



COME LORD
JESUS

Something only a few people know about me is that I spend time each week hanging out with Puritans. The collective prayers of a devout group of people inspire me in my daily walk. It is here that I recently ran across a prayer called *Spiritus Sanctus*. As summer has changed to fall and the holidays are upon us, I was struck by the word “COME” in this particular prayer.

Many of us are familiar with the season of Advent, a word that means come. An expression of worship found in the book of Revelation proclaims: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." As frail humans, we are bound by time in our consideration of Jesus' coming, but we know that *He has always been*. Yet, it is good and proper to remind ourselves how He came to earth as a child, the way He comes to live with us and guide us daily and the promise that He is indeed coming again.

The following devotion uses the *Spiritus Sanctus* prayer as a guide for deeper reflection. It's not specifically a Christmas focus, so it can be read anytime. The outline is a 3x4 format - three days of content each week for four weeks - and it's structured like this:

Read: The most important part of the reading is the scripture – not my words. I pray God will use both in your time here but the most important aspect of this study is for you to have a deeper love and understanding of Him which happens through an encounter with His word.

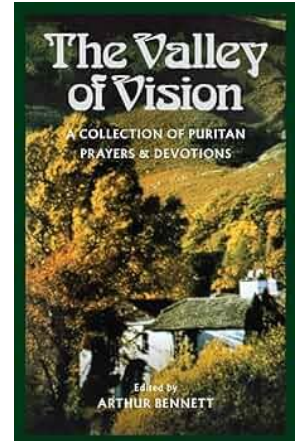
Reflect: Food for thought based on the reading. Nothing super theological, but hopefully you will allow yourself to be led by God's Spirit to go deeper into the truths from the passage.

Respond: What is God calling to you in response to this reading? Confession, worship, action – He may lead you in various ways as you interact with what you have studied.

Some extra resources are listed each day. I would encourage you to read the *Spiritus Sanctus* prayer a few times each week during this study. If you're like me, you might want to set a reminder to keep you going on the plan since this is a low tech version with no built in alerts.

A bonus of reading Puritan prayers is learning some interesting new (or should I say old) vocabulary words to try out on your friends and family. Extra credit assignment: See how many times you can use the word “bewail” in conversation during the course of this study!

Julie



O HOLY SPIRIT,

As the sun is full of light,
the ocean full of water,
heaven full of glory,
so may my heart be full of you.

Vain are all divine purposes of love
and the redemption wrought by Jesus
except you work within,
regenerating by your power,
giving me eyes to see Jesus,
showing me the realities of the unseen world.

Give me yourself without measure,
as an unimpaired fountain,
as inexhaustible riches.

I bewail my coldness, poverty, emptiness,
imperfect vision, languid service,
prayerless prayer, praiseless praises.

Suffer me not to grieve or resist you.

Come as power,
to expel every rebel lust, to reign supreme and keep me yours;

Come as teacher,
leading me into all truth, filling me with all understanding;

Come as love,
that I may adore the Father and love him as my all;

Come as joy,
to dwell in me, move in me, animate me;

Come as light,
illuminating the scripture, molding me in its laws;

Come as sanctifier,
body, soul and spirit wholly yours;

Come as helper,
with strength to bless and keep, directing my every step;

Come as beautifier,
bringing order out of confusion, loveliness out of chaos.

Magnify to me your glory by being magnified in me,
and make me redolent of your fragrance.

Week 1

- Creation
- Divine Purposes
- Realities of the Unseen World

Week 2

- Without Measure
- Bewailing Sin
- Grieving & Resisting

Week 3

- Power & Teacher
- Love & Joy
- Light & Sanctifier

Week 4

- Helper & Beautifier
- Magnification
- Sweet Fragrance

Read:

Psalm 19:1-6

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.
Their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In them He has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.
Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Romans 8:18-25

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Reflect:

The sun is full of light. The ocean is full of water. The heaven is full of glory. So begins *Sanctus Spiritus*. The Puritans were well connected to nature which likely helped them stay well connected to God.

How often do we gloss over creation? Do we smile at a rainbow or sunset without really considering the designer of the beauty we see? How did He create? How does He sustain?

It's no wonder that the prince of this world wants to destroy the notion of creation. Growing up, many of us remember when the "theory of evolution" became a hot topic (insert your own mental image of monkey to man diagram here). In the early days, it may have been taught as theory, one of many beliefs of how the world came into existence. But then there was a convenient dropping of the word theory and evolution became the standard in secular education. Was the switch really that big of a deal? Won't there still be an opportunity for children to believe God's creation story even though it directly contradicts what their teachers say?

It is a big deal because if Genesis 1:1 is eliminated, the entire scaffolding for truth-filled faith erodes. Satan said in the garden to the original humans, "Did God really say...?" and he calls out today with a similar refrain, "Did God really create...?" While we don't have full understanding of how God created and can't claim to neatly answer all questions of origin, we can confidently trust in the One who *was and is* obvious and active throughout creation.

The first stanza ends ... **"so may my heart be full of you"**. Trying to picture all the water in the ocean, all the stars in the sky, all the light from the sun – our cry, like theirs, is for our hearts to experience that level of fullness of our great creator.

Respond:

1. Think of a beautiful encounter you had in nature and focus on God's design and presence in that setting.
2. Think of ways the wonder of creation may have become stale in your life and consider how you might rekindle an awe for the creator.
3. Is your heart full of God? If not, what else has the focus of your heart? Ask God to help you eliminate all that is not of Him and elevate all that is of Him.

Xtras:

Listen: [Psalm 90 | Shane & Shane](#)

Read: [Genesis 1](#)

Watch: [Genesis 1 | Bible Project](#)

Read:

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Ephesians 1:15-21

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Titus 3:3-8

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—

When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace He made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.

This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone.

Reflect:

Hopeless. Helpless. These are not labels most of us would use for ourselves, but these words perfectly describe our condition apart from Christ. Let that sink in. Now take it to a deeper level of disheartenment – this is our condition not just in this lifetime but for *eternity*.

BUT GOD, rich in mercy, reaches through time and eternity to save His precious children. All who would confess that He alone is Savior have a new existence.

As we walk this earth, we have his spirit working to renew our thoughts, direct our steps, guide our hearts and convict our souls. The *Sanctus Spiritus* prayer begins with the words “O HOLY SPIRIT,” so let us not gloss over this salutation. The entire prayer is an appeal to the active and living Spirit of God to do a work that only He can do. The prayer rightly states that apart from this work of regeneration of God’s Spirit, everything is vain. Pointless and futile are the divine purposes without the Holy’s Spirit’s work in our lives. Although the prayer doesn’t state it, we know from scripture that the inverse statement would be true: Purposeful and successful (not vain) are the divine purposes with the Holy Spirit working in our lives.

The prayer continues, “giving me eyes to see Jesus.” The apostle Paul’s prayers in Ephesians, like his other prayers for the church, also center on spiritual needs. He says, “... having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you...”

For Christians to live out their divine purpose, it’s imperative to consistently remind ourselves of the reality of our condition. May the eyes of our hearts always see clearly the One who has saved us and continues to work in and through us.

Respond:

1. Have you considered that there is a divine purpose for your life? If not, take time to reflect on the truths of your existence as outlined in God’s word and consider how that might impact your way forward. If so, consider how those purposes are being lived out today.
2. What might the Puritans have meant to have eyes to see Jesus? How can you improve this vision?

Xtras:

Listen: [Come Jesus | Come Stephen McWhirter](#)

Read: [John 14](#)

Watch: [Holy Spirit | Bible Project](#)

Read:

Psalm 77:19

Your way was through the sea,
your path through the great waters;
yet your footprints were unseen.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Ephesians 6:10-12

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Week 1 | Day 3: Realities of the Unseen World

Reflect:

Some of us may be familiar with the computing term WYSIWIG (pronounced wiz-ee-wig). Before this technology, formatting text to make it bold or change the font etc. was done via coding within the application. The revolutionary “**what you see is what you get**” advancement transformed digital communication as we know it.

I wonder – have we adopted a WYSIWIG mindset that affects our spiritual development? In this prayer, the Puritan pleads for the Holy Spirit to not only give him eyes to see Jesus but also to be shown the realities of the unseen world. In certain times of crisis or most certainly when we are grieving death, we may have keen spiritual vision for the unseen, but what about the rest of the time?

C.S. Lewis highlights this strategy of the enemy to keep us focused on earthly things in the very first chapter of *The Screwtape Letters*. Written from Uncle Screwtape to his nephew Wormwood, the young demon whose dubious duty is to ensure his “patient” does not enter heaven. Wormwood says:

“Thanks to the processes we set at work in them centuries ago, they find it all but impossible to believe in the unfamiliar while the familiar is before their eyes. Keep pressing home on him the ordinariness of things. Above all, do not attempt to use science as a defense against Christianity. They will positively encourage him to think about realities he can’t touch and see.”

Scripture tells us to FIX our eyes on Jesus, and to FIX our eyes on what is unseen. How can we accomplish such a task when the demands of the world are so plentiful and urgent? First, we must be aware of our need to shift our gaze and then, as our Puritan friend revealed, we must ask the Holy Spirit to be our helper to see Jesus and see what is unseen. Without his help, we will be tricked into thinking we have a WYSIWIG existence.

Respond:

1. How would you rate yourself today in your ability fix your eyes on Jesus and what is unseen?
2. What are some of the realities of the unseen world? How could these realities impact how you live in the “seen” world?

Xtras:

Listen: [Turn Your Eyes | Sovereign Grace Music](#)

Read: [The Screwtape Letters | C.S. Lewis](#)

Watch: [Spiritual Beings | Bible Project](#)

Read:

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters,
He refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 145:14-18

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.
The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.
The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.
You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.
The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does.
The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

Ephesians 1: 3-10

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Reflect:

We are so used to fine print. “Some restrictions may apply” should really say “some restrictions will apply” in most cases. We aren’t accustomed to anything without strings attached, so it may be difficult for us to grasp both the measure and magnitude of God’s loving compassion toward us.

“Give me yourself without measure, as an unimpaired fountain, as inexhaustible riches,” the Puritan prays.

How shallow are our prayers in comparison to this plea? Do we find ourselves asking for riches and forgetting that the Lord himself is our prize?

In John 3:34 we read, “For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.” Jesus received the Spirit without measure. He has promised to send this same Spirit to those who choose Him as Lord, so we already have this limitless presence.

Can we proclaim as the psalmist did:

“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Psalm 73:25-26

Respond:

1. How would you rate the content of your prayers? Is the focus more on yourself or centered on God?
2. Consider the longings of your heart. Do you desire the Lord above all else? Pray and ask God to reorient your priorities into a singular, divine priority.

Xtras:

Listen: [Psalm 23 | SATB Choir](#)

Read: [Rich Beyond Measure | Paul Tripp](#)

Watch: [Developing Intimacy with God in Prayer | Alice Moss](#)

Read:

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of
your righteousness.
O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; then will you delight in right
sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reflect:

I bewail my coldness, poverty, emptiness,
imperfect vision, languid service,
prayerless prayer, praiseless praises.

I'm sure there is more sin to bewail, but I think the writer of this prayer captures a very relatable list for many of us. It's easy to reduce sin to a generality, but throughout Puritan prayers, sin has a name. If we are serious about ridding our lives of sin, we first must identify it, or should we say, ask God to point it out.

Many Christians know the pattern of prayer known by the acronym ACTS which stands for adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. Ordering our prayers in this way allows us to first put our focus on God and then begin our petition. We must daily remember the greatest need we have is the need for God's forgiveness and grace.

For most of us, prayer time is a list of requests. While it's important to remember the physical and spiritual needs of others, it's also important for us to spend time in repentance, allowing God to put us in a right position so that we can better understand our deepest needs, mold our desires to His and be ready to lead where He follows.

John Newton provided thoughts on how we could keep a right perspective when it comes to who we are and who God is, and this would be such a worthwhile exercise for us to do on a regular basis:

"Compare your sins with his blood, your wants with his fullness, your unbelief with his faithfulness, your weakness with his strength, your inconstancy with his everlasting love".

Respond:

1. Take time to deeply consider Jesus' sacrifice.
2. Ask God to help you get specific with naming the sins you know about in your life and identifying hidden sin. Pray and meditate using this prompt:
"Lord, I sin against You when I _____."

Xtras:

Listen: [Trisagion | Fernando Ortega](#)

Read: [Respectable Sins: Confronting the Sins We Tolerate](#) | Jerry Bridges (book)

Watch: [What is Sin? | Bible Project](#)

Read:

2 Chronicles 30: 6-9

So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his princes, as the king had commanded, saying, “O people of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were faithless to the Lord God of their fathers, so that He made them a desolation, as you see. Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and your children will find compassion with their captors and return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him.”

Proverbs 1:7

The ear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Ephesians 4:30

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

James 1:19-21

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 John 1:8

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Reflect:

In the Bible, we read that King David was a man after God's own heart. And yet we also read how his love for God did not keep him from sinning.

When Nathan confronts David about his relationship with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, he uses a parable to weave a tale of injustice. The rich man stole the poor man's dear lamb and prepared it for a stranger, Nathan says. David rages with anger, believing the story to be real, and insists "The man who did this must die!" Nathan responds, "You are this man!"

<Mic drop>

Nathan goes on to elaborate about David's evil acts after which David simply responds: "I have sinned against the Lord." He echoes this sentiment in Psalm 51:4 when he says, "Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just."

David had obviously sinned against other people, and yet he claims he has sinned against God alone. How often do we minimize or try to mitigate our sin? What if we saw these acts for what they are – evil deeds that show we are setting ourselves in opposition to God and bringing him grief?

Thankfully, our job is not to simply try harder to please God. In 2 Corinthians, Paul tells the church about the spiritual battle that waged and still wages today and reminds them of the weapons with which we fight:

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

O Lord, may we daily beg, as those before us have also cried out, "Suffer us not to grieve or resist you."

Respond:

1. Consider ways you have resisted or grieved God now and in the past.
2. We should really be resisting Satan. Are there ways he has subtly corrupted your thinking or deceived your heart? Ask God to restore a holy focus in your life.

Xtras:

Listen: [Wash Over Me | Teeks](#)

Read: [2 Samuel 12 | Nathan and David](#)

Watch: [The Grief of God's Spirit | Francis Chan](#)

Read:

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip—
He who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, He who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all harm—
He will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

Jeremiah 31:33

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the LORD.
“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.”

John 16:12-13

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what He will make known to you.”

Reflect:

We've come to the "come" section of the Puritan prayer. The author cries out for the Lord to come not just in a singular appeal but to come in very specific and powerful ways. Asking God to manifest himself in the life of the believer, this prayer is a bold ask. The ask is not for earthly comfort, not for temporal wants. Instead, these pleas have at their core a longing to be fulfilled by God to do that which pleases Him.

Come as power, to expel every rebel lust, to reign supreme and keep me yours;

Come as teacher, leading me into all truth, filling me with all understanding;

It may be easy to say that God is supreme and that He is sovereign, but do we really believe it? Inviting him to reign supreme is not about the status quo. John the Baptist had one of the most simplistic yet poignant statements in scripture: "He must become greater; I must become less." Change is implied.

In our modern world, many of us fret about the future. For Christians, the question may be "What is God's plan for my life?" Good news – we don't have to wonder! God will reveal to us what He wants. In fact, He already has revealed what He wants for our lives: Love God with all our heart, soul and mind and love our neighbors as ourselves. Day to day He will be faithful to lead us into ALL truth and bring deep understanding if only we will listen. How amazing to think that the creator of the universe desires to help us navigate our time on earth, all the while giving us a deeper understanding of who He is!

God's original design was to be with his creation in a perfect environment, no sadness, no sin, completely knowing him and being known by him. When sin entered the world, He already had a rescue plan for Jesus to overcome death. When we accept Christ, God's Spirit lives in us, so that He can guide us through this life until He brings us home again to be with him in that perfect place once again. If you are unsure about your relationship with God, I'd love to listen to your story and your questions. [I AM Second also has a great video resource to help you take the next step on your faith journey.](#)

Respond:

1. How diligently do you seek God's wisdom and understanding? Where are you looking for direction and guidance in your life?
2. What evidence is there that God reigns supreme in your life?

Xtras:

Listen: [He Will Keep You | Sovereign Grace Music](#)

Read: [John 16](#)

Watch: [Against All Odds | How Nick Vujicic turned his brokenness into his destiny](#)

Read:

Psalm 86:15

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

John 15:11

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Reflect:

The first chapter of John is so powerful. Read this and feel the chills:

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

**God becoming man. Light piercing darkness. Truth revealed. Sin defeated.
Ultimate love displayed.**

These are the themes of the gospel.

In this section of the Puritan prayer, we read:

Come as love, that I may adore the Father and love him as my all;
Come as joy, to dwell in me, move in me, animate me

In his poem, *Love's as Warm as Tears*, C.S. Lewis concludes with this observation about love:

Love's as hard as nails, Love is nails:
Blunt, thick, hammered through
The medial nerves of One
Who, having made us, knew
The thing He had done,
Seeing (with all that is)
Our cross, and His.

The Lord has shown us His love and made clear that we are His joy, both are truths which should inspire in us deeper devotion and adoration.

Respond:

1. Look up a definition of adoration. Does this describe your response to God?
2. How might the Lord's joy “animate” you?

Xtras:

Listen: [This is Jesus | We Are Messengers](#)

Read: [A Love Without End | LeAnne Martin, C.S. Lewis Institute](#)

Watch: [Gospel of John Summary | Bible Project](#)

Read:

Psalm 19:7-11

The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.
The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.
They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.
By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

John 1:1-10

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

Reflect:

Come as light, illuminating the scripture, molding me in its laws;

Come as sanctifier, body, soul and spirit wholly yours;

Sanctification is defined as the process of becoming holy or being set apart for a special purpose. Some have summarized this effect in the life of believers by saying that sanctification means we look more like Jesus. At its core, sanctification requires submission.

There is a bad stretch of highway near my home where three roadways merge into one. Although there are multiple blind spots affecting visibility, drivers not paying attention to a yield sign is the biggest source of trouble.

One day, I noticed a car barreling toward my lane, and with anger I thought to myself, “Why don’t they yield?” While the Lord didn’t audibly speak to me at that moment, I was greatly impacted by the word yield and sensed Him impressing on me that I also needed to be better at yielding – not in my car but in my spiritual life. At the intersection of my will and God’s commandments am I willing to yield?

What I wish everyone could grasp is that when a believer surrenders to God and sets aside his desires, molding himself completely to God, the result is perfect peace. God our creator and redeemer is for us. Who then, scripture begs to ask, can be against us? We mature as Christians when we grasp that there is nothing that He cannot use for our good and for His glory.

Romans 8 expresses this so well:

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Respond:

1. Where can you point to signs of the sanctifying work of Christ in your life?
2. Reflect on the benefits of God’s law in Psalm 19 (listed above). Choose one to meditate on, thanking God for these realities of His goodness through His word. What are some ways you can be molded to scripture?

Xtras:

Listen: [Bring it All to Jesus | Lou Fellingham](#)

Read: [Perfect Sanctification | Charles Spurgeon](#)

Watch: [Light of the World | Bible Project](#)

Read:

Psalm 27:4

One thing have I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord
and to inquire in his temple.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Isaiah 61:1-4

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.
They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

2 Corinthians 3:12-18

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Reflect:

American independence.

Not only does this term refer to a war which launched a nation, but it describes the mindset of many of our citizens still. While independence can be a good quality, it also can be a spiritual handicap.

Come as helper, with strength to bless and keep, directing my every step

Our Puritan prayer continues with an appeal to heaven for help. Isn't it difficult for most of us to ask for help? Even if we need it, we're often reluctant to seek assistance from someone in the flesh, let alone from a powerful God whose face we do not see and whose presence we may not always experience. When we realize that God is completely able and wholly willing to always help us, how sad to think that He often becomes our last resort in times of trial.

Come as beautifier, bringing order out of confusion, loveliness out of chaos.

In Colossians, Paul admonishes us to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. I once saw the term rule in this instance compared to an umpire. The umpire makes the call and has the final say. According to this scripture, we are to allow Christ to reign when there is a call to be made in our hearts between the stress and temptations of the world and His perfect peace. Who wouldn't choose peace? Why would we not be fully committed to letting Christ rule?

A verse we love to cling to is Psalm 46:10 which tells us to "be still and know that I am God." In older translations, the verse reads, "Cease striving and know that I am God." When we call out to the helper, we can truly see Him as beautifier and will experience one of many dichotomies of the Christian faith: loveliness in chaos.

Respond:

1. Where have you experienced the Lord bringing order out of chaos in your life or in the lives of others?
2. Can you point to instances where you prefer to direct your own steps rather than follow God's leading? How can you develop the ability to "lean not on your own understanding?"

Xtras:

Listen: [You're Beautiful | The Worship Initiative](#)

Read: [Psalm 8](#)

Watch: [Bible Project: Psalm 8](#) (babbling babies 🎨)

Read:

Psalm 34:1-5

I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.
Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together!
I sought the Lord, and He answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.
Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.

Psalm 69:30

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked on the humble estate of his servant.
For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Reflect:

The word magnify in its original meaning conveyed the idea of praise or rendering honor to God. Other synonyms include glorify and extol. When we magnify His name, we also focus on the greatness of God.

In a world loud with information, Christians are often too silent when it comes to our praise. It's easy (and nice) to post a Bible verse on social media but filling our conversation with examples of what we are learning about God and how we see Him moving will go farther to foster curiosity in unbelievers and encouragement in fellow Christians.

In *Spiritus Sanctus*, the writer cries:

Magnify to me your glory by being magnified in me

Our culture needs God to be magnified. Opinions reign supreme, and absolute truth, to many people, has become an outdated notion. The result is an unprecedented cultural decline. The moral standards, rooted in scripture, which once held us together are eroding by the day.

But with God, there is always good news. We can turn from darkness and walk in the light.

In 2 Corinthians, we read Paul's comparison of our lives to jars of clay. May we be reminded of the great treasure we contain, so much so that it pours out in utmost praise.

You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure, this makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

Respond:

1. Consider your thought life and where you direct your attention. What are you magnifying day to day?
2. Read a few scriptures about God's glory and choose one to meditate on this week.

Xtras:

Listen: [There is a King | Elevation Worship](#)

Read: [Collect for Purity Prayer](#)

Watch: [What does it mean to magnify God in your life? | Greg Laurie](#)

Read:

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Philippians 3:20

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we eagerly await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflect:

When the people in Corinth read Paul's reference to the aroma of death and life, it is believed to have carried multiple meanings, which helps us understand the context of the message.

Those with Jewish heritage would immediately connect the symbolism of the burnt offerings and how the scriptures described them as a pleasing aroma to God. For the non-Christians, they would have connected the fragrance to a different type of offering – those presented to pagan gods.

However, Paul's reference to triumphal procession signals the picture he most likely hoped to paint. After battles, the Romans would return in military parades where captives were adorned with flowers and where incense would be burned. The smells would signify death and captivity to those who were defeated but the same scents would elicit joy among the champions who fought the battle and were victorious over their enemies.

Have you been around a joyful follower of Christ? As the light shines brightly in the life of that person, we could say there is a sweet aroma surrounding their life. Scents can either draw us in, like homemade cookies, or repulse us, like (fill in the blank here with your own gross selection).

In Deuteronomy, we read about a choice that God gives His people. He still offers these choices today. As we read the list, it seems obvious what we should pick, yet so many are still held in captivity awaiting death to death. I pray that we would think deeply about eternity and choose wisely.

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.

Respond:

1. What's a favorite scent for you? Think about how it pleases you and then consider how living a life worthy of Christ is like a sweet aroma to Him and others around you.
2. Jesus has always existed. He came to earth on a rescue mission, and He is coming back to earth in judgment. Are you ready for His return? Who do you know who needs to be encouraged to "choose life," and how might you bring that sweet smelling message?

Xtras:

Listen: [Abundantly More | North Point Worship](#)

Read: [1 Thessalonians 4](#)

Watch: From Anne Graham Lotz:

[Our Hope for Tomorrow](#)

[Just Give Me Jesus](#)