

Day 1
The Glory of God

When Jesus spoke to the multitudes about prayer, He gave us the Lord's Prayer, which begins:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:9-10)

And so we want to begin our week of prayer by acknowledging God's attributes, especially his glory. Here are several passages worth reading and a few suggested thoughts for meditation.

Revelation 4:11 – “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Psalms 29:2 – “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.”

Isaiah 24:23 – “The moon will be dismayed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders—with great glory.”

Look at creation. What does it say about God? Think about trees and rocks, benches and buildings, the faces which walk past. In all of these we may see God's attributes and His gifts to us.

Praise the Lord. Thank Him for everything that comes to mind, for everything around you.

Read Psalms 8 and 19. Let your meditations reflect the words of the Psalmist.

Read Revelation 21:1-8 and Revelation 22. Consider what God will do, who He is, and what heaven entails.

Suggestions for meditation and prayer:

- Ask the Lord to reveal His glory to you.
- Ask that God's name will be treated as holy, that people around us will see Jesus for who he is.
- Pray that Penn State and State College will be filled with the knowledge of God's truth.
- Ask the Lord to reign as king of your life and to use you to make the reality of his kingdom known to others.
- Reflect and ask God how His glory has been shown to you in your life.

Day 2

Repentance

1Joh 1:8-9 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)

God is holy and will not allow sin into his presence. The creatures that surround his throne rightfully proclaim "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8 and also note Isaiah 6:3 NIV) Think about the holiness of God. Meditate on his perfections and the resplendent glory.

When the prophet Isaiah came into the presence of our holy God he cried out "Woe to me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty. (Isaiah 6:5)" The noble man Isaiah was undone. When faced with the perfect righteousness of God he realized his sin and the sins of his people.

Think about the idle words you have spoken. Think of the sinful things that have come from your mouth and the mouths of the people around you. What words have caused your parents pain, what words have you spoken that have injured others? Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34b).

Think about what prevents you from trusting God. What desires do you cling to? What do you strive for at the expense of God? Why can't you trust God in all things? Ask for forgiveness for your excuses in life, and ask for a heart that trusts God in all things. Give up your hold on the things you keep from God.

Like a prodigal son returning home (Luke 15:11-24) or Hosea's adulterous wife (Hosea chapter 1 to 14) God will forgive our sins and restore us. Romans 8:1 says "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus," so let us confess our sins and pray for each other so that we may be healed (note James 5:16a).

Suggestions for mediation and prayer:

- James 4:17 says "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."
- What sins have you committed? Reflect on your sins and ask the Lord for forgiveness.
- What sins are prevalent among your friends? Ask the Lord for conviction, forgiveness and righteousness.
- What are the sins of Penn State? What are the sins of State College? What are the sins of our nation? Please intercede for our school, town and country.
- How can you go and make right the sins you have committed? How can you be reconciled to those you have sinned against? How can you live a life redeemed from sin?

Song of the Day:

Give Us Clean Hands by Charlie Hall

Day 3

The Will of God Devotion 1

Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ... For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for *tomorrow will worry about its own things.* Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Two common questions college students ask are, “What does God want me to do with my life and how do I know God’s will?” Upon much reflection and through numerous conversations I have repeatedly heard the following:

- Read the Bible a lot. (Psalm 1)
- Pray for God to give you specific direction. (James 1:5)
- Consider your talents and circumstances, both given by God. (1 Cor 12)
- Seek older Christians known for wisdom, and seriously consider their advice. (Pr 19:20)

Yet, there is more. Jesus said,

John 15:4-8 (NASB) “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither [can] you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and [so] prove to be My disciples.”

Suggestions for meditation and prayer

- Ask the Lord to abide in you.
- Pray that Jesus will reveal his specific will for your life.
- Reflect on what the Lord has made you passionate about.
- Ask the Lord to reveal how you can worship him through your studies.
- Ask the Lord to turn your desk into an altar so that you may love him with your mind.
- Surrender to Jesus.

Day 3

Discerning God's will part 2

What is God's will for your life?

How does Jesus want you to spend the precious time he has given you?

Paul says in Philippians 1:20-21 (NIV) I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Paul was committed to bringing Jesus glory through either his life or death?

What does it look like to live for Christ?

What are you going to need to sacrifice in order to make Jesus the ruler of your life?

What is standing in the way of total obedience to Jesus?

What if God's will for you in Christ Jesus is obscurity?

What if God's will for you is to spend the rest of your days working in a minimum wage job?

Will you still follow him?

What dreams are you going to need to lay at the feet of Jesus in order to be faithful to him?

What are you most afraid of being asked to give up?

Jesus said in Matt 7:13-14 (NIV) "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

How narrow is the gate that leads to life? Have you found it? Have your friends found it? Are you sure?

1John 2:3-6 (NIV) We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Luke 11:9-10 (NIV) "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Ask Jesus for help.

Ask Jesus to reveal his will.

Ask Jesus for the courage to follow him.

Verses for further reflection: Romans 12:1-2, Matthew 16:24, Matt 7:24-27, John 13:1-17

Day 4
The Poor and Exploited

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Luke 6:30-31 (NIV) Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

How easy it is to forget, when small trials come our way, that many are destitute by comparison! Have you ever had anyone ask you for money? Have you ever been approached by a homeless person on the street asking you to give them assistance? What was your response? Did you feel threatened? Were you concerned that they might use your money to buy alcohol or cigarettes? What do you think Jesus would have done?

James 2:14-16 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

Read Luke 14:16-24. Are you the host? Who do you invite? Are you a guest? Do you despise your host? Could it be that God has invited you to His feast, and you despise His offer? "So likewise, whoever of you does not *forsake all that he has* cannot be My disciple." God places the poor amongst the most important focuses in our lives. If we, the rich and comfortable, do not give up ourselves for the poor and exploited, how bold are we to call ourselves followers of Christ!

Luke 18:22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Matthew 11:5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Consider: Is not helping the destitute the center of Christ's ministry? And His Father shows the same:

Psalms 68:5 A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, Is God in His holy habitation.

Psalms 82:3-4 Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

Zechariah 7:9-10 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, Show mercy and compassion, Everyone to his brother. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, The alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother.'

"Then Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'"

Focus on those whom you can serve. How has God blessed you so that you can bless the nations. Ask God for guidance in how you spend your time and money so that you can make His glory be shown everywhere.

Day 5

Evangelism

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

Jesus says, "'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" Jesus has the same authority as the glorious God of whom we ask forgiveness, whose will we seek, and who cares for the poor and exploited. Jesus walked on water (Matthew 14:22), quieted a violent storm with a word (Matthew 8:23) healed the sick (Matthew 8:14-17), cured the blind (Mark 8:22-26), drove out demons (Luke 4:31-37) and raised the dead (Matthew 9:18-26, John 11:1-44). Jesus demonstrated that he had authority and power over this world.

With all authority and power, Jesus tells us to go make disciples, baptize them and teach them to obey everything he commanded. This is evangelism, going into the world to find those who need Christ and sharing the love, grace, power and authority of God with them.

We are commanded to share the Gospel with people, however many of us struggle with fear.

Read and meditate on the following verses:

- How do I deal with my fear? Acts 4:9, Joshua 1:9
- What if I pray for a miracle and it doesn't happen? Mark 16:17-18
- What if God doesn't "show up"? Matthew 28:20
- What if I am asked questions I can't answer? Matthew 10:19-20

Here is a final piece of encouragement, that we may have confidence with Christ:

1 John 3:16-23 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But *whoever* has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and *shuts up his heart* from him, *how does the love of God abide in him?* My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, *God is greater than our heart*, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

- Pray that the Lord will provide you opportunities to talk with people about Jesus.
- Ask the Lord to give you the words to say so that people will recognize his goodness and accept his grace.
- Be continually praying for a person or a few people so that they may come to know Jesus and accept Him as Lord.
- Meditate on Jude 23 and how you can snatch people from the fire and save them.
- Pray for Penn State and State College that many will sincerely repent of their sins and turn to Jesus who will heal them.
- Pray for our country and the world that many people will accept Jesus as Lord.

Day 6

Sabbath Rest

Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV) "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jesus gives us rest. Imagine if salvation was not by grace through faith. How would you ever know that you have done enough good works in order to please God? Could you ever be certain that your good deeds overshadow your sins? After all we worship a God who will not abide sin in his presence.

But in Christ we do not need to be afraid of the future or strive to do good works in order to merit salvation. Salvation is by grace. Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us and we become not only acceptable to him, but his beloved child. In Christ we can have rest from our fears and our striving to merit salvation.

Jesus gives us rest. In him we do not need to be anxious about the things that the world fears. We are exhorted not to be anxious about tomorrow for tomorrow has enough worries of its own. We do not need to worry about food or clothing for our Father in heaven knows that we need these things.

Jesus gives us rest. One of the most common fears I have seen in our society is the fear of being alone. I am not talking about being alone in a dark wood or a lonely street at night. I am talking about the fear of abandonment. Jesus tells us that he will never leave us or forsake us. In Christ we can calm our anxious hearts for nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.

Jesus gives us rest. American society places a high value on productivity. It is easy to begin to gain our identity from the things we do. How do you define yourself? Are you a musician, athlete, business person, scholar, party animal, soldier? I once had a very wise professor warn me never to gain my identity in anything I can lose. This was wise advice. The value of our life can not be judged by our ability to produce, accomplish or excel.

Suggestions for meditation and prayer

- Ask the Lord to help you to abide in his rest.
- What activities or roles shape how you see yourself? What does it look like to gain your identity from the truth found in the Bible? What does God say about you in his word? How do your perceptions of yourself compare with what God has to say about you? How does this relate to rest?
- Is your cycle of work and rest honoring to Jesus? What changes can you make in order to worship God with the way you use your time?
- God rested on the seventh day in all of His glory and strength. We in our weakness need rest even more. Ask God for what has been keeping you from resting.