THE POWER OF PRAYER

Transforming your life...deepening your faith... And drawing closer to God.

THE GLADE CHURCH

COURSE TITLE
The Power of Prayer

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Transform your prayer life by learning how to pray with confidence, purpose, and joy. Through biblical teaching, practical exercises, and group discussions, this 8-week journey will guide you to deepen your faith, grow spiritually, and experience the incredible power of prayer.

DOCUMENT OUTLINE

DOC 1: Introduction to the Course
- Overview of prayer and the course structure
- Why prayer is essential to the Christian life
- Introduction to resources and class format

DOC 2: Foundations of Prayer
- Paul's Prayer: *Ephesians 1:15-23 (Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom)*
- *Topics:*
    - *Call to Worship*
    - *Adoration: Praising God*
    - *The Apostle's Creed: Affirming our faith*

DOC 3: Confession and Assurance
- Paul's Prayer: *Philippians 1:3-11 (Prayer for Love to Abound)*
- *Topics:*
    - *Reading of the Law: Understanding God's will*
    - *Confession of Sin: Honest repentance*
    - *Assurance of Pardon: Receiving God's forgiveness*

DOC 4: Praying with Faith and Praise
- Paul's Prayer: *Colossians 1:9-14 (Prayer for Knowledge and Strength)*
- *Topics:*
    - *Praise: Thankfulness in prayer*
    - *Catechism: Learning biblical truths through prayer*
    - *Prayer for Illumination: Asking for God's guidance*

DOC 5: Engaging with Scripture in Prayer
- Paul's Prayer: *Ephesians 3:14-21 (Prayer for Inner Strength)*
- *Topics:*
    - *Scripture Reading: Praying through God's Word*
    - *Reflection: Allowing Scripture to shape your prayers*

DOC 6: Intercession and Petition

- Paul's Prayer: *Romans 15:5-6 (Prayer for Unity)*
- *Topics:*

Prayer of Intercession: Praying for others
Further Petition: Praying for personal, church, and global needs

DOC 7: The Lord's Prayer as a Model

- Paul's Prayer: *1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 (Prayer for Love and Holiness*
- *Topics:*
    - *Exploring the structure and meaning of the Lord's Prayer*
    - *Applying the Lord's Prayer to daily life*

COURSE RESOURCES

- *Be Thou My Vision* by Jonathan Gibson (Crossway)
- *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers* by D.A. Carson (Baker Academic)

How to Develop a Powerful Prayer Life: The Biblical Path to Holiness and Relationship with God by Dr. Gregory R. Frizzell (Master Design Publishing)

Additional Documents:
Devotional: What is the Chief End of Man?

Guided Prayer of Confession

Discerning God's Will

DOC 1: Introduction to the Course

Prayer Definition: "Prayer is the means by which we align our hearts and minds with God's purposes, allowing Him to guide and transform us."

- Prayer is more than a discipline; it is a relational conversation with God that deepens your connection and draws you closer to His heart

Why Pray? Prayer strengthens our relationship with God, aligns our hearts with His will, and invites His power and presence into our lives and circumstances.

- **Philippians 4:6-7** *"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

- **James 5:16** *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect."*

Evaluating and Enhancing Your Prayer Time

- **When**: When do you typically pray? (e.g., morning, evening, before meals)
    - Is this time consistent, or does it vary?
- **How Long**: How much time do you spend in prayer daily or weekly?
    - Do you feel rushed, or do you have enough time to connect with God?
- **Where**:
    - Where do you usually pray? (e.g., a specific room, outdoors, in your car)
    - Is this a place where you feel focused and free from distractions?

NOTE: Prayer habits vary, and there is no "perfect" formula.

Home Exercise: Evaluate your Environment

- What is your physical and mental environment like during prayer? (i.e., quiet, chaotic, calm)
- Are there distractions, or does it feel like a sacred space?

2 Important Practical Tips for Improvement

1. Establish a **consistent** time and place.
2. Create a **distraction-free** environment.

Resource: Be Thou My Vision

- **Call to Worship**: Hearing God invite us to worship through His Word.
- **Adoration**: Praising God for who He is and His greatness.
- **Reading of the Law**: Reflecting on God's law as His will for our lives.
- **Confession of Sin**: Acknowledging our sins and seeking God's forgiveness.

- **Assurance of Pardon**: Receiving God's promises of grace and forgiveness.
- **The Apostle's Creed**: Affirming what we believe about the Christian faith.
- **Praise**: Offering gratitude and worship to God through words or song.
- **Catechism**: Learning & meditating on core truths of the faith (Westminster Shorter Catechism)
- **Prayer for Illumination:** Asking God to enlighten our minds and hearts as we engage with His Word.
- **Scripture Reading**: Reading and meditating on a portion of God's Word**.**
- **Prayer of Intercession**: Bringing our requests to God, including personal, church, & global concerns.
- **The Lord's Prayer**: Concluding prayer with the model Jesus gave to His disciples.

Resource: A Call to Spiritual Reformation (Common Themes)

- **Revealing Paul's priorities:** Christ-Centered, Spiritual growth over physical needs.
- **Demonstrating Paul's faith:** Confidence in God's power, Trust in God's sovereignty.
- **Reliance on God:** Paul's dependence on prayer, Intercession for others.
- **Intercession for Others**: Focused on the spiritual well-being of others.

NOTE: Paul's prayers are an encouragement to believers today: They teach us to praise God, intercede for others, seek spiritual growth, and align our hearts with His will.we're reminded of God's faithfulness and the power of prayer to transform lives. His prayers encourage us to remain steadfast and hopeful in our own walk with Christ.

GROUP EXERCISE (OPTIONAL)
Read and discuss Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21:

- What stands out about Paul's priorities in this prayer?
- How does this reflect his faith and reliance on God?
- How can we apply this prayer to our own lives?

CLOSING PRAYER
The Lord's Prayer

DOC 2: Foundations of Prayer

Overview of the Session

- Paul's Prayer in **Ephesians 1:15-23** and its relevance for today.
- Explore the foundational elements of prayer:

Call to Worship
Adoration
Time permitting: Affirmation of Faith through the Apostle's Creed

Paul's Prayer: Ephesians 1:15-23

- Paul prays for believers to grow in their knowledge of God, be enlightened in hope, and understand the riches of their inheritance and the power of God.
- **Discussion Questions:**
    - What stands out to you in Paul's prayer?
    - How does this challenge or encourage your own prayer life?
    - How can this prayer shape the way Christians pray for one another?

Key Takeaway: Christians grow deeper in faith when their prayers are centered on spiritual growth and aligned with God's Word.

Call to Worship

Definition: A Call to Worship is an invitation to focus our hearts and minds on God through His Word.

- **Why Begin Prayer This Way?**
    - It centers our attention on God's majesty, love, and worthiness of worship.
    - It sets the tone for prayer and reminds us of God's greatness and authority.
    - It prepares the heart to worship and eliminates distractions.
- **Example and Practice:**

Read **Psalm 95:6-7** (example 1)
Read **Psalm 100** (example 2)

- **Discussion Question:**
    - How does beginning with a call to worship transform the rest of your prayer time?
- **Additional Passages to Explore:**
    - **Psalm 96:1-4, Isaiah 6:3, Psalm 145:1-3, Lamentations 3:22-23, Revelation 4:11, Psalm 63:1-4, Habakkuk 3:17-19**

Adoration: Praising God

Definition: Adoration is the act of praising God for who He is—His attributes, character, and nature.

Attributes of God

- **Omniscience** (All-knowing) – **Psalm 147:5** "Our Lord is great, vast in power; his understanding is infinite."

- **Omnipotence** (All-powerful) – **Jeremiah 32:17** "Oh, Lord God! You yourself made the heavens and earth by your great power and with your outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for you!"
- **Omnipresence** (Everywhere-present) – **Psalm 139:7-10** "Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?"
- **Holiness** – **Isaiah 6:3** "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth."
- **Immutability** (Unchanging) – **Malachi 3:6** "Because I, the Lord, have not changed, you descendants of Jacob have not been destroyed."

Character of God

3. **Faithfulness** – **Deuteronomy 7:9** "Know that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps his gracious covenant for a thousand generations."
4. **Mercy** – **Lamentations 3:22-23** "Because of the Lord's faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. They are new every morning."
5. **Goodness** – **Psalm 34:8** "Taste and see that the Lord is good. How happy is the person who takes refuge in him!"
6. **Justice** – **Psalm 89:14** "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; faithful love and truth go before you."
7. **Patience** – **2 Peter 3:9** "The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you."

Nature of God

- **Eternal** – **Revelation 1:8** "I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, the one who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
- **Creator** – **Genesis 1:1** "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
- **Sovereign** – **Colossians 1:16-17** "For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth… He is before all things, and by him all things hold together."
- **Triune** (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) – **Matthew 28:19** "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
- **Self-existent** – **Exodus 3:14** "God replied to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.'"

Why is it important?

- Keeps the focus on God rather than personal needs.
- Prepares the heart for deeper communion with God.
- Aligns us with the purpose of prayer: glorifying God.

Discussion Question:

- How does adoration prepare your heart for the rest of your prayer time?

SPOTIFY — Adoration Playlist: bit.ly/adoration25

(OPTIONAL) The Apostle's Creed: Affirming Our Faith

Definition and Importance:

- A historic confession summarizing the core beliefs of the Christian faith.
- Reminds us of the foundational truths that unify Christians across history.

Brief History:

- Dates back to the early church (likely 2nd century).
- Used for catechism, baptism, and worship as a way to affirm essential Christian doctrines.

Relevance in Prayer:

- Helps us align our prayers with a correct understanding of who God is and what He has done.
- Strengthens our faith and confidence as we pray.

Activity:

- Recite the Apostle's Creed together.

Discussion Question:

- How do specific lines (e.g., "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth") help shape our prayer life?
- Why is affirming our faith important before or during prayer?
- How does reciting the Apostle's Creed connect us to the global church?

Conclusion and Challenge

Review:

- Paul's Prayer in **Ephesians 1:15-23** encourages us to pray for spiritual growth and alignment with God's will.
- A Call to Worship centers our attention on God's worthiness.
- Adoration praises God for who He is and prepares the heart for prayer.
- The Apostle's Creed affirms our shared faith and aligns our prayers with Christian truth.

Challenge for the Week:

- Pray Ephesians 1:15-23 sometime this week (focus your time on spiritual growth and alignment with God's will.
- Begin your prayer time each day with a call to worship.
- Spend at least 5 minutes in adoration, focusing solely on praising God for His attributes.
- **(OPTIONAL)** Reflect on the Apostle's Creed and how it can shape your prayer life.

Closing Prayer

- Psalm 100 personalized for the group (leader) and the Lord's Prayer (together)

DOC 3: Confession and Assurance

Overview of the Session

- Paul's Prayer: **Philippians 1:3-11** (Prayer for Love to Abound)
- The Role of Confession and Assurance in the Christian Life
- Structure of Prayer:

Reading of the Law: Understanding God's will
Confession of Sin: Honest repentance
Assurance of Pardon: Receiving God's forgiveness

Paul's Prayer: Philippians 1:3-11

I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you, always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Indeed, it is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all partners with me in grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how deeply I miss all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, so that you may approve the things that are superior and may be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

- Paul prays with **thanksgiving and joy** for the Philippians.
- He asks for their **love to abound more and more**, with knowledge and discernment.
- Paul prays that they may be **pure and blameless**, filled with the **fruit of righteousness**.

Discussion Questions:

- What stands out to you in Paul's prayer?
- How does this prayer challenge or encourage your own spiritual life?
- How does Paul's emphasis on love and righteousness relate to **confession and assurance**?
- What does it mean for love to abound **with knowledge and discernment**?

Key Takeaway: A life of growing love, righteousness, and discernment requires continual confession and assurance of God's grace.

Reading of the Law: Understanding God's Will
Part 1 - The Law

Definition: God's law consists of His divine commands and instructions revealed in Scripture, guiding us in righteousness and obedience to His will.

- The law is **not just about rules** but about God's character and our relationship with Him.

Scripture Passages for Reflection:

- Matthew 22:37-40, Exodus 20:1-17, Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Why Start with God's Law?
It reminds us of God's holy standard.
It helps us identify areas where we need confession.
It prepares our hearts for repentance and assurance.

Discussion Question:

- How does reading God's law help us understand our need for confession?

Part 2 - God's Will
Key Statement: God's will for my life is to love Him with all my heart, walk in holiness and obedience to His commands, and glorify Christ by making disciples.

Three Critical Principles —

- **Love God and Love Others**
- Jesus summarized God's will in the Greatest Commandment:

Matthew 22:37-40 – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

- God's will is first and foremost about relationship—knowing, loving, and obeying Him, and extending that love to others.

- **Walk in Holiness and Obedience**
- God's will involves sanctification, meaning a life set apart in obedience to His Word.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 – "For this is God's will, your sanctification: that you keep away from sexual immorality."

Micah 6:8 – "Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God."

- God's will is that we live in righteousness, aligning our daily actions with His commands and reflecting His character.

- **Make Disciples and Glorify Christ**
- God's will is that we participate in His mission, making disciples and spreading His kingdom.

Matthew 28:19-20 – "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you."

1 Corinthians 10:31 – "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."

- Everything we do—our work, relationships, and daily choices—should be aimed at glorifying Christ and fulfilling the Great Commission.

- *See attachment "Discerning God's Will"*

Reminder to myself/Response to others: *"God's will for my/your life is to love Him, walk in holiness, and glorify Him. If this decision allows me/you to do those things faithfully, it may be a wise choice. Have I/you prayed, sought wisdom, and considered how it will impact my/your faith and witness? If so, I/you can trust God as I/you step forward, knowing that He will guide me/you as you walk in obedience."*

- This keeps the focus on **God's revealed will in Scripture** rather than relying on emotions, circumstances, or a mysterious sign.

Confession of Sin: Honest Repentance
Definition: Confession is **agreeing with God** about our sin and turning away from it. It is a **personal and corporate** act of humility before God.

Scripture Passages for Reflection:

- **1 John 1:8-9** – If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive; **Psalm 32:5** – "I acknowledged my sin to you, and you forgave me"; **Daniel 9:4-5** – Daniel's prayer of confession on behalf of Israel; **Psalm 139:23-24** – Asking God to search our hearts.

Example of a Confessional Prayer:
"I, a poor sinful person, confess myself before you, my Lord God and Maker, that sadly I have sinned much, with my senses, thoughts, words, and deeds, as you, eternal God, know very well. I regret them and beg your grace. Amen." — Heinrich Bullinger

"O merciful Father, regard not what we have done against you, but what our blessed Savior has done for us. Regard not what we have made ourselves; but what he is made unto us by you, our God. O that Christ may be to every one of our souls, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption! That his precious blood may cleanse us from all our sins; and that your Holy Spirit may renew and sanctify our souls. May he crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey in the lusts thereof; but being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness. Amen." — John Wesley

Specific Areas of Focus:

- Thoughts and Attitudes, Words and Speech, Actions and Behavior, Relationships with Others, Neglecting Spiritual Responsibilities, Sins of Omission (What I Have Failed to Do).

How to Approach Confession:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to Reveal Sin. **Psalm 139:23-24**
2. Confess Each Sin Specifically. **1 John 1:9**
3. Repent and Turn from Sin. **Acts 3:19**
4. Receive God's Assurance of Forgiveness. **Romans 8:1**
5. Walk in Obedience and Renewal. **2 Corinthians 5:17**

- *See attachment "Guided Prayer of Confession"*

Main Point: The goal for confession is to become intentional, biblical, and heart-transforming, leading to deeper holiness and intimacy with God.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is confession essential in our relationship with God?
- How does confessing sin free us to grow in righteousness?
- What makes confession difficult, and how can we cultivate a heart of repentance?

Assurance of Pardon: Receiving God's Forgiveness

Definition: Assurance of pardon is the confidence that God **forgives completely** when we repent. It is based on **God's character**, not our performance.

Scripture Passages for Reflection:

- **Romans 8:1** – "There is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus."
  Psalm 103:12 – As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our sins.
  Isaiah 1:18 – "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow."
  Hebrews 10:22 – We draw near to God with full assurance of faith.

DOC 4: Praying with Faith and Praise

Key Distinction:

- **Adoration** is rooted in **God's being** (His character).
- **Praise** is rooted in **God's doing** (His deeds).

Example (Admiring a Friend):

- **Adoration:** "I love how patient, kind, and wise you are."
- **Praise:** "Thank you for helping me when I needed advice and being there when I was struggling."

Final thought: Both are critical in prayer, and together, they provide a full picture of how we relate to God—**adoring Him for who He is** and **praising Him for what He has done**.

Catechism

Why Include Catechism in Prayer? Catechisms were historically used to help believers of all ages learn foundational biblical truths. These truths can be reinforced in prayer, where we not only learn them intellectually but also meditate on them and ask God for understanding.

Definition: Catechism is a teaching tool that presents **key Christian doctrines** through a series of **questions and answers.**

- Traditionally, catechisms were designed for memorization and reflection, making complex theological truths accessible and applicable.
    - Another way to say it: *"A catechism is a summary of core biblical teachings framed as questions and answers, used for instruction in faith and doctrine. It can guide our prayers by helping us meditate on God's truth, confess our need for it, and ask God to help us live it out."*

Catechism Example?

- **Q1:** What is the chief end of man? **A:** Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
- **How to Pray through This Catechism:** *"Lord, I acknowledge that my highest purpose is to glorify You and find joy in Your presence. Help me to live a life that honors You, seeking not my own gain but Your glory. Teach me to enjoy You deeply and to trust that You are my greatest satisfaction."*
    - **Why Pray this?** This prayer can be a time of **thanksgiving for God's purpose**, **confession of ways we seek our own glory**, and **asking for alignment with His will.**

The Difference Between the Shorter and Larger Catechisms

- **Westminster Shorter Catechism**
    - Purpose: Designed for children, new believers, or those who want a simpler, digestible approach to biblical truths.

    - Structure: 107 questions and answers, covering the basics of Christian doctrine.
    - Use in Prayer: Perfect for quick reflection during prayer or family devotions.

- **Westminster Larger Catechism**
- `Purpose: Intended for deeper theological study, often used by ministers and more advanced learners.
    - Structure: 196 questions and answers, providing comprehensive teaching on topics like the sacraments, moral law, and Christ's mediatorial work.
    - Use in Prayer: Can be used to explore more detailed doctrines through longer periods of meditation and intercessory prayer.

8. *See attachment "What is the Chief End of Man?"*

Illumination: Asking for God's Guidance

A **prayer for illumination** is a request for the Holy Spirit to **enlighten our minds and hearts** as we read Scripture, helping us to understand its meaning, believe its truth, and apply it to our lives.

- **Key Point:** This kind of prayer acknowledges our **dependence** on God to open our eyes, because the Bible is not just another book—it's **God's living Word**.
- Scriptural Foundation:

Psalm 119:18 — "Open my eyes so that I may contemplate wondrous things from your instruction"

1 Corinthians 2:14 — "But the person without the Spirit does not receive what comes from God's Spirit, because it is foolishness to him; he is not able to understand it since it is evaluated spiritually."

Why is Prayer for Illumination Important?

- **Scripture requires spiritual understanding:** The truth of God's Word is spiritually discerned, meaning it takes more than intelligence or study—it requires the Spirit's work in us.
- **It aligns our hearts with God: We don't just read Scripture for knowledge but for transformation. Illumination turns information into obedience.**
- **It humbles us before God:** A prayer for illumination acknowledges that we need God to reveal truth—we can't do it on our own.

How to Pray for Illumination (A Practical Guide)

- **Begin by acknowledging your need:** *"Lord, I come before You recognizing that Your Word is living and powerful, but I need Your Spirit to open my eyes."*
- **Ask God to reveal the meaning and application:** *"Help me not only to understand what I read, but to be convicted by it, encouraged by it, and transformed through it."*

- **Surrender to God's leading:** *"Guide me to see Your will and give me the courage to obey what You show me today."*

Prayer for Illumination: "Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen." — **The Book of Common Prayer**

Key Parts of Prayer:

- **Acknowledging God as the source of Scripture:** *"Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written…"* This phrase highlights that Scripture is inspired by God, reminding us that we are encountering His living Word.
- **Seeking to engage deeply with Scripture:** *"Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them…"* This emphasizes that we don't just skim Scripture but allow it to sink in and transform us.
- **Transformation and hope through obedience.** *"That we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life…"* The prayer points to the purpose of reading the Bible—not just to gain knowledge but to be anchored in the hope of Christ.

Conclusion and Challenge
Review:

- **Praise:** Recognize God for both who He is (**adoration**) and what He has done (**praise**), giving thanks in all things.
- **Catechism:** Learn and internalize biblical truths through structured questions and answers, allowing prayer to reinforce what we believe and how we live.
- **Illumination:** Humbly ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to Scripture's meaning and application, leading to transformation.

Challenge for the Week:

- This week, based on Paul's prayer in Colossians, as yourself — *"Am I living in a way that reflects a growing knowledge of God's will, bearing fruit, and giving thanks for His work of redemption in my life?"*
- **Start with Praise**: In your daily prayer, take time to both adore God for who He is and praise Him for what He has done. Use Scriptures like **Psalm 96:9** and **Psalm 103:2** as prompts.
- **Pray Through a Catechism Question**: Reflect on a catechism, like *"What is the chief end of man?"*, and pray through its meaning, asking God to help you glorify and enjoy Him in practical ways.
- **Pray for Illumination Before Reading Scripture**: Before your next Bible reading, pray for illumination using **Psalm 119:18** or the prayer from The Book of Common Prayer. Ask God to reveal His truth and give you the courage to obey it.

DOC 5: Engaging with Scripture in Prayer

Overview of the Session

- Paul's Prayer: **Ephesians 3:14-21** (Prayer for Inner Strength)
- Topics:

Scripture Reading: Praying through God's Word
Prayer Session

Review:

- Call to worship, Adoration, Reading of the Law: Understanding God's Will, Confession of Sin, Assurance of Pardon, Praise, Catechism, and Prayer of Illumination.

Paul's Prayer: Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I kneel before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us— to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Discussion Questions:

- What stands out about Paul's priorities in this prayer?
- How does this reflect his faith and reliance on God?
- How can we apply this prayer to our own lives?

Key Takeaway: Spiritual strength, deep understanding of Christ's love, and God's abundant power at work in believers.

Praying God's Word:
Why Reading the Bible and Praying Should Go Together

Prayer and Scripture are inseparable because God speaks to us through His Word, and we respond in prayer. When we pray Scripture, we align our hearts with God's truth and deepen our relationship with Him.

- **God's Word fuels our prayers** – "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." **John 15:7**
- **Scripture shapes our desires and requests** – "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." **Psalm 119:105**
- **Praying Scripture strengthens our faith** – "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." **Romans 10:17**

Practical Ways to Pray Through Scripture

- **Pray God's Promises (Confidence in Prayer)**

9. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:6-7**

Key Point Turn your worries into prayers. When anxiety creeps in, pray this passage, thanking God for His peace.

- **Use the Scriptures as Personal Prayers (Honesty in Prayer)**
- "Preserve me, O God, for in You I take refuge." **Psalm 16:1**

Key Point: Personalize the Psalms by inserting your own situation. Instead of just reading, pray: *"Lord, I take refuge in You today. Be my protector and strength."*

- **Pray for Spiritual Growth (Transformation in Prayer)**
- "We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord." **Colossians 1:9-10**

Practical Takeaway: Pray this over yourself and others, asking for wisdom and a deeper walk with Christ.

Prayer Session

Call to Worship: Lord, as I enter this time of prayer, set my heart and mind on You. Teach me through Your Word, counsel me with Your wisdom, and remind me that in Your presence, there is fullness of joy. Keep my feet on the path of life, and let my soul rest in the confidence of Your steadfast love. I choose to fix my eyes on You, knowing that because You are with me, I will not be shaken. Fill this time of worship with Your Spirit, and let my lips declare Your praises. You are my refuge, my joy, and my eternal hope. I worship You now, O Lord, with all that I am. In Jesus' name, Amen. — **Based on Psalm 16**

Adoration Prayer: *"You, Lord, have become my hope, my comfort, my strength, my all! In you does my soul rejoice. The darkness vanished from before my eyes, and I beheld you, the sun of righteousness. When I loved darkness, I knew you not, but wandered on from night to night. But you led me out of that blindness; you took me by the hand and called me to yourself, and now I can thank you, and your mighty voice which has penetrated to my inmost heart. Amen."* — **Augustine**

Reading the Law: Understanding God's Will: Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates. — **Deut. 6:4-9**

Confessional Prayer: *"O merciful Father, regard not what we have done against you, but what our blessed Savior has done for us. Regard not what we have made ourselves; but what he is made unto us by you, our God. O that Christ may be to every one of our souls, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption! That his precious blood may cleanse us from all our sins; and that your Holy Spirit may renew and sanctify our souls. May he crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey in the lusts thereof; but being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness. Amen."* — **John Wesley** *(Thoughts and Attitudes, Words and Speech, Actions and Behavior, Relationships with Others, Neglecting Spiritual Responsibilities, and Sins of Omission (What I Have Failed to Do)*

Assurance of Pardon*:* My little children, I am writing you these things so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous one. He himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world. — **1 John 2:1-2**

Praise: "My soul, bless the Lord, and do not forget all his benefits." **Psalm 103:2**

Challenge for the week
This week, structure a biblical prayer outline and intentionally pray through it, allowing Scripture to shape your focus.

DOC 6: Intercession and Petition

Overview of the Session

- Paul's Prayer: **Romans 15:5-6** (Prayer for Unity)
- Topics:

Prayer of Petition: Praying for myself
Prayer of Intercession: Praying for others

Paul's Prayer: Romans 15:5-6

Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice.

Discussion Questions:

- How does Paul's prayer for **unity** reflect the heart of intercession?
- Why does **unity** among believers matter in our prayer life?
- How can we pray for the **unity** of the church, locally and globally?

Key Takeaway: Biblical unity is rooted in Christ and should be a focal point in our intercessory prayers.

Petition: Praying for Myself

Definition: Petitionary prayer is bringing personal needs before God, seeking His provision, guidance, and transformation in alignment with His will. It is an act of dependence on God, trusting Him to meet our spiritual, emotional, and physical needs.

Biblical Foundations of Petitionary Prayer:

- **Jesus' Example:** "Give us today our daily bread." **Matthew 6:11**
- **Solomon's Example (Wisdom):** "Now, Lord my God, you have made your servant king in my father David's place. Yet I am just a youth with no experience in leadership. Your servant is among your people you have chosen, a people too many to be numbered or counted. So give your servant a receptive heart to judge your people and to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?" **1 Kings 3:7-9**
- **Paul's Example (Strength/Growth):** "I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit." **Ephesians 3:16**

Key Areas of Petitionary Prayer:

- **Praying for Spiritual Growth & Holiness**
    - "Create in me a clean heart, God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." **Psalm 51:10**

    - "We have not ceased praying for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." **Colossians 1:9**
- **Praying for Strength in Trials & Temptation**
    - "Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." **Matthew 6:13**
    - "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." **2 Corinthians 12:9**
- **Praying for Wisdom & Guidance**
    - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight." **Proverbs 3:5-6**
    - "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God—who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly—and it will be given to him." **James 1:5**

- **Praying for Provision & Daily Needs**
    - "And my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." **Phil. 4:19**
    - "The young lions lack and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord will not lack any good thing." **Psalm 34:10**
- **Praying for Emotional and Mental Peace**
    - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:6-7**
    - "God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble." **Psalm 46:1**

Practical Ways to Engage in Petitionary Prayer:

10. **Start with Thanksgiving:** Recognize God's past faithfulness before presenting your requests
11. **Be Honest and Specific:** Tell God exactly what you need and trust Him to respond according to His will.
12. **Pray with Surrender:** Submit your desires to God's greater plan, as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane..
13. **Use Scripture to Shape Your Requests:** Align your prayers with God's Word to ensure they reflect His heart.
14. **Persist in Prayer:** Continue to seek, knock, and ask, trusting that God hears and answers in His perfect timing.

Key Takeaway: Petitionary prayer is an invitation to depend on God for our personal needs, both physical and spiritual. As we bring our concerns before Him, we grow in trust, humility, and alignment with His will.

Intercession: Praying for Others
Definition: Intercessory prayer is standing in the gap for others, seeking God's will and blessing over their lives.

Biblical Foundations of Intercession:

- **Jesus' Example:** "I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in me through their word." **John 17:20**
- **Moses' Intercession:** "But now, if you would only forgive their sin. But if not, please erase me from the book you have written." **Exodus 32:32**
- **The Church's Call to Intercede:** "First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone." **1 Timothy 2:1**

Practical Ways to Engage in Intercessory Prayer:

- **Pray for People in Authority:** Government, Church Leaders, Employers

1 Timothy 2:1-2 – "First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity." **Romans 13:1, Hebrews 13:17.**

- **Pray for the Persecuted Church**

Hebrews 13:3 – "Remember those in prison, as though you were in prison with them, and the mistreated, as though you yourselves were suffering bodily." **Matthew 5:10, Thessalonians 1:4-5.**

- **Pray for Those in Need:** (Healing, Salvation, Strength)

James 5:14-15 – "Is anyone among you sick? He should call for the elders of the church, and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up; if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." **Psalm 147:3, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Romans 10:1.**

- **Pray for the Lost: Biblical Foundation**

Luke 19:10 – "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."

Romans 10:1 – "Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them is for their salvation.

Matthew 9:37-38 – "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.'"

Pray for the Lost: Ways to Pray for the Lost

- **Pray for Their Hearts to be Opened –** That God would remove spiritual blindness and soften their hearts to the gospel. **2 Corinthians 4:4**
- **Pray for Divine Appointments –** That they would encounter faithful believers who share Christ with them. **Acts 8:26-39**
- **Pray for Conviction of Sin –** That they would recognize their need for a Savior. **John 16:8**

- **Pray for Bold Witnesses –** That God would raise up people to share the gospel with clarity and love. **Ephesians 6:19-20**
- **Pray for Whole Families to Come to Christ –** That households, not just individuals, would be transformed by the gospel. **Acts 16:31**

Prayer Session EXAMPLE
Call to Worship: *"Lord, as we enter into this time of prayer, teach us to intercede with love, compassion, and boldness. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may pray according to Your will, for the good of others and the glory of Your name. Amen."*

Adoration Prayer: *"God of all nations, You are sovereign over all. You hear the cries of Your people, and You move on behalf of those who seek You. You are our refuge, our strong tower, and our ever-present help in times of trouble. We worship You today, knowing that You listen and respond to our prayers."*

Confessional Prayer: *"Lord, forgive us when we fail to pray for others. Forgive our selfishness, our distractions, and our lack of faith in Your power. Cleanse our hearts, align our desires with Yours, and help us to pray with purity and persistence."* — **John Wesley** *(Thoughts and Attitudes, Words and Speech, Actions and Behavior, Relationships with Others, Neglecting Spiritual Responsibilities, and Sins of Omission (What I Have Failed to Do)*

Assurance of Pardon*: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* **1 John 1:9**

Petitionary Prayer:
- **<u>Personal needs</u>** (Spiritual Growth & Holiness, Strength in Trials & Temptation, Wisdom & Guidance, Provision & Daily Needs, and Emotional and Mental Peace)

Prayer of Intercession:
- For the unity of the church, For those who are sick and suffering, For government leaders and those in authority, For those who do not yet know Christ.

Challenge for the week
This week, structure a biblical prayer outline **(petition and intercession)** and intentionally pray through it, allowing Scripture to shape your focus.

DOC 7: The Lord's Prayer as a Model

Overview of the Session

- Paul's Prayer: **1 Thessalonians 3:11-13** (Prayer for Love and Holiness)
- Topics:

Applying the Lord's Prayer
Recap
Reflection

Paul's Prayer: 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you. And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone, just as we do for you. May he make your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.

Discussion Questions:

- How can I allow God to increase and overflow my love for others?
- How does keeping Christ's return in mind shape my choices and priorities?
- Why is it important to seek God's guidance in my daily decisions?

Key Takeaway: God calls us to trust His direction, overflow with love for others, and pursue holiness, preparing our hearts to stand blameless before Him at Christ's return.

Applying the Lord's Prayer

Practical ways to incorporate the Lord's Prayer into your daily routine:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. **Matthew 6:9-13**

Manuscript Evidence:

- The earliest Greek manuscripts of **Matthew 6:9-13**, such as the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus (both from the 4th century), do not include this doxology.
- However, later Byzantine manuscripts (which the **KJV** is based on) do include it.
- It is believed that the phrase was added by scribes over time, possibly because early Christians were accustomed to ending prayers with a doxology (a formal praise to God), and it may have been influenced by **1 Chronicles 29:11**, which contains similar wording.

Modern Translations:

- Versions like the **ESV, CSB, NIV,** and **NASB** either omit this phrase or include it in brackets with a footnote, explaining that it is not in the earliest manuscripts.
- The **KJV and NKJV** include it fully because they rely on later **Byzantine** manuscripts.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Worship & Relationship)

- Start your day by recognizing God as your Father. Praise Him for His holiness and faithfulness.
    - **Example**: Begin your prayers with gratitude and worship, acknowledging God's presence in your life.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Surrender & Purpose)

15. Align your desires with God's will. Ask Him to guide your decisions and use you for His kingdom.

Example: Before making choices, pray, "Lord, let your will be done in my life today." Seek opportunities to serve and share His love with others.

"Give us this day our daily bread" (Dependence & Provision)

- Trust God to provide for your needs—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Example: Instead of worrying, bring your needs to God in prayer and express gratitude for His provision.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Repentance & Forgiveness)

- Confess your sins regularly and seek to forgive others as God forgives you.

Example: At the end of each day, reflect on any bitterness or wrongdoing and ask for a forgiving heart.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:" (Protection & Spiritual Strength)

- Pray for strength against temptation and discernment to recognize spiritual attacks.

Example: If you face a challenge, ask God for wisdom and strength to choose righteousness over sin.

"<u>For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen</u>" (Trust & Eternal Perspective)

- Live with an eternal mindset, remembering that God is in control and His kingdom lasts forever.

Example: In difficult times, remind yourself that God's plan is bigger than your present circumstances.

By using the Lord's Prayer as a daily framework, you develop a deeper connection with God, grow in dependence on Him, and live in alignment with His will.

DEVOTIONAL: WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN?

One of the most profound questions humanity has ever asked: "What is the chief end of man?" — "Why am I here?" or "What is my purpose?"

The Westminster Catechism answers, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."
- This simple yet profound statement anchors our purpose. It reshapes how we see life, our work, and our relationship with God.

1. The first BIG question: Why Am I Here?
It is universally human to ask, "Why am I here?" Whether consciously or subconsciously, every person grapples with this question at some point.
- Without an answer, purposelessness takes root.
• Nothing is more demoralizing than living without direction.2

A clear purpose gives focus. It steers our thoughts, actions, and even our dreams. When we understand the chief end of man—to glorify God and enjoy Him forever—it becomes a compass that leads us through life's challenges, joys, and decisions. Without this clarity, people are often left chasing happiness or success in ways that only leave them emptier than before.

2. The second BIG question: Who Am I?
The question of purpose also speaks to identity: Who am I? The chief end of man not only addresses why we are here but also defines who we are.
- We are beings created in God's image, designed to bring Him glory. We are not aimless wanderers, but purposeful creations of a loving God.

However, when people pursue happiness as their ultimate goal apart from God, 2 major problems arise:

1. They get lost in subjectivity. They try to define happiness on their own terms, which constantly shifts and never truly satisfies.
2. They become self-centered. Personal happiness, without God, becomes a monster that tolerates no rivals. When happiness becomes the chief goal, it demands everything—our time, our relationships, our worship—and ultimately leaves us unsatisfied.

Anything that draws our best energies away from God becomes idolatry. And idolatry, no matter how appealing, never satisfies.

Glorifying God in All Things
So, how do we glorify God? Scripture gives us clear direction:

- 1 Cor. 10:31 “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”
- 2 Cor. 5:9 “…we make it our aim to be pleasing Him.”

Glorifying God means making it our goal to honor Him in every aspect of life. It requires loving obedience—not out of obligation, but out of joy. Satisfaction in God comes from trusting Him completely, delighting in His Word, and seeking Him in prayer and worship. When we prioritize Him above all else, we begin to experience the joy and peace He promises.

“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.” — John Piper

Reflection Questions

What is your chief end? The way you answer that question is revealed in how you live:
- How do you view your sin? Do you minimize it, or do you take it seriously because it dishonors God?
- How do you trust Christ? Is He a side note in your life, or is He your Savior and Lord?
- How do you approach corporate worship? Is it a duty or a delight?
- How do you recreate? Even in your rest, are you seeking to glorify God?

Closing Takeaway

Those who refuse to bend their knees to God will still, in the end, serve to make known the riches of His glory (Romans 9:23). But only those who bend their knees now will also enjoy Him forever.
- Is your chief end truly to glorify God and enjoy Him forever? If not, what needs to change?

Let’s strive, in all that we do, to make it our goal to glorify God—because in Him, we find our greatest joy.

GUIDED PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Opening: Seeking God's Presence
"Heavenly Father, I come before You humbly, acknowledging that You are holy and just. Your Word says that if I confess my sins, You are faithful and just to forgive and cleanse me from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Search my heart, Lord, and reveal any sin in me. I want to walk in obedience and righteousness before You. Amen."

Confession of Thoughts and Attitudes
- **Reflection**: Have I been prideful, jealous, or bitter? Have I doubted God's goodness or allowed fear to
control me? Have I entertained impure thoughts or selfish ambitions?
"Lord, I confess the sins of my thoughts and attitudes. I have entertained pride, doubt, fear, jealousy, or impure desires. Your Word says to take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Forgive me, and renew my mind with Your truth. Help me to set my thoughts on what is pure, lovely, and honorable (Philippians 4:8). In Jesus' name, Amen."

Confession of Words and Speech
Reflection: Have I spoken harshly, lied, gossiped, or complained? Have my words built others up or torn them down? Have I misused God's name or spoken without wisdom?
"Lord, forgive me for the words I have spoken that did not glorify You. I have been careless with my speech—complaining, gossiping, speaking in anger, or using my words to harm instead of heal. Your Word says that life and death are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21). Cleanse my speech and let my words be pleasing to You (Psalm 19:14). In Jesus' name, Amen."

Confession of Actions and Behavior
Reflection: Have I acted in dishonesty, impurity, laziness, or selfishness? Have I misused my time, body, or resources? Have I engaged in anything that dishonors God?
"Lord, I bring before You my actions and behaviors that have been sinful. I confess where I have not been faithful, whether in my work, relationships, or personal habits. I ask for Your forgiveness and strength to live a life that reflects Your holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16). Help me to walk in obedience and honor You in all that I do (Colossians 3:23). In Jesus' name, Amen."

Confession of Broken Relationships
Reflection: Have I held grudges or refused to forgive? Have I been unkind, impatient, or unloving toward others? Have I dishonored authority or neglected those in need?
"Lord, I confess my failures in relationships. I have held on to bitterness, failed to show grace, and neglected to love others as You have loved me (John 13:34). I ask for Your help to forgive those who have wronged me, just as You have forgiven me (Ephesians 4:32). Soften my heart and restore broken relationships. Give me the humility to seek reconciliation where needed. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Confession of Neglected Spiritual Responsibilities
Reflection: Have I neglected prayer, reading Scripture, or worship? Have I resisted the Holy Spirit's conviction? Have I failed to share my faith or serve others?
"Lord, forgive me for neglecting my relationship with You. I have not prayed as I should, sought You in Your Word, or shared the gospel when I had the opportunity. Renew my hunger for Your presence (Psalm 42:1). Fill me with a passion for knowing and serving You. Help me to seek first Your kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33). In Jesus' name, Amen."

Confession of Sins of Omission (What I Have Failed to Do)
Reflection: Have I ignored someone in need? Have I failed to use my gifts for God's kingdom? Have I withheld generosity or avoided spiritual growth?
"Lord, I confess not only the sins I have committed but also the good I have left undone (James 4:17). I have ignored opportunities to serve, to be generous, and to speak life into others. Forgive me for my complacency and awaken in me a heart that seeks to glorify You in every opportunity. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Assurance of Pardon and Renewal
Reflection: Do I believe that God's forgiveness is complete? Do I need to release guilt and walk in His grace? How can I move forward in obedience?
"Father, I thank You that in Christ, I am fully forgiven. Your Word says that You remove my sins as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). I receive Your grace and ask that You strengthen me to walk in righteousness. May my life reflect the new creation You have made me to be (2 Corinthians 5:17). Fill me with Your Spirit and lead me in Your ways. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Closing: Walking in Grace and Obedience
"Lord, I thank You for hearing my confession and granting me mercy through Jesus Christ. Help me to walk in freedom from sin and to live in a way that honors You. Keep me sensitive to the leading of Your Spirit, quick to confess, and eager to follow You wholeheartedly. In Jesus' name, Amen."

DISCERNING GOD'S WILL

Is This God's Will for Me? A Biblical Framework for Decision-Making
When faced with an important decision, it's natural to ask, "Is this God's will for me?" The best way to discern His will is by evaluating the choice through a biblical lens, rather than relying solely on circumstances, emotions, or personal desires. Here's a structured way to approach this question:

Does This Decision Align with Loving God and Others?
Scripture: Matthew 22:37-40 – The greatest commandment call us to love God and others as ourselves.
Ask: Will this choice help or hinder my ability to love God and love others well?
Consider: Will this decision allow me to grow in my relationship with God through worship, prayer, and obedience? Does it demonstrate love, integrity, and concern for others? Will it strengthen or weaken my relationships with my family, church, and community?

Does This Decision Align with Holiness and Obedience to God?
Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:3 – God's will is for our sanctification. Micah 6:8 – Act justly, love faithfulness, and walk humbly with God.
Ask: Will this decision cause me to compromise my integrity, biblical values, or moral convictions?
Consider: Is this choice ethical and honoring to God? Will it help or hinder my spiritual growth? Does it
require dishonesty, greed, immorality, or actions that conflict with biblical principles?

Does This Decision Glorify God and Further His Mission?
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:31 – Do everything for the glory of God. Matthew 28:19-20 – The Great Commission applies to all aspects of life.
Ask: Will this choice allow me to glorify Christ and be a witness for Him?
Consider: Does this decision allow me to serve others and use my gifts for God's kingdom? Will it help provide for my needs in a way that enables generosity? Does it open doors to influence others for Christ, either directly or indirectly?

Is This Decision Made in Faith and Trust?

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6 – Trust in the Lord and seek His direction. James 1:5 – Ask God for wisdom.

Ask: Have I prayed about this decision, sought wise counsel, and considered whether this aligns with how God has led me?

Consider: Am I making this choice out of fear, pressure, or selfish ambition rather than faith? Have I sought counsel from mature believers who know me well? Do I sense God's peace about this decision?

God's Will Is More About Who You Are Than What You Do

Instead of looking for a "yes or no" sign, evaluate the decision through the lens of biblical principles.

- If it aligns with God's character, commands, and mission, you can step forward in faith, trusting that He - will guide your steps. Psalm 37:23

Let obedience, love, and trust be the foundation of your decision-making, knowing that God's will is not just about where you go or what you do, but who you are becoming in Christ.