

31 DAYS of

Communing *with* Jesus

A 31-Day Devotional *featuring* the “I Ams” of Jesus Christ
Mountain Valley Chapel, Open Bible Church, Gold Bar, Washington



Communing *with* Jesus

Day 1

An Invitation to Remember

by Pastor Danielle R. Smith

In the hustle and bustle of each day, it can be easy not to stop and take time with the Lord. We may find ourselves throwing up a quick *911, help me Jesus* prayer, but not stopping to draw near to the Lord. For the next 31 days, we are asking everyone to intentionally set aside time each day to spend with the Lord to keep us in rhythm with the Lord's heart and will for our lives.

Earlier in the year, we felt the Lord asking us to draw near to Him, remember who He is, and live intentionally in Him. In a world full of noise, knowing and responding to His voice is vital. In order to distinguish His truth and His voice, it requires spending time with Him.

James 4:8 (NKJV) says, *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double minded.* I like how the New Living Translation states this verse: *Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands you sinners, purify your hearts for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.*

In John 10:4 it says, *And when He brings out his own sheep, he goes before them and the sheep follow him for they know his voice.* The word *know* in this verse in Greek is *oida*, meaning; to know, understand, recognize, to realize.

John 10:27 says, *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* The word *know* in this verse in Greek is *ginosko*, meaning; an intimate knowing.

In order to have this type of intimate relationship, it takes time and intentionality. We are to be communing with the Lord. *Communing*, according to dictionary.com, means; to converse or talk together or be in intimate conversation.

Several members of Mountain Valley Chapel have written devotions for "*31 Days of Communing with Jesus*," which features the "I Ams" of Jesus Christ. Each devotion is formatted into five sections.

The first section is thankfulness. It's important to be purposeful in recalling and giving thanks to the

Lord, and learning to live from the place of thankfulness. Gratefulness of the heart gives a fresh perspective of everything you encounter in life. It's also an entry point for drawing near to the Lord. Psalm 100:4 (KJV), *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*

The second section is encouragement. Each daily devotion is focused on the "I Ams" of Jesus. Our desire is to build on the foundation of who Jesus is, so we are confident in our stance in Him when the world shakes around us. In this section, the writer will share scripture and encouragement.

The third section gives us an opportunity to search our hearts. This section is an invitation to take a moment to evaluate and align your heart with the truth that was presented in the day's devotion. Wait on the Lord and allow Him to reveal anything He wants to highlight to you. Then repent and/or rejoice over what He has revealed to you.

The fourth section is prayer. Pray in correspondence to the day's devotion. Hopefully this is just a starting place for you to spend time in prayer each day. For example, I recently started intentionally praying for Israel on a daily basis. I found a ministry in Israel that has a 31-day prayer guide. I begin my prayer time with this guide as a spring board to continue praying as the Lord guides me.

The fifth section is a decree. Take a moment and speak the decree out loud.

I would also encourage you to take communion after each day's devotion. What a time to remember all that Christ has done for us as we commune with Him, align our hearts with Him, and declare who He is.

I pray the Lord will bring each of us to a deeper desire to commune with Him. I pray that we all fall more in love with Him and gain a greater understanding of His love for us. I pray that the knowledge and reality of who He is will strengthen our foundation and stance in Him. I pray that we live from a new place of intentionality in all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 2

Search Me

by Pastor Ryan D. Smith

Thankfulness

Give the Lord praise for all the treasures in your life. Thank him for those things and people that you view as treasure.

Encouragement

Search me! Try me! Have you ever given God permission to examine you or to refine you? Well, that is exactly what David was asking of the Lord in Psalm 139:23.

Psalm 139:23 (ESV) Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!

Search me! *Search* means to examine, to look over, or to look for. It's like a doctor giving a physical exam or a person searching for great treasure. When we give permission to the Lord to search us, we are giving Him permission to examine our lives; to look inside us. Before I flew out of the country on a mission trip, I had to get a physical. I had to be examined to make sure I was healthy enough for the trip. Also, if there happened to be any concerns about my health, I could take the proper precautionary measures. The Lord is our great physician and He is examining us. He is giving us a spiritual check up so we can know of any spiritual health concerns.

When we pray, "Search me, Lord," we are coming into agreement with the Lord's examination of our life. By agreement, it means we are listening to what He has to say about us and we are allowing Him access to help us heal or live healthier spiritual lives. This search will ultimately bring out the treasure God has in each of us.

Try me! *Try* means to refine or to test. The word is used elsewhere in the Bible in connection with the refining of precious metals like gold and silver. "Try me, God," is a scary, yet powerful, prayer. "Try me," is a prayer that gives God our permission to remove whatever is not like Jesus out of our lives any way He decides. Like gold being melted in a furnace, the impurities will rise to the top from the heat and be skimmed off. The heat of life's trials and tests often brings our impurities to the surface. Trials will often expose areas in our lives we don't want to look at or have been trying to hide or suppress. The Lord's desire of the refining process is not to hurt or harm us, but to allow us to see what is inside us. This way we can acknowledge we need Him

and, by repentance, allow Him to skim those impurities out of our lives. So, whether those impurities are fear, pride, past hurts that have led to unforgiveness and bitterness, moral or spiritual failures, anger, or wayward thoughts, the refining process is for us to come out as pure vessels for the Master's work.

Proverbs 17:3 (NKJV) The refining pot [is] for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts.

"Search me and try me O Lord," is a prayer about letting God into every area of your life—your inner most being—hiding nothing from Him. It's a vulnerable place to be but it's the best place to be. It's a place of safety and love with the one who already knows you and created you.

David also said, "Know my heart and know my thoughts." The word *know* in the Hebrew means intimacy, to know experientially, to have a relationship with. David knew that opening his life to vulnerable examination by the refining process was asking God for a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him; experiencing God's heart and thoughts in a deeper way. God desires a deep and growing relationship with all of us.

Search Our Hearts

Take time to commune with God and let Him search you and try you.

Prayer

Thank you, God, that you created and know me. Thank you for seeing to the depths of my being, choosing to love me, and sending your son, Jesus, to die for me. Father, I give you permission to search me, to try me, and to remove all that is not of you. I thank you for your good and perfect will for my life and I submit to your will. I ask to experience you in deeper ways than I ever have.

Decree

I declare that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I declare I am no accident and that the creator of the universe placed me here on the planet at this time for a purpose and for a relationship with Him. I declare today that I am whole in Christ. I declare that I am purified in Jesus. I declare I am walking out of the impurities of the past and into a glorious new day in Jesus.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 3

Not Being Afraid of What He Reveals, and What to Do with It!

by Pastor Danielle R. Smith

Thankfulness

List the people in your life that truly know you and are not afraid of your messes. Begin to thank the Lord for surrounding you with those people that you can get real with. If you are unable to think of anyone, thank the Lord that He does.

Encouragement

Jeremiah 17:10 I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind (Hebrew translation for mind means innermost being). Even to give every man according to His ways. According to the fruits of his days.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Read Psalm 139

In January 2020, the Lord led me to be intentional with drawing near to Him and taking communion daily. As I became obedient to this, I started each day praising who He is and then requesting, "Lord search me." Although God knows everything about me, this initially made me feel very vulnerable. Did I really want to see what was in my heart? Did I really want to know? I had to work through this thinking before I could sincerely ask the Lord to search me. "Yes, Lord, search me. I want nothing within me that doesn't please you."

As I began to take time and wait upon Him, He was faithful to highlight *dustings* of attitudes that had settled upon my heart. I was surprised at a few things He began to show me that were not of Him. I am usually very quick to repent of noticeable bad attitudes, unrighteous responses, judgments, etc. when I recognize them. I typically chitty chat with the Lord all day long. But, in the waiting, I was no longer the one talking, but the recipient listening for answers to the question I had asked. The Lord began to reveal attitudes of my heart that I didn't realize I had. Sometimes they were very simple, small things, but if they were left unkept could be entry points for larger offenses, criticism, unbelief, jealousy, dishonor, etc. I began to repent and release back to Him what He revealed to me, and I asked that He help me walk in what was opposite of that. For instance, if God revealed anger in me, then I would ask help to walk in peace. I prayed that I would learn to walk reactionary to the fruits of the Holy Spirit and not the fruit of the flesh. I began to notice that when hard things would come my way, my responses were more righteous and from the place of security. This is so freeing for myself and for those around me, especially my family.

When I walk outside I get dirt, grass, and mud on my feet. I need to wash them off before I come back inside so I don't track it all over my house. (Yes, I run around barefoot a lot.) As we go into the world, we are "*dusted*" by things that try to settle onto us that are not of the Lord. A quick rinse and my feet are clean. Same with our hearts. The *dusting* isn't a big deal if we let God rinse us off. But if we continue to carry it and it grows and goes deeper, then we begin flinging it all over everyone around us.

Pastor Ryan wrote a devotion on searching our hearts in this devotional, so I won't repeat all that he said. I do want to encourage you that searching and repenting doesn't have to be a time of beating yourself up. Scripture says in Psalm, Proverbs, Jeremiah, and Hebrews that the Lord disciplines those He loves. I want to encourage you to not fear what He reveals. Deal with the attitudes of the heart before the point of discipline. Either way, know God always comes from a place of love and this *dust* isn't what you were meant to walk in. This process of cleaning is freeing and not shameful. The fact is, this is what I am walking in, but the great news is I don't have to continue! The Lord reveals the *dust* to us for our benefit, not our destruction!

Psalm 24:3-4 (NKJV) Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His Holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. In Matthew 5:8 Jesus repeats this in His sermon on beatitudes, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Searching

Searching our heart, brings us cleansing and freedom as we repent and access to see the Lord. It's a time of rejoicing for our hearts to be pure.

Wait upon Him to speak to you. If He reveals anything say, "Lord I repent of _____. I thank you that you have revealed this to me. Help me to walk in _____ (whatever is opposite of what He revealed). I desire to walk in purity and thank you that, through Jesus, I am able."

Prayer

Lord, I thank you that you desire all of my heart. I thank you for this searching process. I give you permission to reveal to me all that is within me that is not of you.

Decree

I am free in Christ Jesus, and I rejoice that I can see and know God. The Lord speaks to me and I respond in obedience to all that He shares. I am fully forgiven and I walk in confidence knowing that I can overcome all temptations thrown my way. In Christ, I overcome.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 4

Communing—Listening, Not Just Talking

by The Hauser Family

Thankfulness

Father God, thank you for who you are. You reveal your glory in love, power, holiness and splendor. You are the King of kings and worthy of continuous praise. *“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory?” Isaiah 6:3*

You are worthy of praise for you are all-knowing and perfect in all creation, which offers you ceaseless praise. I too will praise you. God you reveal your majesty, holiness and love to me as the whole earth is full of your glory. How great are your works.

Encouragement

Communing—Listening, not just talking.

Listening for Him, as He answers my call, I exercise patience, trust, hope and faith. As I do this, I am no longer speaking. I must stop my thoughts to hear in the depths of my heart; truly hear what is being said to me with my spiritual ears. My judgments are suspended as I anticipate His answers to me. I must make space and seek out His voice.

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” Psalm 46:10

“My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”

Proverbs 2:1-5

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

Revelation 3:20

Being Christ-like, when I am listening to another, I will pay attention to the way they feel, not the way I feel. I will allow Holy Spirit to quiet my heart. Thoughts and ideas I will relinquish to God for purification and await His guidance.

Search Our Hearts

Lord, show me the ways to pay attention and be silent so as not to answer before listening for understanding. I want to listen to increase my learning. I want to listen for your guidance for discernment. Help me to listen so I can live in safety, be at ease, and live without fear of harm.

Prayer

Father God, please hear my prayer. I want so badly to hear your voice. I have petitioned you to search my heart and show me the way to be still and pay attention to you. Bless me as I listen and wait on you to open my spiritual ears and pour into my heart your words and your will. In Jesus' name, amen.

Decree

As a child of Christ, I employ these methods to be able to understand others as they are speaking to me. To have compassion, I will open my heart and mind to receive another's. I suspend judgment, so as to come to understand them. I will extend grace to others as God extends grace and mercy to me. My Lord will be revealed in me and through me as I listen to come to understand others. With the Lord as my shepherd, I will slow down and be still.

Communing with Jesus

Day 5

Adoration and Praise

by Susan Mackey

My Lord, my dear sweet Jesus, My savior and rescuer, Holy Spirit, my best friend and counselor, God my refuge, my safe hiding place, your Love reaches me in the deepest, most tender secret places of my being. My adoration for you is but a reflection of the love you have bestowed over me. I praise you in all that you are, in all that you have given me, that stretches far beyond human understanding. I will sing your praises always, in all that I do and have I will praise you. I thank you for the humble in heart that walk in the fullness of your joy, truth, love and gentleness with a Divine confidence, boldness and strength of your freedom. Sweet Lord, let our adoration and praise rise like a sweet incense to declare all that you are and to bless you for all that you have done for us. Amen.

Hebrew definitions of PRAISE

HALLAL-HALLELUJA; to shine, to boast, to be clamorously foolish.

YAHDAH; a verb with the root meaning to worship with extended hands, thanking God for things not yet received.

SHABACH; to shout in a loud tone, to command, to triumph.

TOWDAH, root word yahdah. Used more specifically, an extension of the hands in adoration or acceptance.

BARAK; to kneel down, to bless God as an act of adoration. To salute.

ZAMAR; a joyful expression of music, largely involving musical instrument.

TEHILLAH; derived from HALLAL-halleluja, singing hymns of the spirit or praise.

What is Praise?

What is adoration?

God inhabits our praises.

Psalms 22:3 but you are holy, you who inhabit the praises of Israel.

Definition of *inhabit*; to live in or occupy a person place or environment.

HOLY SPIRIT IS WITH US ALWAYS.

BREATH IN HOLY SPIRIT, BREATH OUT KINGDOM.

How amazing is our God? That He inhabits our praises. He draws closer to us as we adore and acknowledge Him

in our thoughts and actions. When we set our sights on Him above ourselves and situations we are experiencing, He runs to us and encompasses us in His **divine love**. His love is a cure all. It is the antidote for ALL that ails you physically mentally and emotionally.

The question that arises is, "*How do we touch His divine power in our human existence?*"

1. Relationship, relationship, **RELATIONSHIP**

Spend time with Him. Talk to Him throughout your day. Spend time in the word. These are God's LOVE LETTERS to us. They confirm His goodness, grace and LOVE He has for each and everyone of us right where we are. Nothing is required of us for Jesus to Love us. The proof of that was left on the cross. Thank Him for all He has done and provided and all He is going to do for you. This is PRAISE AND ADORATION.

2. APPLICATION IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP

I truly believe God is calling our body to a higher form of praise and worship where He will pour out His blessings in power; an increased heavenly power that is bigger than anything He has done before.

King David DANCED **with all his might**. He gave up everything that was in him through dance before the ark of the covenant **to praise God**. Even to the judgement of his wife, whom he told he would become even more undignified than that before God. 2 Samuel 6 :1-19.

How many times do we hold back during praise and worship at service when this is the place we congregate to seek His presence as a community? How much do we hold back even speaking about how Holy Spirit is moving in our lives, because we wonder what someone else will think if we speak His truth, raise our hands, dance or kneel? How excited do some of us get over a great football game; whooting, hollering and clapping our hands, jumping to our feet in excitement? As opposed to how outwardly excited do we get for God when He just healed a broken place in us, gave us divine revelation, physically healed us or someone dear and near?

This right here is the key to enter into a deeper knowledge of His presence, which brings a beautiful, divine boldness and confidence.

Continued

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 5 *continued*

Adoration and Praise, *by Susan Mackey*

Are we focused on God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, three in one, The beautiful Trinity, or are we **focused** on ourselves, the thoughts running through our minds, or people around us?

I encourage each and everyone to step out into a new and unfamiliar place of praise and worship.

If it feels awkward, raw and unknown, you're doing it right.

It starts at home. Take up the posture of praise, whatever that looks like to you.

Raise your hands. Kneel before the King of Kings. Put music on and dance. Lay flat face down on the floor. I personally like outside in the grass, for the last one.

Now, drop all your reasoning, to-dos, whys and wha-fors, and consider nothing but God's presence. We are all unique, so this looks different to everyone.

My personal example

When I consider **Jesus**, my thoughts always start with me as a little girl, with flowers in my hair, dancing and spinning in my little girly white dress, in a field, while Jesus holds my hand.

When I consider **God**, I climb in His lap and just rest against His chest with His arms around me, Loving me and Keeping me safe.

When I consider **Holy Spirit**, that's when I am flooded with the truth of Gods Love and acceptance of who I am and who He has created me to be. For me personally, when I consider Holy Spirit, that's were I feel God's power flow.

Now that you are focused on **Him**

1. Thank Him for all he has done. Sing to Him the song on your heart. You are the only one that can sing that beautiful song for Him. Don't judge your singing; it changes your focus from Him to self.

He rejoices over us (Zephaniah 3:17).

Rejoice over you literally means *dance, skip, leap, and spin around in joy.*

2. Dance for Him. Dance with Him. It doesn't matter what it looks like. This is your very own personal dance with God. There is freedom in Him. Let his joy rise up in you in your dance. You will find freedom and strength.

3. Lay down. Sit or kneel. Be still. Clear your mind. Drop all your worries and thoughts and listen. Listen to the Spirit of God. We all receive Him differently. Sometimes we hear His voice. Sometimes we get pictures in our mind that are kingdom based. Sometimes we are flooded with a new knowledge or revelation. God meets us were we are at. Write down what he shared with you.

Busy-day application of praise and adoration

You hit the ground running...Tell God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit *GOOD MORNING*. Remember to thank Him for the day. Rejoice and be glad in it, for He has made this day. Talk to Him while you are working. Ask His opinion. Listen for His answer. Tell Him you appreciate His presence in your day to day. This is another form of praise and adoration.

**BLESSING ON YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES.
MAY GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE ENCOMPASS
ALL OF YOUR ENDEAVORS.**

**I PRAY HE ILLUMINATES ALL HIS BEAUTY IN
YOUR JOURNEY IN THIS LIFE.**

**I HAVE ALWAYS SAID WE ARE ALL JUST WALK-
ING EACH OTHER HOME. I AM HONORED TO
KNOW EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU OR TO
GET THE PRIVILEGE OF TOUCHING YOUR
HEART IN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT.**

**KNOW THAT YOU ARE BEAUTIFULLY AND WON-
DERFULLY MADE. YOUR UNIQUENESS IS THE
BEST PART OF YOU.**

**I AM PROUD TO CALL YOU FAMILY.
BE BLESSED IN YOUR COMINGS AND GOINGS.**

With love and joyfulness,
Susan Mackey

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 6

Decreeing with Heaven

by Pastor Danielle R. Smith

Thankfulness

What has the Lord done for you over this last month that you know happened as a result of choosing to place your trust in Him? Give thanks to Him!

As I think back over this last month, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I give the Lord praise and honor. We never went hungry, we always had toilet paper, we have not been sick, and I cherish the family quality time we have had. There are times we give thanks for the large things, but it is as important to give Him praise for the small things as well. He is worthy to be praised in it all. Give the Lord praises for His faithfulness to you and your family.

Encouragement

In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus taught his disciples to pray:

In this manner, therefore, pray:

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.*

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

As we commune with the Lord and listen to His voice, we then begin to pray/declare His heart for every situation we encounter. This is why Jesus taught us to pray, *Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*. We are inviting His will into situations and not just our own will. We decree the Lord's heart and kingdom principles here on earth and into our lives. It is important to spend time with the Lord to know His desires and decree those and not just our fleshly ones.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

1 John 5:14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

We are to know and speak forth His will. Sometimes it is obvious in scripture what His will is. Other times we question what His will is and we need to seek Him for it. What He reveals to us will always be supported in scripture. What an amazing privilege to partner with God and see His desires released upon the world around us. Decreeing is praying from the place of victory and not desperation.

Search Our Hearts

Ask the Lord to reveal what His will is over a pressing situation in your life, and how He would like you to pray and declare into it.

Prayer

Lord, what a privilege you give us to know your will. Lord, we repent for the times we have not sought you and fell victim to the circumstances around us. We thank you that through Jesus Christ we are victorious. Teach us to pray with you, declaring your will into our situations and those areas you call us to pray for. In Jesus' name. Amen

Declare

I am a child of God. I know His voice and He shares His heart with me. Scripture is illuminated as I read and His truths are within my heart. I decree with heaven and see the impossible made possible when I pray and declare His will.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 7

I Am the Bread of Life

by Elisa Johnson

Thankfulness

How has the Lord provided for your needs and or specifically blessed you recently? Praise and thank Him for what He has given you.

Encouragement

"I am the bread of life. Come everyday to me and you will never be hungry." John 6:35 TPT

Jesus gives us a clear invitation into His Abundance of Absolute Provision! The only action on our part is to come; to move toward Him. The Passion Translation appropriately adds "EVERYDAY!" Just because we ate food yesterday does not mean we don't need to eat today, right? We know, oh so well, that physically we want to and need to eat multiple times a day in order to survive. This reality is just as important in the spiritual realm, yet so many believers are starving and don't know why.

God has made it a simple move toward Him on a daily basis to satisfy everything that I need for my perfectly balanced spiritual nutrition! He knows what I need today for what I will face and he has issued the invitation. Will you make the time to spend with Him in prayer, reading the word, and waiting on Him today?

Search Our Hearts

Lord, please show me where I have moved toward and sought after things that do not satisfy me and are a cheap substitute for You.

As the Lord shows you and reveals areas of disbelief, lies, or complacency, repent and ask Him to forgive you and to cleanse and restore what was lost by not relying on Him to fill you.

Prayer

Lord, I thank You that You not only supply abundantly for my every need, but You make it so easy for me to come to You for ALL that satisfies me. Today I move toward You and choose to be FULL of YOU!

Decree

ALL of my needs are met in You! I find my spiritual nourishment in You alone! You do what You say You do and I believe!

Listen to the song: *No One But You*, Hillsong Worship

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 8

I Am the Bread of Life

by Bill Clem

Thankfulness

Give thanks with a grateful heart. God I thank you for today, that you have given me breath in my lungs. Whatever the world might throw at me you are a fortress and shield about me.

Give Thanks to the Lord for those in your life that show you His Love.

Give Thanks to the Lord for those in your life who require you to show them His Love.

Give Thanks to the Lord for those who have shown you how to walk in faithfulness.

Give Thanks to the Lord for the faith to walk in his way, so those who follow will not stumble.

Encouragement

Jesus says these words and bread should invoke in us a remembrance of the significance of bread in the Bible to those who follow God. Bread was the primary source of food in Egypt. When God acted powerfully to take his people from slavery and into the promise of His life for them he told them to bake special bread without leaven that they could take with them on their journey. Bread is what God gives us on our journey to strengthen us. When God told his people that he would dwell among them and be their God and not leave them he gave the instructions for the tent and eventually temple of His dwelling which asked them to keep bread of the presence that would represent his presence among them. Bread is what represents that God is alive and among us and not distant from us. When the people were struggling in the desert because of their sin, and they cried out to God to have mercy on them and sustain them he sent Manna, the Bread from Heaven. Bread is what shows us that God cares for us and forgives our sin and brings us back to him in Mercy and Love. When Jesus was tempted in the desert for 40 days the Devil tried to tempt him into meeting his physical needs by turning a rock into a loaf of bread. Jesus replied "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Bread of Life is not just flour and water and yeast, it is a source of spiritual nourishment that will give us life and life more abundantly. When the people who followed Jesus were hungry Jesus took a few loaves of bread and fed thousands more than once. Bread is a symbol of God's provision beyond what seems possible and supplies all of our needs from his fountain of miraculous power. When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray he told them to pray the Lord's Prayer which includes "give us this day our daily bread." Bread is a reminder that each day

God will provide what we need to get through the day.

When Jesus was in the upper room with his disciples and establishing the new covenant that would be sealed with his death and resurrection he took the bread and broke it, and said "This is my body broken for you, whenever you do this remember me." Bread is our daily reminder that Jesus gave himself for us, that his body was broken so that we might live and have access to our God and Lord. Jesus said "I am the bread of Life."

Jesus is what strengthens us on the journey.

Jesus is alive and present among us.

Jesus is who cares for us and forgives our sins.

Jesus is what nourishes us and sustains our spirit.

Jesus does what seems impossible to provide miracles.

Jesus reminds us each day he will supply our needs.

Jesus died for us that we might live in him.

Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Search Our Hearts

So let us draw near to him. Let us confess that we need Jesus each day. Confess the things to Him that you are trying to draw strength from. Remove the rocks and the temptation to rely on them to feed you and ask Him to make your faith like a few loaves of bread into baskets and baskets full of blessing and goodness and mercy that he has for you today.

Prayer

"Dear Jesus, please come today and fill me. Give me this day, you, my daily bread. Be my source of strength, my comfort, my reminder of what you did on the cross and the presence of Holy Spirit in my life today. Fill me, not just my belly with physical bread, but my heart, soul, mind, and strength with your loving kindness and your mercy. Help me not to judge the world around me, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you, my God."

Decree

The Lord is here. He is in this place. He is the bread of life, the presence of God, the source of my strength and my hope. He will give me all I need to make it through today. He is the God of Tomorrow and I will lie down tonight thinking of his blessings. If I wake tomorrow I will know he has breathed new life into me, and will give me all I need to make it through each day. Jesus loves you.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 9

I Am the Bread of Life

by Mark Neilson

Thankfulness

Meditate on and praise God for His many life-giving blessings.

Encouragement

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Isaiah 55:1-2

THE I AM AND THE BREAD OF LIFE IS IN THE WORD!

Search Our Hearts

Tremble in awe before the Lord, and do not sin against Him. Be still upon your bed and search your heart before Him. Psalm 4:4 (TPT)

Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your many blessings. Thank You that You give what is good, so my soul delights in abundance, joy that overflows, peace that subdues, patience that endures, kindness in action, a life full of virtue, faith that prevails, gentleness of heart, and strength of spirit!

Decree

I will go to the waters for my Bread of Life!

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 10

I Am the Light of the World

by Robbie and Kristen Eye

Thankfulness

I encourage you to look around and point out each place you see Jesus' light. Give Him thanks for high-lighting the direction of your path.

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NLT)

Encouragement

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." John 8:12 (NLT)

Tent camping is one of my favorite pastimes. It's where I meet God in His beautiful creation. Sometimes I will go for a hike to watch the sunset from a majestic view. By the time I walk back to my tent, it is dark. So, I get my flashlight out and turn it on to find my way down the path. If I don't stay on the path, I may stumble and stub my toe or get lost. Without my flashlight to light my way, I have no hope of staying on the path.

Such is true with our path of faith. Without Jesus as our flashlight to light our path to salvation, we are likely to stumble or lose our way to God.

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105 (NLT)

Sometimes we turn off our flashlights. Perhaps we get busy and forget to check our batteries (sit with God). Or we don't recharge our batteries by spending time in the Word daily. However, getting recharged is easy and can be done anytime.

Search Our Hearts

Simply pray. Ask for forgiveness. Ask for God to search your heart for things that are not good for your path. Ask Him to help you avoid those stumbling points by lighting them up. Then wait. Wait for God to light them up. This can come in a moment or perhaps throughout your day or week.

In all your ways, submit to Him and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:6 (NIV)

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I love you. I am so grateful that you care so much for me. Thank you, Jesus, that you would light my way, even in the small things, so that I don't stumble or lose my way to you.

Please continue to guide me closer to you every day. Amen.

Decree

Today is the perfect day to recharge batteries, to draw nearer to Jesus. We declare that we are His children and we will follow His path for our lives!

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:5 (NLT)

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 11

I Am the Light of the World

by The Hauser Family

Thankfulness

Oh Lord, I am in awe of your goodness, beauty and holiness.

Encouragement

“Your sun shall no more go down nor your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light and your days of morning shall be ended.” Isaiah 60:20

Jesus declares, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

In this world, we are bombarded with darkness. We are bound by the cultural and social strongholds ingrained into us on a regular basis. God is constantly calling us away from the darkness of the world and into the light, into a life with Him and His Kingdom as the center. In the Light, there is an abundance of joy and peace available to us.

Search Our Hearts

Holy Spirit, you dwell within me. The Glory of God is in my heart. Lead me into the Light of the Lord. Search me so I can openly surrender my life to God and the light He is. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer

I will surrender my life to you, Lord. I will experience a life of freedom from the darkness of this world. Darkness will not overcome me. My life is hidden in Christ. I will be the light as Jesus is in me. I choose to place Jesus at the center of all I do and who I am. I thank you for a mighty deliverance from the limitations and bondage of darkness.

Decree

I look to the Light of Christ. I fix my attention to the God who conquered sin and death. I fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith. God you are my great deliverer, healer and source of comfort and strength. I center my life around you and your loving kindness now and forever.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 12

I Am the Light of the World

by Baylee Johnson

Thankfulness

Stop and think about all the ways God has answered your prayers, and then take a moment to thank Him for them.

Encouragement

Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying "I am the light of the world: He who follows me will not walk in the darkness But will have the light of life." John 8:12

This year has been a challenging year for me. Every time I look back at what has happened, I thank God for taking me through what I went through. He was there for me every step of the way, shining his light to guide me. God gives us tough circumstances as an opportunity to step out in faith and shine forth in difficult situations. Just like a lighthouse directs boats from destruction, Christ lights the way for us.

Search Our Hearts

Are you allowing God to have a part in your life? Ask Him if there is anything that you have put in higher priority than Him. If the Lord reveals an area to you, give it to him, and then ask Him to help guide you in this area of weakness.

Prayer

Lord, I pray that I would not hide your light, but that I would let it shine brighter than ever before. Lord, I want you more than anything. Please help me to be in tune to your voice and walk in the gifts you've given me. Have your way in me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Decree

I am chosen by God and I will walk through difficult situations differently than before. I thank you that you are the Light of the world and that you gave your life to give me mine.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 13

I Am the Door

by Rick and Stephanie Jiggins

Thankfulness

We are given blessings in life and the opportunity for salvation without even knowing it at times. We are thankful that the Lord our God provides these blessings whether overtly or in a hidden fashion that only our faith can discover. We are always grateful for the opportunity to spread and help teach the lessons of our Lord.

Encouragement

I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.
John 10:9

We are His sheep and Jesus is our Shepherd. He is the door, always present as we wander. The only way we can reach salvation shall be through Jesus Christ, our doorway to the truth. Like a shepherd leads and protects his flock, so too shall Jesus do the same. If we repent of our sins, ask for forgiveness, and believe the Gospel, we will be led toward eternal life.

As sheep, we are easily defenseless against predators and must rely on our Shepherd to protect us and keep us safe. We are defenseless against our enemies without Jesus. We are victorious merely through his name. With Jesus, we are well supplied, defended, and led into perfect pastures. We will always be kept safe against the enemy's attack. By his Holy will, we will have perfect freedom to enter whenever storm or danger approaches. He is the door; come as you are. Do not hesitate.

Search Our Hearts

Where do you search for answers? What direction are you heading right now? Can you see the door? There are many doors available to you as you live in this world. Search your heart and ask yourself if the door you seek is indeed the one provided by our Shepherd. Ask the Lord, as he will search your heart and make known what it desires. He will always give you direction if you ask.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I pray that as you are my door, my compass will always point in your direction. A grand door you provide; a gateway to eternal life and salvation that, by my own choosing, I choose you. I come as a humble servant and knock with great anticipation of passing through your portal to peaceful pasture. I pray that through my open heart, through my love for your truth, and through my passion for righteousness, my key will open your door. In your most magnificent and Holy name I pray these things. Amen.

Decree

Today, be led by the Shepherd, encourage the rest of the flock. The Door He presents is always there for you, should you desire it. Let the door be your beacon, protection and eternal peace. Live each day as another opportunity to affirm your obedience and love for Jesus. Do not wander; let your love for the Lord be your compass, pointing your heart toward the Door.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 14

I Am the Door

by Julie Hopson

Thankfulness

Think about the presence and goodness of God in your life. Give thanks to the Lord for being your Savior, protector, and provider!

Encouragement

In John 10:9, Jesus said, *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.*

In this context, Jesus said He is the door of the sheepfold, a pen where the sheep stay safe until they are led out by the True Shepherd (Jesus) to find pasture. (Read John 10:1-30 to get the full context of this parable). The Door only lets in the True Shepherd to get His sheep. Any other that tries to get in is a thief or robber.

For this devotion we will focus that Jesus is the Door.

First, Jesus is the Door to salvation. Anyone who enters through Jesus is saved and receives eternal life. Jesus is the Savior. (John 10:9, 28)

Second, the Door keeps the sheep safe. The Door only lets the True Shepherd come through to the sheepfold. The True Shepherd calls to the sheep (those saved by Jesus) by name. The sheep hear His voice and follow Him as He leads them out to pasture and then back in to the sheepfold. Jesus warns that any other that tries to get in to the sheepfold or lead the sheep away is a thief or robber and will do the sheep harm. John 10:10 says *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* So, the True Shepherd and the Door keep the sheep safe from the enemy. Jesus lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:11). No one can snatch His sheep from Him (John 10:28).

Third, the Door opens for the nourishment of the sheep. The True Shepherd comes to lead the sheep out to find pasture for nourishment. Some of the

nourishment of choosing Jesus as our Savior is provision, protection, love, joy, peace, healing, hope, eternal life, and abundant life! (John 10:10) He leads us to the good plans and purposes He has for us. (Jeremiah. 29:11) We develop a deep, loving, and trusting relationship with Jesus, our True Shepherd.

Fourth, other doors can lead to our destruction. Sheep can go astray. We can choose our own way or be deceived to go through other doors—unrighteous doors—of relationships, religions, careers, entertainment (including TV, video games, music), thoughts, or doors of criminal activity. So, if Jesus didn't lead us through that door, it will likely lead us to destruction. We should run from these doors! (John 10:5) If we did go through a door of destruction, we can close that door, repent, and return to the sheepfold of the Lord for forgiveness and restoration. (Luke 15) Jesus is calling our names!

Search Our Hearts

Jesus loves you. Ask Him to reveal any doors you need to close that are not of Him. Repent and close that door and be restored from what the enemy tried to destroy in you. Rejoice that Jesus wants the best for you!

Prayer

Lord, I thank you that you make a way for me that is beneficial to me; life abundantly! Give me ears to hear only your voice, follow only where you lead me, and be who you created me to be. Thank you for redeeming me, saving me, and for forgiveness. Restore areas in my life the enemy tried to steal, kill, and destroy. Your continual presence is so comforting; I never want to stray. I put my full trust in You.

Decree

Jesus saved me. He knows me by name and I can hear His voice. He spares me from evil. He leads me, provides for me, and keeps me safe. He gives me abundant life.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 15

I Am the Door

by Adele Berg

Thankfulness

I am so grateful to the Lord for being able to have a moment by moment relationship with Him. I am thankful that He is only a thought away. He is my ever present help in time of need. I praise Him for the fullness of life He has given.

Encouragement

John 10:7 "I am the door of the sheep" (NASB) "I am the gate for the flock" (TPT)

John 10:9 "I am the gateway" (TPT)

Jesus declares in the "I am" to be one with God who declared to Moses, "I Am" in Ex. 3:14. Jesus is the gateway to those who are His, gives them access to God and to His Kingdom while living in this life. As the gate keeper, He also opened the way for gentiles to enter into relationship with the Father. His declaration opens up a whole new way of life for you to live in a relationship with Him. You have freedom of choice to enter in or out. There are many choices you can make about which "door" to take. Following the Lord as the gateway, you have constant and instant access to your heavenly Father. As you follow Him, you are guided, protected and blessed. You are led into all truth. You learn His voice and learn to follow only His voice. Jesus came as the gateway to provide for you, that you would be complete in Him, and live your life more abundantly. He is the gateway bringing God's heavenly kingdom to your life, this day, this moment.

Search Our Hearts

Perhaps you can recall times when the Lord led you into really fruitful places, and times when you chose other "doors" that led to wrong paths. Let God's Holy Spirit guide you and bring to light anything that bothers you about your choices, and lay it before Him. Thank Him for the places He has brought you closer to Him.

Prayer

Lord, I pray for all who read this that the you open eyes to see the depth of your love and your everlasting kindness toward us. That you would grant great understanding of the abundance you have for us and the fullness of joy awaiting for those who follow you. Enlarge our hearts, dear Lord, so that we can receive from you the riches of our inheritance through Jesus. Amen.

Decree

Lord, I declare, that I am a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus. I lay everything at your feet, and freely follow you where you may lead. I pronounce over my life that I have all I need according to the rich inheritance that is mine because I am yours and that you love me unconditionally. Because of your great love for me, I can joyfully embrace whatever you have for me in the future. I open my heart and declare out loud, "I receive! I receive all you have for me!"

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 16

I Am the Good Shepherd

by Pastor Ryan D. Smith

Thankfulness

Thank the Lord today for His protection, His provision, and His guidance.

Thank the Lord that He likes to talk us.

Thank you, Lord, for being a good shepherd who is always Good and always loving.

Encouragement

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd." Sheep were a common part of culture in Israel in Jesus' day and still are in parts of the Middle East. Remember, it was shepherds to whom the angels first appeared to visit Jesus when He was born. Shepherding is also a huge part of the Hebrew people's history. And, God Himself was likened to a shepherd quite frequently in the Old Testament. Many of the great Old Testament heroes were shepherds: Abraham, Moses, and David are a few of them. Which means, the people would have very much understood what Jesus meant from a practical and historical perspective.

A shepherd has a lot of responsibility taking care of the sheep. His job is to protect, provide, and guide. A shepherd protects the flock from predators, thieves, insect infestations and disease. A shepherd provides not only food and water, but also comfort. The shepherd provides nurturing back to health, he provides a safe environment to sleep and graze and reproduce. A shepherd will make sure a sheep is free from debris caught in its wool or thorns in its feet. A shepherd also guides. He not only leads the sheep to the right pastures, he goes and gets the ones that have gone astray.

I have raised a few sheep for eight years now. There are times I would come home and notice one of the sheep wasn't with the rest of them. So I would go search for it. Every so often I would find one of the sheep stuck in blackberry bushes. I would have to pull it out of the bushes and pick out the blackberry vines tangled up in its wool. Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He is our protection from predators, thieves,

and disease. He is our provider. In Him is our provision, comfort, nurture, and safety. Jesus helps get us out of life's snares and cleans us up. Jesus said clearly that His sheep knew His voice. *John 10: 27* "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." Sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd. They find comfort in the voice of their shepherd knowing he is near to protect or provide for them. They know the shepherd's voice so well that they will not follow the voice of another. *John 10:5* "Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. We should know His voice. Notice it says my sheep know my voice, not my lambs. Lambs are immature sheep. And God's lambs often don't know how to differentiate the Lord's voice from the voice of another. And how do we mature to hear His voice? By familiarity; spending time with Him, spending time in His word, and becoming less familiar with the voices of this world and outside influences. By this we will know the difference between the voice of the Good shepherd and other voices that would come to rob, to kill, and to destroy.

Search Our Hearts

Ask the Lord to help you know His voice. Ask the Lord to forgive you for anywhere you have been too familiar with a voice of fear, doubt, pride, or anything else of this world.

Prayer

Lord, I pray for ears to hear what you are saying. I pray to walk in your abundance and to desire all that you have for me. I thank you, Good Shepherd, that I am your sheep and I am secure in you.

Decree

I declare you are the good shepherd of my life. I declare that you have good things for me. I declare fear is not my portion and the victory is yours. I declare favor, protection, and secure footing in my life because of who you are.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 17

I Am the Good Shepherd

by Tina Stevens

Thankfulness

As I was taking a walk the other day, I could hear the trees swaying back and forth in the breeze. I could smell the fresh cedar from the trees. The birds chirping was music to my ears. The warmth of the sun felt good on my face. All this reminded me to keep moving for the Lord, to sing praises to him. To be thankful for what He has given me and that He is always with me. What in your life can you give Him thanks for today?

Encouragement

I am so thankful for the Body I belong to; for MVC (Mountain Valley Church). It is more than just a church in a small town. It is a place of peace, honesty, gratefulness, integrity, laughter. It is family, a togetherness, and home. It is a calm place of worshiping and praises to our Heavenly Father, the creator of the Heavens and the Earth. It is a group of the young and old. It is the gathering of families over a feast. It is the togetherness we share and cherish, and help one another. In it are lessons taught of serving and praising our Lord and Savior, and of being disciples for Him. It is our young pastors praying, teaching, and guiding us in our daily lives, and assisting us as a Body to be one for another inside and outside of the church.

Representing the Good Shepherd means to me that I will help lead my family, friends and people of all nations to the Lord. I will lay my life down for my fellow man. I feel that representing the Good Shepherd is also knowing your identity in Christ.

Galatians 2:20 *"It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Author unknown *"God didn't promise; days without pain, laughter without sorrow, nor sun without rain, but He did promise; strength for the day, comfort for the tears and light for the way."*

Psalm 23:1-3 *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.*

Psalm 23:4 *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.*

Written from John 10:11, *I am the Good Shepherd who lays down my life as a sacrifice for the sheep.*

Search Our Hearts

As I write this, I ask of you to search your hearts and to ask the Holy Spirit for the truth. I once wasn't sure of what was true and real. Then, one evening at church, I was given proof. The power of prayer is HUGE! I later discovered more proof of His love and grace. I started to repent and forgive. My life started to feel more peace and comfort. I thank the Lord for my job and my home. He is my provider and my healer.

Prayer

It is my prayer that you dream of everything from God. I pray for guidance, peace, good health, and for your finances to be what is needed. I pray for greener pastures for you. Be gentle on yourself. I know that God will never leave you nor forsake you, as it is written in the Bible. Trust, listen, and obey in the Lord; He is your refuge. I pray for healing hands laid upon you for only the Lord knows your needs and wants. Kneel before Him often. Know that you are the other one who God chooses to be in His Kingdom forever. I rebuke the enemy's thoughts that tempt you. Our God is love and is everlasting. I pray that through the Body you find the love and grace I found. I ask all this in His name. Amen.

Decree

By my faith, I accept Jesus Christ as my Almighty Savior and commit to follow Him as my Shepherd. I am a child of God. I know my Redeemer lives. I know I will never go hungry or worry where I lay my head and the end of the day. I rejoice in and have a strong feeling and knowledge that my needs will be met from our Father; He is our Provider, our Good Shepherd.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 18

I Am the Good Shepherd

by Elise Malm

Thankfulness

Take a minute to remember that moment of salvation and all that Jesus has brought to your life because of His sacrifice. Pause a moment and thank Him.

Encouragement

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:11

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

I can't help but think about Jesus' sacrifice. It has opened THE door. The door to heaven! Without that sacrifice life would look a whole lot different. He created you for NOW. He created you for THIS MOMENT. He created you to live in the time after the cross, after His sacrifice and resurrection; a time of open heavens! And it says He equips us with everything good for doing His will. The Passion Translation says, *Hebrews 13:21a* "may he work perfection into every part of you giving you all that you need to fulfill your destiny." He has a destiny for you! Maybe you've felt called to something, or felt a passion in your soul that seems woven into your being, or maybe you haven't felt anything. Just know that you have a destiny, and He equips you to fulfill it, even if it feels too big, too tiring, or too scary, etc. He has grace for you where He has predestined you and positioned you. In this very moment we can call on Him and ask for help, knowing that it's His desire to equip us for today. Let us come before the throne and seek Him for all we need.

Search Our Hearts

Have you tried to do it all on your own? Or have you denied your destiny/will that was thoughtfully predestined for you? Ask God if there are any areas where you have placed yourself or your desires above His. If He speaks something to you, repent of it, lay it down at His feet, and ask Him to show you how to rely on Him again and how to align with His will for your life.

Prayer

Pray with me: Jesus, I thank You that You've given me all I need for today. Help me come to You whenever I feel I am trying to do life on my own. Give me courage to fully be who You created me to be, knowing I was thoughtfully made for such a time as this. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Decree

I have a destiny and Jesus gives me all I need to fulfill it. Today I choose to look to God for everything I need to accomplish what I was created to do today. Thank You, Jesus, that You have thoughtfully put me here for such a time as this. May Your will be done in me!

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 19

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

by Julie Hopson

Thankfulness

Imagine living without hope, without knowing that there is an Almighty God in Heaven that knows you and loves you and has the best in mind for you now and for eternity. Give thanks to the Lord for His presence in your life.

Encouragement

John 11:25 (NKJV) *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.*

Lazarus, a friend of Jesus, died. John 11:4 *When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."*

Everyone knew that Jesus could heal the sick. They had witnessed that. But this time Jesus allowed the death of Lazarus as a way to show God's glory to Lazarus' family, friends, and region. His plan was to resurrect Lazarus!

When Jesus arrived to where Lazarus was entombed, the sister, Martha, approached Jesus. John 11:25-27 *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."*

Before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he prayed to His Father. John 11:41-44 *Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."*

This gathering of people witnessed the resurrection power of the Lord that brought Lazarus back to life!

Many of them now believed in Him! God showed that He has power over death and life.

It wouldn't be long until the people would witness another resurrection, but this time the Son of God would be killed and raised to life again by the power of the Almighty God, to reign eternal!

Lazarus would physically die again, but his belief in Christ as his Lord and Savior gave him eternal life in Christ. This promise is for all people who believe. John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Eternal life in Christ brings abundant comfort and hope because we can live fully without fear of death. We are never going to be alone, but will live now and forever with the loving God who created us and gave us life.

Search Our Hearts

Do you have fear of death? Ask the Lord to give you peace and confidence in His promise of eternal life in John 11:25-27. If you have not surrendered yourself fully to the Lord, receive Him now as your Lord and Savior that you too may receive eternal life. John 3:16-17.

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for giving us eternal life. Your love blesses us and we don't ever want to be without you! Guide us to live fully now in the plans and purposes you have for us as your sons and daughters. And, we are excited to reside in Heaven with you one day. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Decree

I live eternally in Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again from the dead and now sits on the throne at the right hand of God the Father, ruling and reigning over all.

God is always with me and for me.

God loves me and I love Him.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 20

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

by Elisa Johnson

Thankfulness

Praise the Lord today for something that you may take for granted but others may not have the ability to do. (For example, walk, breathe on your own, see, etc.)

Encouragement

"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies." John 11:25 (NASB)

This simple statement of identity in *who* Christ is carries so very much for us as the children of God!

I wanted to know what the dictionary meaning of the word "life" is and here is what I found: the condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic matter, including the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change preceding death.

On the surface, this is just the cycle of our life, our physical life on earth, and that is all we have without Christ, but this is not where God left us. God is the giver of ALL life but what sets us apart is that our Savior died for our sins and rose again! Now Jesus gives spiritual life, which one can possess only through faith in Jesus Christ.

When we look at the secular meaning above, I love that it includes the capacity for growth, and continual change! Because Jesus rose again and is very much alive, we can have life, not only abundantly here on earth, but also in the life to come after our earthly departure! As we give our life to God, He guides, He trains, He provides, and He finishes ALL that He starts! There is hope for those dead in sin before knowing Christ and for children of God who get discouraged with the process of refining as a Christian. If you are anything like me, you ask God to magically change all of your areas of weakness into perfection instantly, but God is into the details and personally reveals himself in and through each growth process. He

personally wants to lead us through every part of transformation into His likeness. It is living a present life of grace in Him and having a future life of glory with Him.

Enjoy the journey, and rest in His completed work and His promise to complete the good work He began in you!

Search Our Hearts

Let the Lord search your heart and uncover any areas where you have been discontent with the process of His refining. Repent in your lack of faith in His promise to complete it and ask Him to give you not only peace in the process but joy in the journey!

Let the Lord search your heart and uncover areas of your life where you have denied the Lord access. You make the choice to give Him access and truly live or to continue to restrict His complete working in your life and live stunted and less than the potential of what God has for you.

Prayer

Father, we thank you for ALL that You accomplished on the cross for us! We thank You for still being so active in our lives! Please guide us in all wisdom as we wait on You to complete what You have begun in us, and we give You FULL access to the cleaning of our spiritual houses. I give You ALL of me Lord!

Decree

You are the author and finisher of my faith! You give me life and life more abundantly! You alone have made a way for me to enter into eternal life and to live today in Power, Love, and Soundness of Mind! You are my HOPE and FUTURE!

Listen to the song: *Gone*, by Elevation Music

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 21

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

by Adele Berg

Thankfulness

I am so grateful to the Lord because he called me and changed me from who I was to who I am now. He is my redeemer, and has redeemed my life from a life sin and torment, loneliness and despair. He brought me into a life I could never have imagined! He brought me from sin to purity, from brokenness to wholeness, from poverty to abundance, and from weakness to courage. I am forever His!

Encouragement

"I am the Resurrection and the Life" John 11:23

When Jesus spoke to Martha, she was looking at a future resurrection. Sometime way far away there will be a general resurrection of all who had died. Jesus was declaring, "I Am the resurrection and the life". The power to raise life was in His life in the present. Yes, with his death, He took away the curse of death and took away the keys of death and Hades, yet in life He rose many from death including Lazarus. He proved he had the power in himself in life to resurrect the dead. As the *I am the Resurrection*, He can command life at any time. Resurrection was present in His person. In accepting Jesus as your savior, you are "born again." You are dead in Christ and you have a new life in Jesus. You receive the breath of spiritual life. Jesus can bring new life at any time. There is no more curse to death.

Paul, in Phil. 1:21, said *"My true life is the Anointed One, and dying means gaining more of Him."* We go from life abundantly in Him to perfect life with Him. In Him you have life declared over you. You are pregnant with all you need overflowing, filled to fullness in Him!

Search Our Hearts

Let the person of the Holy Spirit flow around you this moment and be aware of the thoughts He flows through you of how much more your heart and mind can be enlarged to more of Jesus. What does Jesus want to bring into living reality into your life? What seeds have been dead or laying dormant in your life that were there when you first received Jesus?

Prayer

Jesus, we ask you to bring life to dead hopes, life to dreams that you had given us and we gave up on. Renew our desires and passions for the life you have waiting for us. Redeem, oh Lord, what we have lost, redeem what has been taken from us, for you are our redeemer!

Decree

I declare, oh Lord, that as you are my LIVING HOPE, that I live in expectation and wonder of a great future! I expect this day to be a great day, because you are the author of life. I acknowledge each day you have a purpose and a plan for it and I will follow your leading. I want to receive all you have for me!

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 22

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

by The Hauser Family

Thankfulness

Lord God, thank you for being the rock upon which I stand. Thank you for being my counselor and comforter that keeps me anchored to the Kingdom. Thank you for the gift of life and life eternally. Thank you for preparing a place for me in Heaven. Thank you for never forsaking or abandoning me.

Encouragement

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6*

Jesus is the way to the Father in Heaven. There is no other way. Jesus said, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17) Jesus teaches us how to follow Him. He leaves His footprints for us to follow. He wants to influence us in every part of our life. Jesus knows our plights in life. He has been there. He knows, understands and can lead us to overcome and be victorious. He wants us to help others as we are helped by Him. He will show us which way to walk. He will show us how to proceed. When we are lost, we are to look to Him to find direction—our True North. He will light the path at our feet. Psalm 119:105 says, "*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*" Follow Him and He will never leave us or forsake us. We will then leave a path for others to follow. He will be the lamp at their feet. Follow our Lord and have life eternal, free from fear and full of courage and strength.

Search Our Hearts

Remove all bitterness from us. Fill us with Holy Spirit and restore our souls. Open our eyes so that we may seek your truth in our life and in the difficult moments.

Prayer

Lord, teach me to follow you. When I was lost, you found me and you cover my shame with your love and mercy. You know how I have fallen short. I confess that there have been times I have feared, but I remember that you have not given me the spirit of fear, but a spirit of power and of love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Remove all bitterness from me. Fill me with Holy Spirit and restore my soul. Open my eyes so that I may seek your truth in my life and in the difficult moments. Please continue to be the rock solid foundation upon which I build my life. Please guide me toward the light and help me see less of me and more of You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Decree

I will follow You through good times and bad times. Lord bless and keep me. Stay with me at all times. I accept Your Word and want to be a light on the path of others. I do not fear, for You are with me; I will not be dismayed, for You are my God; I will be strengthened by You and helped by You; I will be upheld by You with your righteous hand (Isaiah 41:10). Through me, Your light will shine and others will see that light and want to follow You.

1Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. John 17:1-5

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. John 17:17

Communing with Jesus

Day 23

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

by Jenna Clem

Thankfulness

Who has been key in your life that showed you Jesus is the Way to God and salvation? Who are the people that prayed for you—even years ago—that cried out to God for you to be shown the Truth and to partake in everlasting life? Take time to thank God for these people that he placed in your life and along your path. Thank Him for showing you his truth and choosing you to be his ambassador of the Son of God.

Encouragement

Jesus said to his disciple, Thomas, in *John 14:6*, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” Maybe you’ve thought before, “what does that even mean?” When Jesus said “I am the way” he means the way to God; He says in the second sentence that no one comes to the Father if it isn’t through him. So we can’t be with Father God—be in his presence and be reconciled to him—except by going through Jesus. Who’s forgiveness is sufficient to make us right with the Father who cannot abide sin? Who’s acceptance and sacrifice on our behalf enables us to boldly approach the throne of Father God? Only Jesus! His death on the cross and his forgiveness of sin is the bridge over the gap between us and the Father.

He also says that he is the Truth. Every word from his mouth is true; we know that he was incapable of lying because he is God. Lying is sin and God cannot sin. God values Truth! He says we are to speak the truth with our neighbor (*Ephesians 4:25*). In *1 Corinthians 13* Paul says that love rejoices with the truth, meaning if we have love, we rejoice with the truth. Read *Romans 1:18-25* (or the whole chapter if you prefer!) where Paul says that unrighteous men suppress the truth and had exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. We must be careful to not exchange truth for lies. We do not want to be counted among these that Paul talks about in *Romans 1*.

Paul again talks about truth in *2 Corinthians 13*. In verse 8 he says, For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. Truth cannot successfully be denied. All lies will ultimately be sussed out.

And then Jesus says that he is the Life. Well, this is perhaps the most self explanatory part of his sentence: he is life because he is the source of all life and he created the heavens and earth and all that is in them. In our study of the “7 I ams” we see *life* in 4 of the 7. This is fundamental to us as humans for we are living, breathing creatures, that did not just happen by accident. How is it that we are alive? Because he made it so. Because he breathed his breath of life into some dirt. He is the one that ordained life, made all life happen and, without him nothing that is

alive would be alive. Nothing would exist at all without him (*John 1:3*). *John 1:4* says “*In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.*”

Search Our Hearts

Ask the Lord to give you deeper revelation and insight into this aspect of Him; only he can give us greater understanding of his character through prayer and, of course, through his word. Do you look for truth in the “wise” sayings of men and scholars? Look no further than your Bible. When you hear something said by someone who is said to be wise take it to the word—does what this person says line up with God’s thoughts on the subject? If not, then reject it. Many people say things to which even we as Christians say, “Oh, that’s a good word.” or, “That is so true!” or even, “Amen!” Ask yourself, “Why am I saying these things about the ‘wise’ words of men, something that has not been tested against scripture and the words of my Lord?” Jesus is the truth. If you believe something that is not in alignment with his character or his teachings, you have no other choice than to stop believing that something.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you that YOU are the only way to the Father. You are the only one who can save and the only one in whom I can find redemption. Thank you that YOU are the truth. Your very being is truth. You are true. Your words are true. What you say about anything and everything is TRUE. And you do not want me believing lies. Reveal to me the lies that I believe and the false teachings I hold on to. Help me to test my beliefs against what your Word says and the red letters I find in my Bible. Reveal truth to me, align my spirit with your truth, and drive out the lies. Do not let me ever again trade the Truth for lies. Thank you for the life that you have given me. That you knew me before you formed me. That you give me breath each minute and have the mighty power to create life with your voice.

Decree

I am a follower of Jesus and have been forgiven of my sins through his blood and his sacrifice on the cross. He is the only way to salvation and to Father God, with whom I have been reconciled because of the Son, Jesus. He is the truth. Nothing contrary to his teachings can be anything but a lie. I believe the truth and as I grow in Jesus my grasp of His truth gets stronger. He is the life—MY life. He is my very life. I breathe because he has given me breath. My heart pumps my blood through my veins because he has designed me and made me alive. He knit me together in my mother’s womb and knew me before he formed the universe. I am alive because he imagined me. He is my life and without him I am nothing.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 24

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

by Mark Neilson

Thankfulness

I (we) have all fallen short; messed up. All have sinned and deserve punishment, but with repentance and belief in the Way, the Truth and the Life, comes much thankfulness and praise that even the angels can't understand.

Encouragement

Jesus explained, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No ones comes next to the Father except through Me, to know Me is to know my Father too." John 14:6 (TPT)

Read the Word—lots of good stuff, such as, *The entirety of Your word is truth and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever. Psalm 119:160*

Search Our Hearts

This works for me: *Surrender your anxiety! Be silent and stop your striving and you will see that I AM GOD! I am the God above all the nations, and I will be exalted throughout the whole earth. Psalms 46:10 (TPT)*

Prayer

Lord, I pray that You reveal to me the depth, the width, the height, and the fullness of the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Decree

I will read and meditate on Your Word!

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 25

I am the True Vine

by Elise Malm

Thankfulness

Have you ever had a moment when you realized the impact of being linked with Jesus and the immense blessing it is? Take a moment to remember and express to Him how thankful you are.

Encouragement

"I am a true sprouting vine, and the farmer who tends the vine is my Father. He cares for the branches connected to me by lifting and propping up the fruitless branches and pruning every fruitful branch to yield a greater harvest. The words I have spoken over you have already cleansed you. So you must remain in life-union with me, for I remain in life-union with you. For as a branch severed from the vine will not bear fruit, so your life will be fruitless unless you live your life intimately joined to mine.

I am the sprouting vine and you're my branches. As you live in union with me as your source, fruitfulness will stream from within you—but when you live separated from me you are powerless. If a person is separated from me, he is discarded; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire to be burned. But if you live in life-union with me and if my words live powerfully within you—then you can ask whatever you desire and it will be done. When your lives bear abundant fruit, you demonstrate that you are my mature disciples who glorify my Father!" John 15:1-8 (TPT)

How are you doing at staying connected with Jesus? Are you living in power? Are you yielding much fruit? Do you know that if you aren't living in power or yielding much fruit that He hasn't given up on you? You are of great value to Him. He lifts you and props you up. I encourage you to draw near to Him today. Lean into your life source and strengthen that bond.

Search Our Hearts

Is there an area of your life that isn't surrendered to Him? Are you letting things, situations, etc. take you away from your connection with Jesus? Wait a minute and let Him speak to you. If He reveals areas that aren't surrendered, release those to Him; repent and ask for forgiveness.

Prayer

Lets pray this together: Jesus, I am sorry for letting anything keep me from being closer to You. I release those things to You today and surrender it to Your will. Help my eyes to see when I'm letting something come between You and I. I need to stay connected with You! I want to be fruitful and powerful in You!

Decree

When I am connected to Jesus I am powerful and bear much fruit! Today I declare that Jesus is more important than anything else in my life. I will bring Him with me into all situations and lean on Him for my strength and wisdom. I will stay connected.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 26

I Am the True Vine

by Nina Neilson

Thankfulness

God, I am thankful that You don't just leave me as I am, unpruned (unclean), but You clean me and all I have to do is remain in You.

Encouragement

"I am the true sprouting vine, and the farmer who tends the vine is my Father." John 15:1 (TPT)

First of all, He (Jesus) is the sprouting Life vine and Daddy God is the farmer who so tenderly tends that vine—we're covered! This verse always reminds me of the song I learned in church as a child and also taught my kids: "He is the vine and we are the branches, His banner over me is love." Anybody else remember that song? I'll bet my grown kids can still sing it today. When we stay connected to Him, He shoots out life and love through our branches that affects those around us. I am a visual person so I can picture the difference between a tree that has been cared for, pruned and watered and a tree that hasn't. A father who loves you will not leave you be.

Search Our Hearts

Is there anything that you've allowed to creep in? I have been asking God to search my heart and prune out what I once considered okay. This time right now has been so fruitful and the Lord has exposed my heart and opened my eyes. Oh the freedom!

Prayer

God, you see me and know me greater than anyone. Prune me so will be more fruitful for Your kingdom. I know it won't be comfortable, but it is necessary so I can reach a greater harvest for You. Weed out the sin in my life. I love You, Lord. Amen.

Decree

I am covered by Your love. You make me a strong, fruitful branch!

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 27

I Am the True Vine

by Elisa Johnson

Thankfulness

Has someone blessed or encouraged you in the Lord recently? Take a moment to thank God for them and make a note to let them know as well.

Encouragement

"I am the true sprouting vine, and the farmer who tends the vine is my father." John 15:1 (TPT)

As I am learning to tend my garden, I see this verse come alive in new ways. I have to do a lot to make sure that what I am planting has the proper soil, food, sunlight, and support it needs in order for it to grow and live. In my physical garden, I have to do most of the work, but in this verse God bears the burden of caring and supplying everything necessary for our abundant living!

Jesus is the only and very much active and living source of life and fruitfulness for the children of God. God the Father supports us when we are young and weak, provides the nourishment we need to thrive, and prunes the areas of our lives that are not life giving. As we choose to stay connected to him and make ourselves available to his working, we truly have life more abundantly!

Search Our Hearts

Lord, please show me where I may have removed myself from your life-giving truth, where I have believed lies that you don't know what I need, have abandoned or neglected me, or just don't care about me.

As the Lord reveals anything to you, bring it before him in repentance and replace the lie or disbelief with the truth!

Prayer

Lord, may I never lose sight of the ONLY source of life being YOU! Without you I wither and fade. Thank you for wooing me to you and for providing a way for life and life abundantly in YOU!

Decree

I am willingly yours, Lord! I submit myself to your working and completing the work you began in me! You are my everything and you are Good! You love me and know exactly what I need and will never withhold from me!

Listen to the song: *Springtime*, by Chris Renzema

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 28

I Am the Alpha and the Omega

by Robbie and Kristen Eye

Thankfulness

Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. Rev 1:4b-6 (NLT)

Almighty God, I am so grateful that you are my everything, my all-in-all. You, creator of all the Universe, Alpha and Omega, brought me into existence, concerned about the every-day details of my life. I am so humbled and honored by You. You deserve all the glory for every gift, talent and possession I have. Thank you doesn't seem like enough, but my belief in you is all you require. You are a gracious God. My service to you is a pleasure and great joy to me. I love you.

Lord! I'm bursting with joy over what you've done for me! My lips are full of perpetual praise. I'm boasting of you and all your works, so let all who are discouraged take heart. Join me, everyone! Let's praise the Lord together. Let's make him famous! Let's make his name glorious to all. Psalm 34:1-3 (TPT)

Encouragement

Alpha and Omega; two Greek letters. The first and the last letters. The symbolism of these letters represents the beginning and the end. Jesus refers to Himself in Revelation as the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8). He was here at the beginning, He is here now, and He will be here at the end. He is the creator of all...of everything. Take a moment to think of all that entails, and the details of each of those things.

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. John 1:1-4 (NLT)

Any time you host a major event, you will have many details to plan. This can be very work intensive. You may write lists to help organize all that you will be doing. You will need to gather all the supplies. Then, you will have to put everything together for the big event. Weeks, months, maybe even years goes into planning an event.

Consider God for a moment, the ultimate host, organizer, and planner. He planned all of time down to the smallest detail. He created time, all sorts of structures, life, and the things needed to support each of these, down to the particles. He also created a plan to allow our sin to be wiped out by sending Jesus to die for our sins and conquer death. Jesus also is our example of how to live the way God wants us to.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave. Rev. 1:17-18 (NLT)

And then He created YOU. You are a very important part of His plan; His major event. He needs you to be a part of it for everything to go the way He intends it. YOU ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM. God took the time to consider every detail of who you are, what you will look like, what talents you will have and how He can use those talents in His world. He cares not only for the events though, He also cares for your everyday needs and your every thought. He wants to hear them and craves to be a part of your day.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. Luke 12:7 (NLT)

We matter that much. Each and every single human is so important that God wants to know us intimately. He is the creator of all, can do anything and everything, but still feels that we are so valuable that He wants to be near our hearts every moment. This is so incredible! Our huge God, our Alpha and Omega, cares for how we spend our day. Make time for Him. He asks little compared to all that He does for us. When we honor Him with our prayers and ask for favor from Him, He answers with love more awesome than our minds and hearts can comprehend.

For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. Jeremiah 29:11-13 (NLT)

Search Our Hearts

Lord, are my deeds pleasing to you? I ask you to reveal places in my life and in my heart where I harbor ungodly things. Expose them and help me to rid myself of them. Forgive me for my wrong doings. I am reminded that conviction does not breed guilt, but instead compassion. You give me grace, peace and acceptance when I come to you.

Prayer

Father, thank you for thinking of me, of entwining me in your awesome plan. Thank you for sending Jesus, that I may, one day, join you in everlasting life. I long to be close to you as well. Please remind me to be in your presence all the time; every moment belongs to you. Thank you for finding me worthy of your attention. Help my actions to be good works for you. Amen.

Decree

I decree that I am WORTHY of God's attention. I am WORTHY of the Alpha and Omega's great plan. I am WORTHY of all of the gifts he has given me.

And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my Children. Rev. 21:6-7 (NLT)

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 29

I Am the Alpha and the Omega

by Nina Neilson

Thankfulness

God, I am so thankful You know me by name and You created me in Your image. You are the One who created the stars and named them all, the One that came to this earth as a man, suffered and died, and You are the risen King! You truly are my everything!

Encouragement

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, "Who is, Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1:8

There's so much security in knowing He was, and is and is to come. In John 1:1 TPT it says, *"In the very beginning (creation, time as we know it), the Living Expression (Jesus), was already there."* Before time, He was! He is our risen Savior right now and He is coming back for His church. He is the beginning and the end. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. Jesus is all knowledge and He is all truth.

Search Our Hearts

God who was and is and is to come knows our deepest thoughts, our desires, and our hearts. Let Him who knows us greater than anyone ever will, who we cannot hide from, who is our greatest source of love, purify us with His tender mercy.

Prayer

Lord, during this time of uncertainty, only You know the future. Guide us to make right choices. Holy Spirit, tug at our hearts and remind us of how wide and deep Your love is for us. Thank you, Lord, for what you are teaching us right now. Amen.

Decree

I am Your child. You know me by name. You knew me before time began. Because you overcame, I will overcome. I trust the God Who was, Who is and Who is to come.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 30

I Am the Alpha and the Omega

by Bill Clem

Thankfulness

Give thanks to God that he is Good. He is the giver of all good things. Take time to think specifically about the good things that he has done in your life today, this week, this month, this year. Thank you, Lord, that you are in control. Nothing exists beyond your ability to change, and to heal, and to save. Thank you that you know the plans you have for us, and that you will make sure to bring them about in our lives.

Encouragement

In the book of Revelation, Jesus gives a vision to the disciple John of the things that are to come in heaven and on earth before the end of this age. At the beginning of this Revelation of Jesus Christ in chapter 1 verse 8 it says, “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and was and who is to come, the Almighty.*” Alpha and Omega are letters at the beginning and end of the Greek alphabet. This is like Jesus saying to John, “I am A-Z, the whole story. There is nothing before or after me.” Everything from Genesis 1:1 to the end of time will be contained inside of the Story and person and work of Jesus Christ. And to emphasize this, the Book of Revelation ends with the same declaration, in chapter 21 starting in verse 5 “*And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ Also he said ‘Write this down for these words are trustworthy and true.’ And he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.’*” Jesus begins and ends the book of his Revelation with the statement that he is the beginning and end. He contains everything in the world. All of the suffering of man, the sin of the world, the joy, the mourning, the pain, the love, the entire story of the creation of heaven and earth, to the recreation of a new heaven and new earth fits inside of the person and work of Jesus. The beginning isn’t time—it’s Jesus who came before. The end isn’t death—it’s Jesus who comes afterwards. Let yourself be in awe of a Lord who loves you and is bigger than life and all of its pain and mystery and chaos. He brings life, and order, and resurrection, and healing. One of the most treasured and beautiful things of it all is that he will give to

us that are thirsty living water from the spring of life WITHOUT payment. He paid it all for you and it is contained in the bigness of eternity. Jesus is the beginning and end of our lives. Put your trust in him when you are thirsty, and weary, and tired because he is bigger than the day and has it under his control. “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.*”

Search Our Hearts

Come before God now and ask him to search your heart for anything that is uneasy or troubled. Do you have anxiety? Do you have worry? Are you worried about health? Finances? Politics? Death? Where you will live or eat? He is in control. He is the beginning and the end. Let your thirst for him lead you to his spring that does not run dry and brings life. You will not come to an end of your struggles apart from Him. He is the Alpha and Omega and is bigger than whatever burden you carry.

Prayer

Pray this today: “Lord you are the beginning and end. Let me begin each day with a prayer to you, and end each day reflecting on your glory. From start to finish let me put each step in you and follow the path you have laid out for me. Help me in my worry and my anxiety to cast all of my cares upon you because you care for me. Meet me here and speak to me Holy Spirit. Let me know that you are big and you contain the whole world and future and past and I am not lost among it all.”

Decree

I am a part of the story of God. My life is not its own story with an unwritten ending. It is a chapter in the already finished story of Jesus Christ. My trouble and my worry will be a signpost that shows the comforting love and faithfulness of Jesus. Jesus is the Alpha, the beginning of my story, and Jesus is the Omega, the ending of my story. My story does not begin with my life and end with my death. My story begins with Jesus creating a plan for the universe that included my every step and my story does not end...it continues through Jesus into eternity where I will drink from the fountain of life.

Communing *with* Jesus

Day 31

I AM

by Pastor Danielle R. Smith

Thankfulness

Give thanks to Jesus that He is the Bread of Life; the Light of the World; the Door; the Good Shepherd; the Resurrection and the Life; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the True Vine; and the Alpha and the Omega. Let Him know what this means to you.

Encouragement

Names are powerful. A name carries weight, purpose, and identity. The Jewish people highly esteem names, recognizing they don't just differentiate between objects, but they are the differences between all things. A given name carries meaning. When Jewish parents name their child, they are declaring the child's identity.

When we look at other religions and the many gods they serve, those gods only oversee, if you will, certain duties—they worship a god of war, a god of fertility, a god of harvest, etc. This is how it was in the time of the Egyptians. Pharaoh acted as a mediator between the gods and the people, many believing Pharaoh was a god because of his great power.

In scripture, the first time the Lord calls himself a name is in Genesis, when He makes a covenant with Abraham. In Genesis 15:1 God says, *"I am your faithful shield and your great reward."* In verse 7 He says, *"I Am Yahweh."* God later appears to Moses in a burning bush, asking Moses to go back to Egypt and set His people free. God calls himself *"I Am that I Am"* to Moses. God is expressing a promise and a pledge to Moses. He is saying, I will be everything you need me to be.

In an article, *Why Did God Call Himself, I Am that I Am*, this is what it states: **"I AM THAT I AM"** are *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, which should more accurately be translated, **"I will be what I will be"** or, as Rotherham translates it, **"I will become whatsoever I may become."** Israel was crying out for freedom. God became their deliverer, their protector, their guide, their provision, their healer—all that they were in need of—thus demonstrating that *I Am that I Am* is a covenant name to God's people.

The ancient Hebrews highly revered the name of God. Yahweh is considered God's personal name and is used more than any of His other names. Yahweh was held in such high regard, they would not even speak His name out loud. Instead, they would substitute Yahweh with Adonai (my Lord). And when writing Yahweh, they would leave out the vowels (YHWH); all out of respect for His name.

Knowing that God's name was held in high reverence and that it was blasphemy to call yourself God, you can

imagine the response to the conversation Jesus had with the Jews about being seed of Abraham and doing what he has seen His father do! Jesus is continually declaring his identity when he says *I Am*. Then in **John 8:58**, **Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am."** He is declaring himself as God here. In fact, they were so furious they picked up stones to kill Jesus, but because it wasn't yet time he slipped through the crowd.

When we accepted Jesus Christ as our savior, all that was available through the great *I Am* we now have access to and security in knowing who we can call upon. We can stand in trust, however, we need to take time to be in the Word and waiting upon the Lord to gain an understanding of who He is. It is learning to abide that we gain abundant life through the great *I Am*. Everything we need is found in Him, so I encourage you to continually seek first the kingdom of God.

Deuteronomy 4:29 *But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Jeremiah 29:13 *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

Search Our Hearts

Where in your life have you not trusted in the character and identity of who God says He is in your life? Are you fully seeking Him with your whole heart?

Prayer

Jesus, I praise you for who you are. I repent for the places in my life that I have trusted in the enemy to harm me more than trusting you to save me. I thank you that you are all things that I need you to be, and that by accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord, I am in covenant with the great *I Am*. Break off the limitations I have placed on my mindset of not believing and trusting you in all things. I choose to fully surrender every area of my heart to you and seek you with all that I am. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Declare

I am loved by the great *I Am*. He guides me in the path to go, walking me through places of death beside still waters. He restores my soul, bringing healing to my body. He protects me from harm and gives wise counsel helping me to overcome all temptations. He illuminates the darkness, gives me life and fruitfulness, and he is my entry point into abundant life. He sustains me. He is the beginning and the end. He is my all in all.

Communing *with* Jesus



31 DAYS of **Communing with Jesus**

This 31-day devotional focuses on the “I Ams” of Jesus Christ.
It is an invitation to you to come and commune with the Lord.

Grow deeper in your relationship with Him
as you discover who Jesus says He is and who He is for you.

I Am the Bread of Life
I Am the Light of the World
I Am the Door
I Am the Good Shepherd
I Am the Resurrection and the Life
I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life
I Am the True Vine
I Am the Alpha and the Omega



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