

THE PEOPLES CHRISTIAN  
FELLOWSHIP



# BE WATCHFUL... STAY ALERT

8TH - 28TH JANUARY

21 DAYS PRAYER  
& FASTING

DEVOTIONAL  
BOOKLET

'WATCH THEREFORE,  
FOR YOU DO NOT KNOW  
WHAT HOUR YOUR LORD IS  
COMING.'  
MATTHEW 24:42



# TPCF MISSION



The People's Christian Fellowship exists  
to **SPREAD**  
the gospel through **SERVING** our  
community and  
**STRENGTHENING** the body of Christ



THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP





# FOREWORD PASTOR



Dear church family,

Our spiritual objective for 2024, is entitled  
**'Be Watchful...Stay Alert!'**

The sentiment of this theme draws inspiration from Matthew 24:42. Which states:

***Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.***

The essence of the word 'watch' or 'watchful,' embodies the instruction to stay awake, to stay alert, to be vigilant, to look out for. For something is happening, something is coming, something is changing, and the children of the Lord must not be taken by surprise. I believe that the Lord is calling us to be in a state of anticipation and readiness, with the attitude to respond as necessary, for He is coming again.

In another very popular passage with similar words, Jesus called His disciples to "watch and pray..." He said this during a most intense period for both Him and His followers (Matthew 26:41). The hatred towards Jesus by His enemies was approaching boiling point. Jesus and His disciples moved about in numbers for their own safety. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus assembled His disciples for one more prayer meeting. With supernatural intelligence He instructed His disciples to pray, but at the very same time, to watch out.

This season of prayer and fasting provides us with a great opportunity to intently beseech the Lord, to provide us His church with the supernatural intelligence, to ascertain and discern where we are right now, and what we are about to be confronted with spiritually.

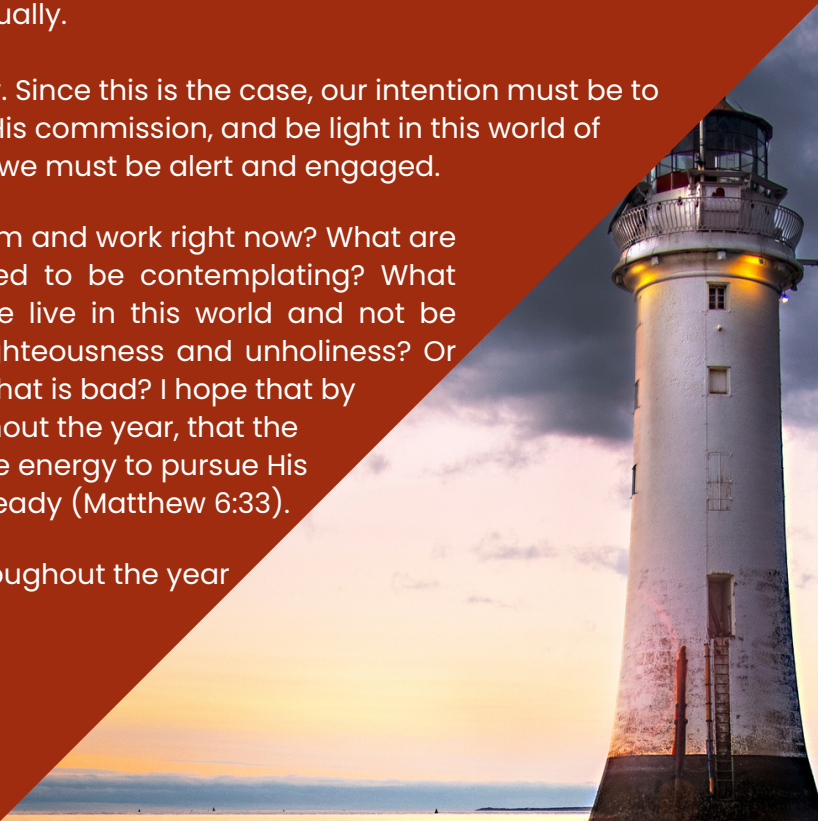
Jesus is coming again soon, and we must be ready. Since this is the case, our intention must be to line up within His will, actively being engaged with His commission, and be light in this world of darkness. We cannot afford to be sleepy and tired; we must be alert and engaged.

So, what is the Lord saying to you about His kingdom and work right now? What are some of the most important things that we need to be contemplating? What should our priorities be looking like? How can we live in this world and not be wedded to it? How may we decipher between righteousness and unholiness? Or what is truth and what is a lie? What is good and what is bad? I hope that by the conclusion of this period of fasting and throughout the year, that the Lord might challenge us and provide clarity and the energy to pursue His kingdom for He is coming again, and we must be ready (Matthew 6:33).

May the Lord bless you all and bless His church throughout the year 2024.

Grace and Peace

*Pastor David Daniel*



# GETTING STARTED

## TYPES OF FAST

### **Complete Fast:**

Abstaining from food and liquids for a period of time (see Esther 4:15-16).

### **Normal fast:**

Abstaining from food but drinking liquids. This fast can be exercised over the course of a full day or for a specific period of the day. The majority of people do this type of fast. Fasting from for example, from sunrise to sunset, or from 6 am to 6 pm. Or from 8pm in the evening and breaking the fast at 3 pm the next day.

### **Partial Fast or Daniel Fast:**

Some people see the daily periodic breaking of the normal fast as a type of partial fast. But a partial fast could allow the eating of certain foods. The Daniel type fast is based on Daniel 1:8 and 10:2-3 which includes a restriction on the consumption of all meats, sweets, alcohol, and pleasurable foods.

### **Electronic Entertainment Fast:**

Abstaining from social media and all forms of electronic entertainment (movies, TV, video games, etc.) This is a wonderful fast for everyone! Still, it is important that when you embark on any spiritual food fast, that you include this form of abstinence also. When you break the fast, try not to rush back into social entertainment. Continue to think about whatever it is the Lord had shown you during this period of fasting.





# REASONS FOR FASTING

## WHY FAST?

Biblical fasting is a powerful tool that can help you draw closer to God and experience transformation in your life. Unfortunately, many people misunderstand it, believing that it is a way to manipulate God into responding to their prayers or to improve their prayer life. However, fasting is all about approaching God with humility and allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition. Through fasting, you can experience brokenness, repentance, and transformation in your life.

People choose to fast for many reasons, including seeking God's will and direction, asking for a miracle or breakthrough, receiving a word that only God can make possible, desiring a fresh touch from God, building a deeper and more intimate relationship with Him, being more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's voice, breaking free from bondage, praying for the salvation of loved ones, and bringing your flesh under subjection to the Holy Spirit.

When you fast, replace your normal eating habits with reading God's Word, meditating on Scripture, and spending time in prayer. Eliminate entertainment and unnecessary activities and fill your mind with edifying things that will nourish your spirit.

Fasting can strengthen your faith and confidence in God while refreshing you mentally, spiritually, and physically. Therefore, if you're seeking to draw closer to God and experience transformation in your life, consider biblical fasting as a powerful tool to achieve your goals.

## MEDICAL ADVICE

For medical reasons, some people may not be able to fast from food altogether. They may choose to abstain only from certain foods, like sugar or chocolate, or from something other than food. Doing without something temporarily, such as television, as a way of redirecting our focus toward God. Consult your doctor before going on the fast.



# FAQS

## **Q: How many meals do I eat per day on the Daniel Fast? Can I have snacks?**

**A:** The number of times you eat throughout the day is a personal decision. Some people choose to eat three meals. Some might add a snack or two in between. Others may skip a meal to pray. There isn't a particular formula for the frequency of meals. Let God guide you as to what your fast should look like.

## **Q: Pastor, what is one thing a first time 'faster' like me should remember?**

**A:** This is a spiritual fast. What you do during this period of consecration is more important than the food restrictions you have chosen. Fasting is about denying the physical body and soul of things it may both need and desire, to focus on providing for one's spiritual necessities. So, we may like to be entertained by many things, but in this period of fasting, we choose to develop our spirits and relationships with Christ.

### **NOTE:**

Always keep paper and pen nearby so that you can write down the things the Lord lays on your heart. During the evening it might be good to fill out a journal which recaps your thoughts and feelings throughout the day

Put on Christian radio and TV channels, ask the Lord to direct you to a book that you should read or a Christian magazine. Do not let non-spiritual things cloud your mind or cause you to lose focus.

Call a Christian friend and entertain them with godly words of comfort and encouragement.

## **Q: Are salt and pepper allowed? What about herbs and spices?**

**A:** Yes, you can use salt and pepper to flavour your food. Also, herbs and spices are allowed. However, you need to make sure any store-bought seasonings are Daniel Fast friendly. Read the ingredients list on the label to be sure. Watch out especially for added sugar.





# A FEW EXTRA BITS

## EAT BUT...

In a normal fast, we fast for a certain number of hours each day, then we are permitted to break our fast to eat. In the Daniel Fast, you are permitted to eat at any time, but you are restricted to only eating specific things (see Daniel 1: 11-16; 10: 3 for reference). It is not uncommon for believers to do a 'normal fast' but restrict their eating to the foods approved on the Daniel fast list.

## 10 OR 21 DAYS

Officially we are doing a 21 day fast and I hope everyone is aiming for this. But there may be some of our congregation who may have never fasted before. 21 days might seem too great a challenge. Well maybe you could aim at doing 10 days and see how you feel on the 10th day. You could then either continue, or if not, still restrict yourself from other things like TV etc. until day 21.

## FOOD IS ONE THING

Restrict yourself from all forms of fleshly entertainment for the duration and increase your spiritual intake. Seek the Lord regarding which external things to abstain from. Read and study the Word, increase your prayer times connect with other believers. Be confident that through this spiritual sacrifice, God will take His rightful place within your heart.

Make extra time to pray, this is imperative. Prayer is talking with God; you will find that during a period of fasting, your spiritual senses become finely tuned. Do prayer walks with other believers, bike prayer rides, prayer journals, prayer conference call sessions, email encouraging words to each other (be creative). Remember to pray for others

## OPPORTUNITY

There are habits, attitudes, beliefs, practices, weakness, and other carnal powers that can only be broken through fasting. During this period of fasting, let us stop doing those things that we know are wrong (the Lord speaks to our conscience) and do the things we know that are right and pleasing to Him.



# DANIEL FAST

## FOODS TO EAT

*I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*  
**Daniel 10:3**

### **Whole Grains**

Amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, freekeh, millet, oats, purple rice, quinoa, rye, sorghum, spelt, teff, whole grain pasta, whole wheat, and wild rice.

### **Beans and Legumes**

Black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, and split peas.

### **Nuts and Seeds**

Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, nut butter, peanuts (actually legumes but people think of them as nuts), pecans, pepitas (pumpkin seeds), pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds, walnuts, sesame seeds, soy nuts, sunflower seeds.

### **Vegetables**

All vegetables are allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned).

### **Fruits**

All fruit is allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned). However, any dried fruit should not contain added sugar (check ingredients to be sure).

### **Oils**

Oils (such as coconut, olive, and sesame, for example) are allowed but should be used minimally. For example, you can sauté foods in olive oil but avoid deep-frying them.





# DANIEL FAST

## FOODS TO EAT

### **Other**

Unleavened bread (whole grain bread made without yeast, sugars, or preservatives. All herbs, spices, and seasonings are allowed, including salt and pepper. Soy products (such as edamame and soy nuts) and tofu are acceptable.

### **Beverages**

Water should be the main beverage on your Daniel Fast. Distilled, filtered, sparkling, spring, and mineral water are allowed as well. However, you may have 100% fruit juice on occasion. You can also use 100% fruit juice in recipe



# DANIEL FAST

## FOODS TO AVOID

### **Animal Products**

- Meat (bacon, beef, bison, chicken, lamb, pork, and turkey).
- Dairy (butter, cheese, cream, milk, and yogurt)
- Fish
- Eggs

### **Added Sugar**

Agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, brown rice syrup, brown sugar, cane juice, corn syrup, honey, malt syrup, molasses, and raw sugar.

### **Yeast**

Yeast and, therefore, leavened bread is not part of the Daniel Fast.

### **Refined Grains**

White flour and white rice. Only whole grains are allowed on the Daniel Fast. A whole grain product contains the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.

### **Processed Food**

Foods that contain artificial flavourings, chemicals, food additives, and preservatives.

### **Deep-Fried Food**

Examples are corn chips, French fries, and potato chips. (Baked chips are acceptable if they do not contain restricted ingredients. Check the label for “baked” to be sure.)

### **Solid Fats**

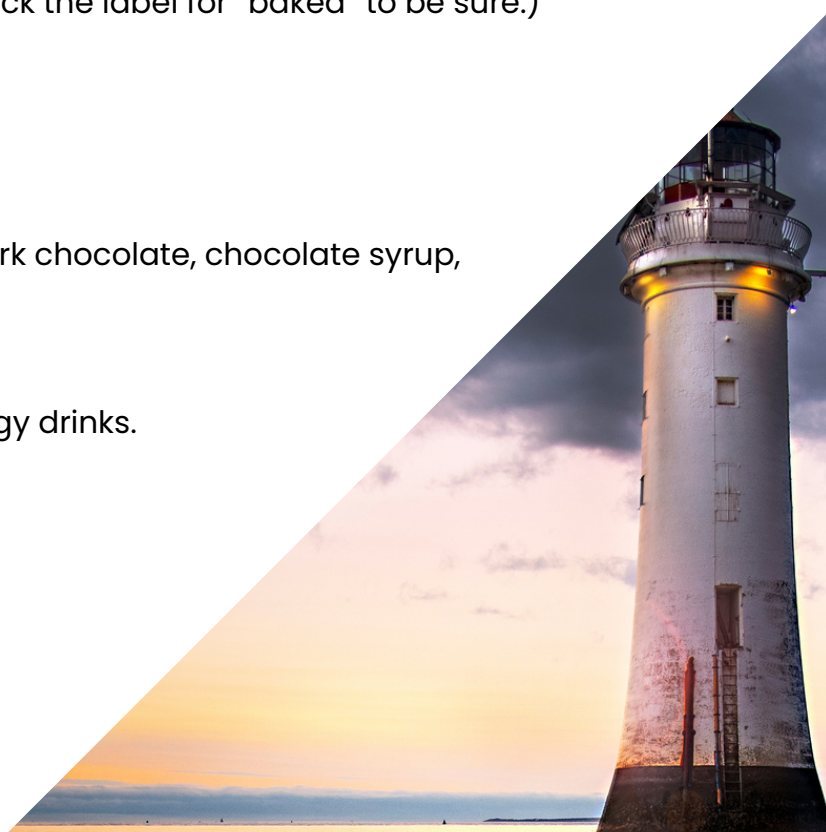
Butter, lard, margarine, and shortening.

### **Chocolate**

Milk chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, dark chocolate, chocolate syrup, and cacao.

### **Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages**

Alcohol, coffee, caffeinated tea, and energy drinks.







WEEK  
**ONE**

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GOD  
**WATCHES OVER US**



THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

# DAY ONE

## WATCHES OVER HIS VINEYARD

Isaiah 27:3

*I, the Lord, am its keeper; every moment I water it.  
Lest anyone punish it, I keep it night and day.  
(ESV)*

Have you ever experienced the joy of gardening? Gardening is a remarkably calming and fulfilling endeavour. The act of nurturing a garden produces a sense of pride and joy. But, should a garden be disordered—overgrown, untamed, surrounded by weeds—it quickly loses its appeal. Have you ever been invited to a barbeque in such neglected surroundings? Not likely I'm sure.

On the other hand, a well-maintained garden is a sight to behold, especially with a mix of fruits, vegetables, or herbs. Not only does it enhance the beauty of the garden, but these productive elements often become the focal point of exciting and imaginative conversations.

Today's devotion centres on a vineyard which is watched over by the Lord, and it provides us with a vital lesson. The scripture describes a thriving and fruitful vineyard, tended to and protected by the Lord Himself. He ensures its needs are met, guarding it against harm and the evil intentions of His adversary.

This vineyard serves as a symbolic representation of God's people—Israel. The care shown to them mirrors the care He extends to us today. God intended for His 'vineyard' to yield abundantly, just as He expects from His church (John 15:1-5). Therefore, we can rest assured that God diligently watches over us, protecting us, nurturing us, and providing for us with blessed purpose and intention, and the intention is that we shall be fruitful, bearing much fruit to the glory of His name.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**Thought: What should His fruit produced in us look like?**

- **Pray that we the church remain confident in the hope that the Lord is watching over us.**
- **Pray for the fruitfulness of the Church.**





# DAY TWO

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## WATCH OVER THE LORD'S VINEYARD

Proverbs 24:30-34

***A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest; so shall your poverty come like a prowler, and your need like an armed man. (v33-34 NKJV)***

Today's scripture reading is in stark contrast to yesterday's reading. Yesterday we saw how God actively cared for His vineyard, guarding and watching and doing all that was necessary for it to be pleasurable and fruitful. Today, we are greeted by a lazy person who is not at all attentive to looking after his vineyard, the result of which has rendered the vineyard to become untidy, unfruitful and unattractive (Proverbs 24:30-31).

This unfavourable contrast demands an unwavering commitment to crucial practices so that the task of maintenance might be completed successfully. It requires genuine love and care, an understanding of the importance of the role, and relentless and consistently hard efforts.

To effectively fulfil our commission, we must understand the significance of our role. Recognising our place within the broader scope of God's plans can fuel our motivation, infusing us with the energy necessary to honour our commitments.

As the vineyard symbolised God's people in yesterday's reading, we must always remember that the Lord has entrusted us to watch over His valuable work. We have to see ourselves as working in HIS vineyard. This means that we view our actions as integral to the fulfilment of HIS overall and glorious plan.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**What is the work that the Lord has commissioned you to watch over?**

- **Pray for an awareness of the significance of your role in God's work.**
- **Ask the Lord to forgive you if you feel a sense of guilt regarding your personal commitment and attention to His work**



# DAY THREE

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## WE HAVE THE LORD'S ATTENTION

Psalm 121:1-4

***I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.  
He will not allow your foot to be moved, He who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. (v.3-4 NKJV)***

The writer here refers to the hills, maybe looking into the distance as he faced problems saw the distant hills and felt God was beyond the hills which inspired him to write that he will lift up his eyes to the hills.

Be encouraged to look away from the problem unto the distant hills and feel relief that that's where my help is. Beyond discouragements, beyond sickness, beyond distractions, beyond earthly problems. God being in focus, above the eye level, reflects my help comes from God who made Heaven and Earth. We have God's attention on us always, even when we are not thinking of Him.

There may be times we try to work things out for ourselves feeling that we can find answers for ourselves. God is asking us, the same question He asked Jeremiah. "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for me?" (Jeremiah 32:27) God is waiting for our call. He is just a thought and prayer away.

Verses 3 & 4 reminds us that God does not sleep. He who keeps His people Israel, and He who keeps us neither slumber or sleeps. We serve an Awesome and Amazing God who is always there for us every moment of every day.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**During this time of Prayer and Fasting, let us seek the Lord from where our help comes from.**



# DAY FOUR

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## GOD IS WITH HIS OWN

Deuteronomy 31:8

***It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you He will not leave you or forsake you, do not fear or be dismayed.***  
(ESV)

Moses handed the Israelites over to Joshua to continue the journey to the Promised Land as God had commanded him. These verses still apply to God's children today. God never goes back on His Word. God is with His own.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie; Neither the son of man, that He should repent: Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?

As we go through this time of Prayer and Fasting, you may be facing questions and not getting favourable answers. Remember God's word to you today as you go through this new year, God goes before you. Ask Him to lead and direct your paths. If you prayerfully listen, you will hear. God promises to be with you, take Him at His word, He is not going to leave or forsake you. He has the answer but we usually want a quick reply, yet He continues to say "Trust Me."

We are living in challenging times and sometimes tend to wonder if God cares. Be encouraged God cares, He sent this message to Joshua "do not fear or be dismayed" and this message comes to all of His children today, do not allow fear to keep you from reaching the goals set before you.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Pray for courage to keep believing and standing on the promise of God.**
- **Pray God gives us faith to keep serving Him faithfully.**





# DAY FIVE

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## GOD SAW US BEFORE WE WERE BORN

Psalm 139:13-16

***My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance. (v13-14 ESV)***

Psalm 139:13-16 boldly declares that God watches over and cares for us even before we are conceived. This gives us unwavering confidence in His endless love and protection towards us. The psalmist describes God as all-powerful, with great supremacy and control over our lives (from whom we cannot hide - Psalm 139:7-12).

The scripture vividly pictures God as a master craftsman or weaver, carefully creating and weaving us together in the womb with precision and purpose. This powerful imagery reminds us of the intentionality behind our creation and the unique crafting of our temperament, character, and personality even before birth. The phrase "being woven together in the depths of the earth" (i.e. the womb) signifies meticulous attention to detail in our formation. Most importantly, this scripture emphasises that God loved and cared for us before we even existed, which is truly awe-inspiring. Indeed, who is like the Lord our God (Psalm 113:5)?

Jeremiah 1:4-5 confidently affirms that God knew us even before we were formed in our mother's womb, demonstrating His amazing grace and mercy towards us. We are not mere accidents or afterthoughts but are chosen with great care by the Creator Himself. God has complete knowledge of our physical formation and everything that happens in our lives. He instills a strong sense of purpose and value in us, reminding us that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made".

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**We can have an unshakable faith that the One who created us before we were born is also the One who watches over us and will protect and guide us through all our days.**

**Today, let us boldly affirm that "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made, your works are wonderful, I know that full well."**



# DAY SIX

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## GOD SEES OUR FUTURE

Ephesians 1:4

***Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without defect before him in love (ESV)***

What a powerful scripture! It's so wonderful to know that God has chosen us: every person who would believe in him, before he created the world. This is an amazing *truth* that we must embrace. He knew us and loved us before the creation of the world! A commentary states *he chose us for himself*. The word chosen itself is used by our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:27; Romans 9:11; Romans 11:5; Romans 11:7; Romans 11:28; John 15:19; 1 Peter 2:9 -further reading)

God sees our future and knows us intimately; it's comforting to know that we have been chosen and that it was before the foundation of the world.

Today, focus on what it is like to be chosen. I remember at school wanting to be chosen by one of the popular groups to be part of their team, when I was chosen the joy and happiness that I felt was tremendous.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Take some time to meditate on this scripture and the impact of this scripture YOU ARE CHOSEN, and this was before the *creation of the world!***
- **How can you live in this truth?**
- **How can the spiritual truths in this chapter transform the way you view your role in the body of Christ, the Church?**



# DAY SEVEN

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## GOD LOVES HIS OWN

Romans 8:39

***nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (ESV)***

A parents love for a child can be taken to unimaginable limits by a hard-hearted or unloving child. Even to the point where onlookers would deem the parents' investment in the child to be unwise. The parent has a connection to that child that will hope for a change in behaviour... However, all humans have their breaking point. A point to where much pain & misery can wear that parent down to despair and the relationship is seemingly destroyed.

In our text today, Paul lays out the power of God's love for us. He uses multiple arguments within this portion of his letter to demarcate the weakness in the law, our bodies, and our minds to please our Heavenly Father.

It is only through Jesus Christs redemptive act on the cross that allows us to be called Gods children. Once we have received Gods Spirit, we are now His children. Children who are loved to unimaginable lengths. So much so, that nothing in the created universe known or unknown can detach, disassociate, or separate us from His love. Children who were incapable of pleasing God, have been given the unshakeable position of a loving child through no work of their own!

We are now His own children through Jesus Christ! This realisation is our point of meditation for today. We have been given the opportunity to look back at where we have come from and allow our life journey to strengthen our love for God.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Celebrate Gods unshakeable love for us by studying Romans 8. Look at the fallible areas of life that try to separate us from God but are unable to!**
- **Thank God for His unfailing love for us.**





**WEEK  
TWO**

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**WATCH!  
FOR HE IS COMING  
AGAIN**



THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



# DAY EIGHT

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## WATCH OUT, BE ALERT CHRIST WILL RETURN

Matthew 24:42-43

***Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.***  
**(ESV)**

Here Jesus was speaking of that great day, some call it the Day of Reckoning. This day is too important for you to be careless about it as there is too much to lose, that is your life.

Verse 42 starts "Therefore". Therefore, keep watch because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. We are reminded not to be caught up like the five foolish virgins in Matthew 25: 6-13, being unprepared at their important call. They answered 'yes' but were short of the important fuel and received the replay 'I do not know you, and be cast out'.

We're reminded not to live a life of pleasure, leaving God out of your life. In Daniel 5: 22-18 King Belshazzar went too far against God until he had to face the writing on the wall saying he was found wanting and his days had come to an end, as declared by God.

In this day you cannot live for yourself but for God. We must do what is pleasing in His sight and keep walking in the path of righteousness. Remember that these are evil days and the evil one is doing what he can to turn us off the right path but God is faithful who said in 1 Thessalonians 3:3 when the enemy rises up as a flood, the Lord will raise up a standard. So then, stand strong for God who knows all of the devil's plans will always make a way out so you will go through victoriously.

God is on your side. Remember to be watchful and stay alert and see His glory shining in our midst.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**As today's reading reminds us of those who were not watching or being alert and their demise, we ask God for strength that we would remain keeping watch for Christ's return.**



# DAY NINE

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## WE ARE STILL ON LOOKOUT DUTIES WITH THE LORD

Matthew 26:38

***Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me."  
(ESV)***

Our scripture today is at the time when Jesus was aware of what was to come – the crucifixion – and He told the disciples to keep a look out with Him. Jesus knew who would betray Him, that the weight of the sin of the world was on His shoulders, and He was about to face a horrific death. He knew what was about to happen and still told those disciples to keep a look out with Him.

Why? While being alert and looking out, you see things that you otherwise wouldn't have been aware of. Much is revealed on lookout duties. Our spiritual objective 'Be Watchful... stay alert!' is prophetic. There is so much opposition to followers of Christ and it will only get more intense. Yesterday's reading told us to be alert for Christ will return and today we must also be on lookout duties with the Lord. The key word being "with". In this heightened state of opposition do not get tired of your duty to remain on lookout with the Lord. (Similar to the opposition encountered in our scripture.) God is almighty and knows what is happening in realms that we cannot see. This is the season to be on lookout duties with the Lord so that we too can see and be alive to the principalities that are working against us.

Thought: Lookout duty is 24/7 and the only instruction is that we watch with the Lord – then we will see what God will reveal

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**Pray that we are not distracted whilst on lookout duties**





# DAY TEN

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## WATCHING, WORKING AND WAITING

MARK 13:34

***It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.  
(ESV)***

In this chapter, the discourse between Jesus and his disciples is focussed on the end times but more specifically the signs which will precede the return of Christ. The key message in this verse is to be alert, vigilant and not to be caught unaware. To be vigilant is to give careful attention to something and requires one to assume an active stance.

Note that Jesus describes a man who goes away to a far country leaving his servants with three things: His house, his authority and his work. The house represents the church, the body of Christ. Christ is indeed Head of the church and as his followers, we've been entrusted with the responsibility to care for it, to serve and draw others into the fold. Secondly, he leaves the servants in charge of the house, meaning he's empowered us with his authority. Thirdly, he assigns a task to each servant and appoints a doorkeeper to keep watch.

1 Corinthians 12:7 tells us that God has given each one of us a gift for the common good, to build up his church. He has equipped us with everything we need to fulfil the task and as such, we are to be obedient and faithful to the call. We must therefore do the work the Master has assigned whilst watching for the signs of the times so that we're ready when He returns.

Christ will indeed return and the command in verse 36 is this: "If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping."

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **That God will help us stay alert and vigilant through prayer and reading of his word.**
- **That we will understand the call of God on our lives and the assignment he has given to us.**
- **For strength, renewed passion and zeal as we continue to serve**



# DAY ELEVEN

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## WATCH AND PRAY

Mark 13:48

***Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.***  
(ESV)

This section of Mark 14 is what I like to call Jesus' "frustration" with the sleepy disciples! In verse 32, Jesus reaches Gethsemane which actually means olive press. It was a place where olives were crushed and ironically it is the very place where Jesus himself would experience a crushing. It is here that Jesus' soul is overwhelmed with sorrow and he asks his disciples to keep watch whilst he prayed. But on three occasions he finds the disciples asleep. In verse 37, he asks the question, "could you not keep watch for one hour?" This is followed by the warning in verse 38 to watch and pray to keep from falling into temptation.

To watch usually means to observe attentively but it is also to exercise care, caution and restraint. In this context, the word "watch" comes from the Hebrew word Shamar which is translated as "keep". To keep something is to guard and protect it. We protect and guard through prayer and so Jesus' concern was more for the disciples than for himself. He knew what was ahead and had previously warned them that Satan desired to sift them. His instruction to them was to watch, be vigilant, exercise caution and restraint. We do this by meditating on God's word, and through prayer. Jesus understood the tension between the flesh and the spirit and therefore warned them to "watch and pray" so that the spirit will have dominion over the flesh.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Pray that God would open our eyes to the spiritual battles around us and our need for constant prayer.**
- **Pray that we would see the importance of corporate times of prayer as well as our individual times of prayer.**
- **Pray that we would commit any area we may be struggling to God knowing that he is our strength.**



# DAY TWELVE

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## WATCHING UNTIL THE END

Luke 12:37

***Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.***  
(ESV)

Praise the Lord who does not lie! Titus 1:2

What a beautiful image and a wonderful promise. It may be one of the best promises anywhere in the New Testament. Envisage the scenario: The lady waits patiently in anticipation of that day. Every moment in his presence is precious, she longs to spend time getting to know him and she is attentive to all his desires and vice versa, and she is careful to present herself immaculately before him. He, in turn, watches intently hoping she is worthy of all that he has in store for her on and after that wedding day. Selah

One writer says, 'There is no degree of honor and glory which the Lord Yeshua will not gladly bestow on those who are found ready to meet him, in the day of his second coming.' This should encourage all to become alert in the hope that on that day we, the bride, will not be found wanting... this verse serves as a reminder that God has always desired to bless those who love Him. Wisdom calls... Matt 25:1-13  
Stay Alert, Be Watchful!

His servants who watch, are not preoccupied with the things of today. No, their hope and view are firmly fixed on what the Father has in store for His children. Paul, on the interpretation of the prophet Isaiah, excites us when he says, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor mind has conceived what God has prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor 2:9.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**When the Roll is called up yonder, will you be there?**



# DAY THIRTEEN

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## WAKE UP, THERE IS WORK TO DO

Revelation 3:2-3

***Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. (v.2 ESV)***

### **A call for Vigilance – there is a work to do!**

Awaken, for there is work to be done. Pinch yourself; yes, do it again. Did you feel that? I hope you did. This is a warning from the LORD, a wake-up call. Many of us employ devices, be it the traditional alarm clock or modern gadgets, to wake up. However, this scripture urges us to awaken from our lack of vigilance, our state of inoperativeness, and the dormant conditions in which we find ourselves.

Contributory factors include the daily struggles of life and a lack of faith and trust in our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ. Other factors involve indulging in the world's enticing offerings and seeking validation and acceptance in its larger narrative. Social media likes and appearances-driven validation can breed complacency, falsely suggesting that everything is well. This way of thinking can infiltrate the body of Christ becoming the filter for approval.

Our lack of discipline to stay focused on the higher calling can render us inoperative. The LORD, in His love, instructs us to strengthen, enhance, and intensify what remains of our faith and commitment to Him, as it is at risk of fading away. Remember, we are in the world but Not of the world.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Dear LORD, help me become spiritually alive so that I do not succumb to complacency.**
- **Thank you, LORD, for your love and for instructing me to wake up. Align my attitude with your truth to enable me to work diligently for your Kingdom.**

**Ask the LORD to reveal any unhelpful attitudes in your life.**





# DAY FOURTEEN

## REGULAR WATCHFUL PRAYER

Colossians 4:2

***Continue steadfastly in prayer, watchful in it with thanksgiving (ESV)***

As I read this passage the word 'watchful' stood out to me - I had to ask the question what watchful means: *watching someone or something closely; alert and vigilant* (Online Dictionary).

How many of us use the word 'watchful' these days? Is it in our everyday vocabulary? I tend to use the word vigilant or alert. The Greek word used for "**watchful**" in **Colossians 4:2** is: "γρηγορεύω (grégoreó)" which means: "to be awake, to watch".

The purpose of being watchful in prayer is to have our minds set on sober realities whether present or future, a good example would be Matthew 26:36. When Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "*Sit here while I go over there and pray.*" In **Matthew 26:40-41** Jesus states "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?","..... "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation". The reason we are to be "watchful or vigilant in prayer is because we can fall into temptation.

Temptation – '*the desire to do something, especially something wrong or unwise*' (Online Dictionary)

In Greek the word 'peirasmos': means:

- (a) trial, probation, testing, being tried,
- (b) temptation
- (c) calamity, affliction, to lose focus on spiritual realities.

**Colossians 4:2** is about being "watchful" in our spiritual duties as Christians.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

Scripture to meditate on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

***Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.***



# WEEK THREE

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# WATCH OUT!



THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



# DAY FIFTEEN

## STAY ALERT, STAY SAFE

1 Peter 5:8

***Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.***  
(ESV)

What would you do, if you were walking down your local High Street, and saw a lion? Would you be scared? Would you run? I think, if most people saw a lion prowling down a High Street, they would scream, panic, and run, and to be honest, I think that would be a normal response because lions are not known to be friendly. They are predators, animals with a killer instinct.

So, in the verse above, it is interesting to see the devil (our adversary), prowling (creeping around), like a roaring lion, seeking who he can devour (overcome). Yet in line with the same verse above, as children of God, we are not to run, scream, or be scared. Instead, we are told to be sober-minded, and watchful. Why? Because the devil at worst is an opportunist, and at best a deceiver and a liar. He looks for opportunities to cause you to lose your way in your walk with God or create situations that would cause you to act independently of God's provision for your life.

Now you may think there is no way the devil can trick you, well he did it to Eve, Judas, Ananias, just to name a few, and he will try and do it to you.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Pray for God's children be vigilant and aware of the devil's schemes. (2 Corinthians 2:11)**
- **Pray for God's children to remain dependent on God's provisions for their life. (Proverbs 3:5-6)**

**Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas in your life you are resisting to place under God's authority – life choices, life goals, finance, health, etc.**



# DAY SIXTEEN

## LOOK FOR THE FRUIT OF LOVE

1 Cor 16: 13-14

***Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love.***  
**(ESV)**

Our five senses to connect us to our world. In our natural tendency of self-preservation, our innate senses are fine-tuned through information, observation, and experience, alerting us of pending danger and potential harm to self. What is surprising is stories of people going to foreign countries and being attacked by wild animals, because they have been duped by what they have seen on the screen and assumed that they could approach an innocent cute Meerkat, an adorable cuddly Panda Bear or fun Kangaroo (Google it).

Adverts depicting humanised cute Meerkat's, with names and human-like personalities, is a distant reality from the normal tendencies of a wild Meerkat. This misconception has fuelled the countless amount of people sustaining life changing injuries because their senses were dulled by the information on the screen, and they attempted to pet a wild Meerkat. Simple!

Here in the first epistle (letter) to the Corinthian's concluding exhortation, the apostle Paul is giving instructions regarding Timothy's expected arrival and Apollos's delay. In the middle of this private conversation is what could be identified as an abrupt insertion of an admonition. The caution expressed is not in reference to Apollos but should be viewed in generic terms. In his discourse, he directs the reader to watch/be on your guard/stay awake and alert, all in the shadow of love.

In this post-Christian age please be alert to all of the notions, philosophies, opinions, and ideas, that seek to diminish the existence, reality, and consciousness of a holy, loving, and merciful God. Never get blindsided, God is an all-consuming fire, a righteous God who is just. If the Meerkat does not change his/her nature to fit a misconception, rest assured, neither does God change his nature to fit a lie. He will not be mocked (Galatians 6:7).

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**We must protect what we know about God and the message of salvation.**

- **Pray that God will protect your mind from the influence of foolish chatter, that diminishes the existence and character of God.**
- **Pray that God will help you to be watchful and alert.**

**Meditate on (1 Tim 6:20-21)**





# DAY SEVENTEEN

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## DO NOT SLEEP

1 Thessalonians 5:5-6

***For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.***

***So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.***  
(v.6 ESV)

The Bible speaks of a time to come when the children of light will be caught up with the Lord Jesus Christ and taken from earth. This is known as 'The Rapture'. For many people, this will be a terrifying time, but not for the children of light, who are expecting Christ's return.

But who are the children of light? They are the ones who have made Christ Jesus their Lord and Saviour. Yet sadly, many Christians today find themselves living in contradiction to who God has called them to be. They choose to live independent of God's truth and provisions, and in doing so are influenced according to the ways of the world, the desires of their flesh, and the deception of the devil (Eph 2: 1-3)

We are reminded in 1 Thess 5: 5-6 that God's children are not like children of the night or those who live in darkness. As children of light, we have a hope and a future. We are not to be caught sleeping, but we should be eagerly awaiting Christ's return.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Pray for believers to continue shining their light until Christ returns (Matthew 5:16)**
- **Pray that we become mature through the reading and application of God's word (Psalm 119:105)**

**Take time, to thank God for promising never to leave us nor forsake us, in this life and or the life to come.**



# DAY EIGHTEEN

## LOOK TO JESUS

Hebrews 12:1-2

***Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith (v.2a ESV)***

This scripture is widely cherished for its encouragement, celebrating the triumphant journeys of individuals such as Rahab and Gideon, who, despite their flaws, made it into the great cloud of witnesses. We draw inspiration, knowing that, with the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we too can endure and overcome.

Yet, my attention is drawn to the instruction urging us to cast aside every weight. It calls for a deliberate effort to discard the burdens that hinder us from fixing our gaze upon Jesus. This directive is personal, requiring each of us to actively implement it. We possess the ability to rid ourselves of hindrances, shedding the baggage that impedes our service to God and our perseverance in this Christian race.

Various types of weights necessitate laying aside, some of which have become familiar companions. While once finding comfort in burdens, I realised they kept me from experiencing a fulfilling relationship with God. Hindrances such as a wounded heart, pride, idolatry, secret sins, double-mindedness, lack of self-control, our own will, and worldly fascinations can distort our view when these are not surrendered.

However, it is also true that God utilises our weights and the process of casting them off to sanctify and mould us in His image.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Dear Lord, I am grateful that on this Christian journey, I am not alone. Despite challenges that may seem insurmountable, I thank you for being the author and finisher of my faith and race. Thank you that your love sustains and surrounds me.**

**If you are facing a daunting pile of weights, or even just one or two that you desire to release today but are unsure how, turn to Jesus, His word is infallible, also, the support from within the Church can guide and uplift you in this endeavour.**



# DAY NINETEEN

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## WHILST WE LIVE, WE LIVE WITH HOPE

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

***For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.  
(ESV)***

The verb for the word 'hope' is to believe, desire, or trust. 'Hope' is a state of mind that expects a 'positive outcome' and is a mindset irrespective of a present circumstance. The hopeful person looks beyond current issues, whether they are positive or negative and can focus on a particular outcome being fulfilled.

Thessalonica was a dangerous place for a Christian to profess their faith. Free speech was not afforded to the Thessalonian Christians. Mobs had actively sought out Paul during his missionary stay there and the young church faced such intense opposition that news of their situation was known throughout the various churches in other cities.

Paul encouraged this 'church of faith & conviction' to watch and be alert. They lived in an environment where being distracted or inattentive could cost them. Anything other than full focus on God and His eternal promises would produce a more dangerous proposition than the impending physical harm they continually faced.

We may at times experience hard seasons, but we can encourage ourselves like the church in Thessalonica; knowing that our destination is not based on the wrath of sin, but in being saved through Jesus! If we die or live, our destination is secure... we have a different outlook on life. How we live out our lives is radically different from society's, because of our belief, desire, and trust in God... OUR HOPE.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

- **Pray for strength of focus for your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ... send someone a message of encouragement in the faith.**
- **Read through Paul's writings to the Thessalonian church. Encourage yourself in sharing in the same mindset.**
- **Pray for the suffering church, that their hope in Christ will be fortified and strengthened.**



# DAY TWENTY

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## LOOK TO BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS

Philippians 2:3-4

***Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.***  
**(ESV)**

Unfortunately, there will be times when we experience symptoms that indicate that we may be unwell or coming down with something. Naturally, we start to do a self-examination of ourselves to gauge how bad those symptoms are and to diagnose what it might be i.e. cold or flu. We may then take some medication or remedies and do a daily re-assessment to see how we compare to our expected level of health until we are 100%.

In today's devotional we look at the words of Paul in his letter to the church in Philippi. The message is clear, we are not to only consider our own interests but look at how our ambitions can firstly be a blessing to those around us. In verse 3-4 we are being called to take an inward look (self-examination) to understand any symptoms we have that may indicate selfish ambition and empty pride. The challenge for us is a) doing an honest assessment of ourselves and b) counting others more significant than ourselves – which can be a tough medicine to take.

In doing an honest and regular assessment of ourselves, it may expose the attitude(s) behind the actions that we take and how our actions differ depending on whom they affect. We can unintentionally fall into selective blessings.

Ultimately, this inward look and reflection should bring us closer to the example that we have in Jesus Christ (v. 5-11) and help us to lead a healthy Christian lifestyle. Read Romans 12:9-21 for further encouragement.

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

How often do you put others first in your decision making?

- **Pray that God will highlight areas where we have put our own interests first**
- **Pray for the Holy Spirit to show us how we can be a blessing to others beyond this period of fasting**





# DAY TWENTY ONE

## LOOK ON THE SON AND BELIEVE

John 6:40

***For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. (ESV)***

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

The average life expectancy in the UK is somewhere between 81-82 years. On average females live to about 84 years and males to about 80 years. This trend of females living longer than males is a worldwide phenomenon. Pre-dating the advancement in anatomy and modern medicine, King David, about one thousand years before the birth of Christ highlighted that people were living to about 70 or even 80 years and beyond.

Psalms 90:10 (NIV)

Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

The Psalmist goes on to relay some good advice:

Psalms 90:12 (NIV)

Teach us to number our days, so that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

No matter how smart, rich, successful or health-conscious we are, we are all bound by this common enemy, death. It confirms the undeniable aspect of our being mortal. Whatever beauty we encounter, embrace, or create in our four-score (80+) years, it is all subject to decay.

Yet, as well as endowing the human-soul with the ability to recognise what is beautiful and good, God has also instilled in us an awareness that there is “something more” than this transient world, a hope that one day humanity will find a fulfilment not afforded by the “vanity” in this world.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV)

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

It is at this juncture that we find the secondary outcome of the redemptive work of the Son of God:

## PRAYER/ACTION POINTS

**Primary outcome: Glorify the Father**

**Secondary outcome: Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16-18)**



# NOTES

DURING THE FAST, I AM  
PRAYING & BELIEVING GOD  
FOR:







THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

# JOURNAL







THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

# JOURNAL



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THE PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

# ANSWERED PRAYERS



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