

## Week 3: 21 Days of Prayer

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*Day 15: If God can speak creation into existence, he can sustain you today.*

*Scripture: Genesis 1:1*

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

The opening sentence of the Bible is not one we should rush past simply because it is familiar. Its claim should stop us every time. Genesis 1:1 declares a truth that sparks skepticism in unbelievers and pure awe in believers: God created everything. The Hebrew word for *created* is **bara**, meaning *to create out of nothing*. From the very beginning, God reveals His unmatched power. Soon after, we learn *how* He created: “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”

Think about that... God did not use pre-existing material—He **spoke** creation into existence. From these opening verses, we learn that we are not here by accident, God is eternal, He is all-powerful, and He stands apart from His creation as its intelligent Designer.

For those who follow Christ, faith is essential to our walk. Commentator David Guzik notes, “*If you believe Genesis 1:1, you really have no problem believing the rest of the Bible. The God big enough to create the heavens and the earth is big enough to do all the rest the Bible says He does.*”

Today, ask yourself, “Do I believe God is that big?” Focus your heart on the areas where trusting God feels difficult, where your belief is small. Remember: the God who created the universe also knows you and calls you by name. What He reveals about Himself is true, and it is always purposeful. Ask Him to remind you of His intelligent design—just look outside!

**Verses for further study & encouragement:** *General Revelation:* Psalm 19:1–4; Romans 1:20, *Importance of Genesis:* John 5:46–47, *Faith:* Hebrews 11:1

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## Guide to Prayer & Fasting

### **Prayer:**

Lord,

Thank You for creating the heavens and the earth. Thank You for creating us and calling us Your own. We marvel at Your power and trust that You are the same God today and forever. When life feels impossible, help us return to Your Word and remember that You have done the impossible-right from the start. Help us look at the beauty of creation and give you the praise. Help any unbelief or doubt. We surrender them to you, mighty creator.

In Jesus name, Amen.

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*Day 16: Do you have the childlike faith and humility required to enter God's kingdom?*

*Scripture: Matthew 18:1–4*

*“At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

In true upside-down kingdom fashion, Jesus answers His disciples in an unexpected way. In a world shaped by political power and religious status, they likely expected examples of pious leaders or war heroes. Instead, Jesus points to a child. In that culture and time especially, children were considered among the least—seen, not heard. Yet Jesus declares that greatness in God's kingdom is found in childlike humility.

Think about how children approach the world. They ask questions constantly. A three year old's favorite word is why? Just as we paused to reflect on Genesis 1:1, we should approach Scripture every time we read it with the same curiosity and wonder—asking, “Why, Lord? What are You revealing about Yourself? Why this passage, here and now?”

Jesus makes clear what it means to become like children: **humility**. Though He could have declared Himself the greatest in that moment, He instead modeled it by pointing to someone other than Himself. From being born in a manger to laying down His life on cross, Jesus consistently chose the low place. Following Him requires us to do the same—something we cannot do apart from God's help. Theologian Dr. Timothy Keller put it this way: “...the essence of gospel-humility is not thinking more of myself or thinking less of myself, it is thinking of myself less.” In our daily life we are called to die to ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow Him. Let us approach our Lord with hope, wonder, curiosity, and humility.

**Verses for Further Study & Encouragement:** On Humility: Philippians 2:3–4; Proverbs 22:4, Entering the Kingdom: John 3:5; Matthew 7:21

**Prayer:**

Lord,

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Thank you for showing us what true humility looks like. You willingly stepped into our broken world and took our place on the cross. Help us follow Your example by emptying ourselves. Help us not think less of ourselves, but help us think of ourselves less. Help us count others as greater than ourselves. Convict us when pride rises, and teach us to take the low place. Make us childlike in faith, humility, and wonder as we approach Your throne. In Jesus name,

Amen.

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*Day 17: Created in His image—do we truly grasp this?*

*Scripture: Genesis 1:27*

*“So God created mankind in His own image... male and female He created them.”*

“Who should I be?” Have you ever asked yourself this question? More often than not we ask the question “What should I do? Should I take this job, or that job... Should I marry this person? Should I serve here, or there???” Help me Lord!” As we explore the idea of being made in the image of God, we should shift our perspective back to that first question.

“Who should I *be*?”

If you’ve been a Christian for a while or taken any foundational courses like the Essentials class at our church, you may have heard the phrase “*communicable attributes of God.*” Simply put, communicable attributes are qualities of God that we are able to **reflect**, though never perfectly. While the world struggles to define identity and purpose, we believers already know where to look. Our model is not culture, celebrities, or comparison to one another—it is **Christ Himself**.

We reflect God’s image, but **He defines the standard**. Scripture says, “*God is love*” (1 John 4:8). We can love, but imperfectly. God however, loves perfectly and without condition. God is “*rich in mercy*” (Ephesians 2:4). We offer mercy selectively; God however, gives it abundantly.

As we walk with Christ, we are being shaped to reflect His character more clearly. We will fall short, but by His grace, we keep our eyes fixed on the One who displays these attributes perfectly. We can rephrase our question of “Who should I be?” to “Who should I be like?”

Attributes we are called to grow in: **Holy, loving, good, just, merciful, gracious, faithful, patient, truthful, wise**. Pray over each one, ask the Lord to reveal where you could grow the most, and thank Him for allowing us to have the ability to reflect Him in the first place- what an honor!

**Verses for Further Study & Encouragement:** Colossians 3:10, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Romans 8:29, 1 John 2:6

**Prayer:**

Lord,

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Thank you for creating me in your image. Thank you for setting the standard, for not leaving us in the dark. We thank you that even in our broken, sinful nature on this side of eternity, that we can be made new. That we can reflect your character as we are renewed day by day. Give us opportunities for refinement and sanctification, help us follow your footsteps, and imitate You.

In Jesus name, Amen.

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### *Day 18: There Is None Like Our God*

*Scripture: Isaiah 46:9*

*“I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me.”*

Say this out loud: *“You are God, I am not.”* It’s a very liberating declaration. We are called to approach God with humility—the kind of childlike faith Jesus describes in Matthew 18. When we open His Word or come to Him in prayer, we are not seeking quick answers or self-help, but a deeper understanding of **who He is**. Our posture matters. As we recognize who we are speaking to, our hearts should naturally respond with reverence. As we reflect on God’s redemption plan and His great love for us, the only fitting response is simply: **“What a God.”**

There is no other “deity” in human history who created the universe with a word, humbled Himself to die for His creation, and loves us personally and intimately. Jesus is called **the Word** (John 1:1), and through Him, God’s character and glory are fully revealed. God is holy—completely set apart. As we reflected a few days ago in Gen. 1:1- we know that He created everything out of nothing and stands separate from His creation. If the universe were to pass away, God would remain. Just like there are communicable attributes of God, there are also non-communicable attributes that remind us there is none like Him: **self-existent, eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, unchanging, completely sovereign, holy**

Reflect and study each and every one. Look up the definitions, and pray that the Lord would give you revelation about who He is. There is also beauty and humility in not being able to fully understand the vastness of our God. As Pastor Jarrod has put it; God is like the ocean, our mind is like a teacup. You can’t fit an ocean into a teacup!

**Verses for Further Study & Encouragement:** Isaiah 55: 8-9, 1 Samuel 2:2, Psalm 86:8

#### **Prayer:**

“Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.” (Psalm 86:8-12)

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In Jesus name, Amen.

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### *Day 19: Commanded to forgive*

*Scripture: Colossians 3:13*

*“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”*

Let those words sink in: *forgive as the Lord forgave you*. This isn't a suggestion—it's a command. If we are truly made in God's image and He is merciful, then He has also given us the capacity to forgive and bestow mercy onto others. God never commands what He does not enable.

We all know the name/face that comes to mind when the Holy Spirit nudges us toward forgiveness. And if we're honest, that nudge can make us uncomfortable—because forgiveness can be hard. You're not alone in that struggle, we all fall short.

But this is one of the ways believers are meant to look different. In a culture quick to cancel, ghost, or cut people off, forgiveness stands out. Sometimes we even rename unforgiveness as “setting boundaries”—but that's still sin wrapped up in a falsely justified bow.

Yes, forgiveness doesn't always mean reconciliation, and wisdom/safety sometimes requires distance. Protecting yourself and others matters. But holiness—being like Christ—is costly. That's why Jesus calls us to take up our cross and follow Him. C.S. Lewis put it plainly: *“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”*

When we honestly consider our own forgiveness received by God and fix our eyes on the cross, mercy begins to flow more freely toward those who have hurt us.

**Verses for Further Study & Encouragement:** Proverbs 19:11, Matthew 6:14-15, Luke 23:34

#### **Prayer:**

“Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.” (Psalm 32:1-2). Lord, thank you for blessing me with Your forgiveness. Thank you for covering my sin, and for counting it no more. I need your divine help to do this for others. Soften my heart to lavish this grace and mercy onto others, just like you have for me. I praise You for who You are, and

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what You have done. Lead me to forgive, and equip me with the daily strength I need to bring glory to your name.

In Jesus name, Amen.

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### *Day 20: Our God Is Alive*

*Scripture: Matthew 28:6*

*“He is not here; He has risen, just as He said.”*

When people search for gods made in their own image or built by human hands, they will always fall short. There is only one true and living God—**Jesus Christ**. Buddha has a grave. Zeus is a myth. Ancient pagan gods are products of culture and imagination. But Jesus of Nazareth lived at a specific time in history, changed the course of humanity, and is documented more than many ancient figures we accept without question. After His death, He appeared to hundreds, and there is no tomb to visit—because His body isn’t there. **Jesus is alive.**

Someone with child-like faith might ask, *“If Jesus is alive, then where is He?”* In a world skeptical of what can’t be seen, we are called to give a reason for our hope (1 Peter 3:15) and to share our own encounter with the risen Christ. He is seated at the right hand of God in heaven, but also living in us through the Holy Spirit. It’s complex, but also beautifully simple. Like the wind or Wi-Fi. You know if your phone is connected to wifi, and you certainly know when it’s not. We may not be able to see Him standing in the room with us, or hear His voice audibly, but we can clearly see the evidence of His presence. Many of us can point to life *before* Christ (B.C.) and life *after* encountering His grace. That difference is the proof.

Our God has risen, and He is just as alive today as the moment He walked out of the grave. Remember- *There are many religions, but only one empty tomb.* Ask yourself, are you living like Jesus is actually alive? Do you approach Him as though He can hear you, see you, and love you in this very moment?

**Verses for Further Study & Encouragement:** John 11:25-26, Romans 6:8-11, Mark 16:19

#### **Prayer:**

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for sending your Son to pay for our sins. Thank you for your mercy, for allowing Him to take on the wrath of our punishment. Thank you for your redemptive plan to not only make a way for us, but to assign Jesus to the throne forever. Thank you for the resurrection, and that we have hope in our own coming resurrection. Thank you that death is not the end. It wasn’t the end

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for you, and it isn't the end for us. May we never forget that we have access to the one true living God, right here, right now. To you be the glory!

In Jesus name, Amen.

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### *Day 21: What are you looking at?*

*Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:18*

*“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”*

We are broken people living in a broken world, and it’s easy for our eyes to stay fixed on broken things—our circumstances, our relationships, or even ourselves. Our focus naturally drifts to what’s right in front of us. That’s human. We are limited in understanding and not all-knowing—there truly is none like our God.

Our fears, anxieties, and level of contentment often reveal where our focus lies. Constant worry may point to fear of the future. Anxiety over worst-case scenarios can reflect a belief that this life is all there is. Comparison—longing for more security, success, or comfort—can signal that we’ve forgotten eternity.

On the other hand, peace and contentment are signs of eyes fixed beyond this life—on the Kingdom of God.

Fixing our eyes on eternity is a daily choice. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we learn to think differently than our natural instincts. Picture the nail-scarred hands of Jesus gently lifting your chin—from what is temporary—to the cross, the empty tomb, and the throne in heaven where He reigns.

**Verses for further study & encouragement:** Colossians 3:1-2, Philippians 3:20, Psalm 123:2

#### **Prayer:**

Heavenly Father,

We come to you humbly and with awe, that you will sit on the throne forever. You have set eternity in our hearts, and we are satisfied with nothing but You for the rest of our days. To get to be in your presence forever is something we can’t fully grasp, but God we ask that you give us understanding that fuels our hope. We look to you, Lord in your earthly suffering, when life seems unbearable We look to the resurrection when our fears of death come to mind, and take them captive. We look to eternity when our desire to live for You and not ourselves feels weak.

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Help us make our self-pitied thoughts obedient to Christ, who never complained, but said “God, Your will not mine.” God, give us the faith we need to fix our eyes on the things unseen, and perfect our faith when it falls short.

In Jesus name, Amen.