



DAY CHALLENGE

Welcome to the 2020



We're so thrilled you're committing the first part of your year to developing yourself spiritually.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS CHALLENGE?

Every year, millions of people make promises to themselves and those they love to change for the better, yet they break those promises a few weeks (or sometimes days) later. We spend so much energy looking for our best life only to experience so much heartache when we don't find what we're looking for. Perhaps we're looking in the wrong place!

Jesus said in Mark 8:34–35 ESV, *“If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.”* Jesus is making a staggering and counterintuitive claim here. He’s saying that seeking your own best interest will never work. He’s saying you will never find the peace, the satisfaction, and the life you’re looking for, by looking for it! He’s saying the only way to find what you’re truly looking for is to find it in Him. Again in Matthew 6:33 ESV, Jesus makes a similar promise: *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”*

Do you want 2020 to be the best year of your life? If so, commit to making it your best year spiritually. Make a decision, here and now, to seek Jesus with reckless abandon and watch as He begins to transform every area of your life! Trust me; I know from personal experience that there is no better investment you could make in yourself and in your family than to put God first in this way. That's why we can confidently say this will be the best year of your life, if it's your best year spiritually.

So in the following pages, you will find 21 days of devotional content meant to guide you on a journey of pursuing God first. I encourage you to take this seriously. Put your heart into it, even if you don't see immediate results, and watch what God will do.

I leave you with the words of the great C.S. Lewis:

"Give up yourself, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fiber of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in."



RYAN WEEMS
SENIOR PASTOR

WHAT IS THE 21 DAY CHALLENGE?

Christ Covenant Church invites you to take on the **21 Day Challenge** — a focus on putting God first in our lives.

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

For 21 days, we will commit to communicating with God by praying on our own and together as a church family. To find out more about when and where you can join us for church-wide prayer, go to **christcov.net**.

21 DAYS OF FASTING

During this challenge, we will commit to growing closer to God through the discipline of fasting food or something else we use on a daily basis, so we can identify God as our true priority.

21 DAYS OF BIBLE STUDY

Along with prayer and fasting, we will commit to getting to know God better through a daily devotional which will help us grow in the areas of our lives that matter most to Him.

21 DAYS OF FASTING

WHY WE FAST

The posture of fasting in its simplest form is about putting God first in our lives. In our fast-paced, ever-evolving world, it's important to take time to remind ourselves of our true priority. Closeness with God is the one and only thing that can bring us true peace, fulfillment, joy, and assurance.

Fasting is not always a comfortable journey for your physical body, but if you commit yourself to prioritizing God for the next 21 days, you'll find there's nothing better for the health of your spirit and your relationship with God than to intentionally put Him first.

“Come back to me and really mean it! Come fasting and weeping, sorry for your sins! Change your life, not just your clothes. Come back to God, your God. And here's why: God is kind and merciful. This most patient God, extravagant in love, always ready to cancel catastrophe.”

Joel 2:12–14 MSG

“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.”

Matthew 22:37–38 HCSB

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Romans 12:2 NKJV

21 DAYS OF FASTING - CONT.

HOW WE FAST

The key to fasting is not just subtraction but substitution.

Ex: Instead of having a meal - you spend that time in prayer, worship, the Word. You're starving your flesh and feeding your spirit. **We advise you to consult your doctor** before fasting.

COMPLETE FAST

This fast calls for drinking only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you abstain from meat, sweets, and bread, only consuming water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

PARTIAL FAST

This fast is sometimes called the Jewish Fast and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 AM to 3:00 PM, or from sunrise to sunset.

SOUL FAST

This fast is common for those who do not have much experience fasting food, who have health issues that prevent them from fasting food, or who wish to refocus certain areas of their lives that are out of balance. For instance, some might select to abstain from using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast, carefully bringing that element back into their lives in an orderly fashion at the conclusion of the fast.

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

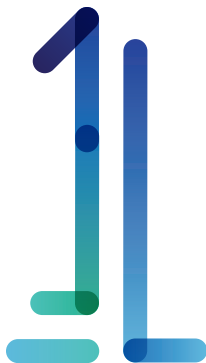
WHY WE PRAY

Every good relationship starts with the same key elements—love, trust, honesty, and communication—and the same concepts apply to our relationship with God. Prayer is all about connecting with God through a personal relationship with Him. God speaks to us through His Word, but He also wants us to talk to Him.

It's through prayer that we express our love and thanks to Him, we ask Him for the things we need, or we just let Him know where we are struggling and need His help. God is never far away from you. In every little moment of every day, He is right beside you with His love fully focused on you—so just talk to Him.

HOW WE PRAY

During each of the 21 days, we have provided some simple prayers for you to pray. We encourage you to continue praying beyond just the words we've given you as a starting point. You don't have to say or do anything that you wouldn't normally say or do when you're talking to someone—just be yourself! God wants to hear your honest prayers. Share your thoughts, your frustrations, what you're thankful for, what you need—He wants to hear it, so He can respond! God doesn't want polished, eloquent prayers; He just wants to hear from you. He wants to have your undivided focus as you speak to Him throughout your day. In 1 Thessalonians 5:16–17 ESV it says, *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God.”* Pray when you're getting ready in the morning, when you're on your way to work or school, as you're walking to your car or the next destination, when you're driving, and everywhere else. God is with you all of the time, so anytime is a great time for prayer!



VERSES TO READ

John 17:1-26

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have I been approaching the Bible for quick fixes to my problems or to develop a better relationship with God?
- Do I read the Bible out of obligation? What can I change about my posture to help me have a meaningful relationship with God's Word?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, today, I purpose to seek You and You alone. I pray as Paul prayed, that You would give me a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that I would know You more. Lord, You are my very source of life; apart from You, I can do nothing. So as I seek You, I ask You to reveal Yourself to me, so I may become more like Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

John 14:10-14

Psalm 25

Luke 9:23

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Is that kind of surrender representative of my relationship with God?
- What am I seeking first—God's desires for my life or my own?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, today, I put You first. I surrender my life to You and give You lordship of my day. In every task, in every errand, in every meeting, in every encounter with another person, have Your way in me. Be my wisdom, righteousness, strength, and peace so that my life glorifies You. Lord, today, Your kingdom come, Your will be done. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Isaiah 44:2

Revelation 4:1-11

Zechariah 12:1

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Can I worship God even when I don't feel His presence?
- Do I lose sight of His goodness by worrying about things I don't have?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Heavenly Father, I worship You because You loved me, and You chose me to be Your very own child. My greatest purpose in life is to give glory to Your name. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Romans 10:9

Romans 5:8

Matthew 16:24–26

James 1:17

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have I unreservedly surrendered my life to Christ?
- Do I daily deny my natural inclinations and impulses that come into conflict with His claim on my life?
- Do I fully trust Him and believe that His will is the best for me?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Heavenly Father, I confess anew the lordship of Jesus Christ. I believe You want good and perfect gifts for me. You see where my heart struggles to surrender. Help me to trust You more. I give up myself—my will, my thoughts, and my body to You. Thank You for making Your lordship a reality in my life. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Hebrews 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 4:18

John 15:1-8

Matthew 6:33

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What specific times throughout each day can I pause to acknowledge God?
- What practices can I implement throughout each day to keep me in contact with God?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, thank You for creating me to be in a close relationship with You. I acknowledge that You are the vine, and I am the branch. I choose to remain in You today. Help me to clearly see what choices I can make today that will draw me close to You. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Isaiah 55:6a

James 4:8

Psalms 16:11a

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have I been limiting conversation with God to church services on Sunday?
- What step can I take to increase the amount of conversation I have with God every day?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that You desire an intimate, personal relationship with me. I am amazed and humbled that the Creator of the universe wants to be in constant conversation with me. Right now, I invite You into every part of my life. From the spectacular to the mundane, nothing is off limits to You. I want to remain in Your presence. I choose to be intentional. I am determined to speak to You throughout the day, and I welcome You to speak to my heart. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Proverbs 27:17

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

1 Thessalonians 5:11

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do I find myself trying to go it alone when it comes to growing spiritually?
- What person in my life has had the biggest impact on my spiritual growth?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, help me in my pursuit of You to remember that there are people that You've placed in and around my life to help me grow closer to Jesus. I ask that You would use me to help my brothers and sisters grow closer to Christ as well. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

John 13:34-35

Psalm 92:12-15

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How are my thoughts and attitude toward family affecting how I view the family of God?
- How could I be more rooted in the family of God?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, thank You for sending Jesus to not only redeem me, but also to redeem family. Thank You for creating a safe place where I am loved, where I belong, and where I can grow. Help me to surrender my idea of what family is and embrace what You created the family of God to be. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

James 2:14-16
Romans 12:1-2

1 Corinthians 11:1

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do I just know about Jesus, or am I truly becoming like Him?
- What's one practical thing I could do today to start being like Jesus?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, thank You for allowing me to know You and for creating me in Your image. Help me never to take the knowledge of what You've done for granted, but compel me to live like Jesus. I ask that You transform me as I surrender my thoughts, actions, and feelings to You. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Galatians 5:1

John 8:36

Romans 13:14

2 Corinthians 5:16-20

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What habits, attitudes, and ways of thinking from my past or my family history are still affecting me today?
- What relationships should I walk away from in order to live in true freedom?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord Jesus, Your mission was to set captives free. Without You, I would be utterly lost and hopelessly bound to my past. Thank You for freeing me and empowering me to change. Help me to say goodbye to my yesterdays and become more like You every day. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Ecclesiastes 4:8-12

Romans 12:9-10

Hebrews 10:24-25

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Am I intentionally seeking out healthy relationships with genuine disciples with whom I can share my story, struggles, and secrets?
- Am I engaged in a small group? If not, what is holding me back?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, I know I am in danger if I am alone. I don't want to be isolated, and I know from Your Word that You don't want me to be either. Help me find people around me who will build up my faith. Give me the wisdom and courage to step toward those relationships that will bring me joy and healing. And help me be the kind of person that builds others up as well. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Romans 1:20-25

Matthew 5:16

Romans 5:1-11

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Where might I be misdirecting glory in my life?
- In what way am I not open to God's purpose for my life because I'm distracted by my own pursuit of glory?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, I am in awe of how good You have been to me, though I deserve nothing. You are holy and perfect in every way, and I can't think of a better way to use my life than to glorify You. I ask You today to use me for Your glory above all else. Help me to see where I am misdirecting glory to the wrong places and teach me to align my will with Yours. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Colossians 1:16

Ephesians 1:11-12

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What is stopping me from accepting that God has a divine plan for my life?
- Am I focusing on God to discover my purpose?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, I am so glad that You knew me and called me even before I was conceived in my mother's womb. According to Your Word, I am no mistake; therefore, I ask You to help me start looking at my life with respect, esteem, and honor. You called me, and You have an awesome plan for my life. I ask You to help me uncover that plan, so I can get started on the road of obedience toward fulfilling what You brought me into this world to do! In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Matthew 7:7-8

Romans 11:29

Psalms 37:4

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do I really expect to hear from God when I pray?
- Am I confident in the purpose I was created for?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, I believe that You created me for a purpose, and I also believe that You want me to be aware of that purpose. I ask You to make Your will for my life known to me, so that I may confidently do what You have called me to do. Just as You revealed Yourself and Your purpose to Samuel through Your Word, I look to Your Word for direction. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Isaiah 30:21

Psalms 139:14-18

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What things am I naturally good at and enjoy? How could those gifts be used as good works to glorify the Lord?
- What is one step I can take to trust Jesus' plan for my life?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, thank You for relationship with You and for my life that You have created. I trust You with the big plan for my life and even for this day. Thank You for walking with me through every step. Instruct my heart on how I can use the gifts inside of me to glorify You. Thank You for the good works You have already prepared for me to do. Grant me the courage, joy, strength, and peace to walk them out. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

John 6:38

1 Corinthians 3:5

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What unique gifts and personality traits do I possess that can bless other people?
- In what ways can I begin to partner with God to use my gifts in His great purpose?

PRAYER TO PRAY

God, I love You and thank You for allowing me to be part of Your purpose for creation. Thank You for the specific gifts and unique personality I have to help and bless other people. Help me to willingly use these gifts well, not solely for my own gain but for Your kingdom. Thank You for partnering with me in the special assignments You've given to me. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Matthew 25:35-40

1 Peter 4:10-11

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have I ever experienced the joy of using my gifts and abilities to serve somebody else?
- Have I found a place of service where my gifts can be strengthened and used to make a difference?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, I'm amazed at the details of all of Your creation! I believe You designed me with a purpose. My entire life is in Your hands! Open my eyes to see the gifts and abilities You've given me, so I can walk out Your purpose for my life. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Matthew 6:1-4

Hebrews 6:10

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What areas of my life do I tend to compare with others?
- What are simple, practical ways I can acknowledge and appreciate my unique gifts and contribution to the kingdom of God?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Dear Father, help me to recognize, appreciate, and acknowledge my significance, so You may receive glory from my unique service in Your kingdom. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Philippians 2:3-11

1 John 4:10-11

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How has the Lord been generous to me?
(Take a few moments to reflect on this and then thank Him for what He has done in your life.)
- What can I do to be more generous toward God and others?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, thank You for what You've done in my life. I stand in awe of how good and generous You are. You know that I deserved the worst. I deserved punishment and wrath, but You placed it all on Your Son, so now I get to experience the riches of Your grace. When I consider how You've treated me, I desire to treat others with that same generous spirit, so I can reflect who You are. Lead me today, I pray, and open my eyes to ways I can live with greater generosity. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Romans 8:11

John 16:33

Romans 8:37

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who do I have influence with?
- What can I do to better serve the people in my life?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, I thank You for the work You accomplished through Jesus. I ask You to equip me with everything I need to accomplish Your will in my life. I thank You that through the power of the Holy Spirit, I can go boldly with the message of Jesus. Greater is He who is in me than any spirit of opposition that exists in my world. It is through Jesus and the word of my testimony that I will overcome any such spirit. Therefore, I ask for opportunities to go and make a difference in other people's lives. In Jesus' name, amen.



VERSES TO READ

Matthew 28:19

2 Timothy 1:6-7

1 Corinthians 16:10

2 Peter 1:10

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How am I currently working to influence people in my world?
- What steps can I take to apply this calling in my day-to-day life?

PRAYER TO PRAY

Father, I ask for a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline as I follow You this year. Give me a heart for people, so I can fulfill the calling You have placed on my life. Help me to recognize my importance in the body of Christ and open my eyes to see who in my world I can impact this year. In Jesus' name, amen.



WHAT'S NEXT?

It's day 22 and beyond. We encourage you to keep going! Don't stop here. Continue the habit of putting God first in your life. Keep a consistent time with God. Here are a few recommended next steps.

JOIN US FOR GROWTH TRACK

God created you for a purpose! Growth Track will help you move closer to that purpose, so you can make a difference. Find more information at christcov.net/events or email us at info@christcov.net to sign up for the next Growth Track.

JOIN A CONNECT GROUP

Christ Covenant's spring Small Group semester is here. Find a group that fits you now at christcov.net/groups!

FIND A DAILY READING PLAN

Download the **YouVersion Bible app** and find a daily reading plan that works for you. If you're not sure where to start, we've provided a few options to consider. If you prefer a hard copy, local Christian bookstores have several great devotionals or one-year Bible plans that could work for you.

YOUVERSION DAILY READING PLANS

THE BIBLE PROJECT | THE BIBLE (365 DAYS)

This plan from The Bible Project takes you on a chronological journey through the entire Bible over the course of one year. Each book includes videos specifically designed to enhance your understanding and engagement with God's Word.

RICK WARREN'S DAILY DEVOTIONAL (365 DAYS)

Do you know what God created you for? Do you know God's destiny for your life? These devotionals by Rick Warren will help you get to where God wants you to go spiritually, financially, emotionally, relationally, and physically. They offer practical steps for reaching the goals God has for you as you follow Jesus into your destiny.

THE BIBLE PROJECT | THE GOSPELS (90 DAYS)

This plan from The Bible Project takes you on a journey through all four Gospels in 90 days. Each book includes videos specifically designed to enhance your understanding and engagement with God's Word.

LIFE'S HEALING CHOICES - RICK WARREN (25 DAYS)

Join Pastor Rick for this series of broadcasts on "Life's Healing Choices" as he walks through the Beatitudes from Matthew 5, which are the eight steps to physical, emotional, social, financial, and personal health.

21 DAYS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN - LEVI LUSKO (21 DAYS)

This is a 21-day plan chapter by chapter through the Gospel of John designed for new believers, but anyone can complete. It's based on the teachings by Pastor Levi Lusko of Fresh Life Church.

CHRIST **COVENANT** CHURCH