

Saint John Baptist Church



21 Day Devotional On Matthew 6:24-34

Rev. Dr. Jamey O. Graham, Sr.
Pastor
&
Mrs. Yvette D. Graham
1st Lady

3404 West Beltline Boulevard
Columbia, SC 29203
803-254-4170

Greetings,

We greet you with Jesus' Joy and Strong Faith in what God is about to do for us in 2021. God is calling His covenant children to Trust Him to supply all of our needs as we seek His Kingdom.

God wants us to establish a foundation of Trust over worry, and Faith over fear. Our theme: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteous Rule," will help us to build strong faith and trust in God that will empower us to overcome worry and anxiety.

It is our prayer that as you seek God's Kingdom Blessings and Righteous Rule, that you will experience God's favor, presence, power, and blessed assurance like never before. It is our hope that with this faith and trust in God and His Righteous Rule, you will never have to worry about poverty, lack, or want. God wants you to live a worry-free life! Therefore, as we walk by Faith to access God's Kingdom Blessings and Righteous Rule in 2021, it is appropriate for us to begin our journey together with a 21-day Corporate Prayer and Fast.

This book is a guide to fasting that includes a 21-day devotion (developed by Pastor & Mrs. Graham) to help you get in tune with God's Kingdom Blessings and God's Righteous Rule that will empower you to overcome worry and to reign in life.

During the Fast, we're asking that you please pray for your personal goals, and Saint John's Vision, Mission, and 2021 Goals.

Remember that the purpose of fasting is to work on your flesh and build your trust in God, so that God's Spirit may move in your life, transforming you into what He has called you to be.

Our prayer for you over the next 21 days is that your passion for God and His Word will be ignited and that you will develop a hunger for His presence that is greater than ever before!

Peace and Blessings,

Dr. Jamey O. Graham, Sr. & Yvette Graham

Pastor Jamey and Leading Lady Yvette Graham

How to Study

During prayer and devotion, it is best to have a special place where you are able to center yourself and fellowship with God.

It is suggested to read various translations during your devotion. We have included three different translations in this guide. Please feel free to use other translations as needed. You are able to gain more clarity or insight by reading the same word in a different translation.

When you study, note these four aspects.

1. **The verse** - *What is the scripture?*
2. **Insights** - *What is something new that you learned from the verse?*
3. **Application** - *How can you apply what you learned to your everyday life?*
4. **Prayer** - *Although we have included a prayer, pray your own prayer; it's your personal way of fellowshiping with God.*

You may choose to have a prayer journal or just record your Insights, Application, and Prayer in this devotional booklet. As you read this devotional and the scriptures, keep in mind the following three things:

1. **Read daily**
2. **Read prayerfully**
3. **Read with expectation that God is prepared to reveal Himself to you in new and refreshing ways.**

When you are fasting, your **main source of "food" is God and His word.** Therefore, it is very important that you spend time with God daily and that you remove as many distractions as possible during the fast. This will allow you to hear clearly from God.

May this special time with God bring you clarity, peace, strong faith, trust in God, and divine blessings as you seek to establish order in your lives.

Please take advantage of this book and the daily Corporate Prayer times via:

Conference Call @ (803)573-0268 at 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm, your individual daily prayer and the Wednesday Corporate Prayers 7:00 am, 12:00 pm, and 7:00 pm, via Conference call prayer line @ (803) 573-0268.

An Overview of the Devotional Process

I want to take the time to share with you the format of the 21-Day Devotion to overcome worry and live in the Blessings of the Kingdom. For the first 11 days we have shared with you a verse-by-verse approach to the Study of Matthew 6:24-34. Days 12-17 lifts up the questions in Matthew 6:25-34. Days 18 and 19 lift up the theme “Consider or Behold” in Matthew 6:25-34. Day 20 lifts up the theme of “All These Things,” in verses 32 and 33. Day 21 takes a look at verse 33 of Matthew 6:25-34 as the foundational verse that empowers Believers to overcome worry and anxiety. It is our prayer that this devotional study of Matthew 6:24-34 will increase your faith to help you overcome worries and anxieties and give you access to the Kingdom Blessings.



PLEASE NOTE:

Pastor Jamey O. Graham and the Saint John Baptist Church advise all members and participants of this consecration to consider their personal health needs and to consult their personal health physician prior to beginning this fast. Therefore, we specifically disclaim any responsibility from any physical reaction from this fast.

FASTING GUIDE

January 10 - January 31

Note: **This is a 24 hour a day Fast starting**

Starting 12:00 a.m. -- Sunday, January 10, 2021

Ending 12:00 a.m. -- Sunday, January 31, 2021

Like prayer and Bible reading, fasting is one of the spiritual disciplines of followers of Jesus. The next few paragraphs are here to help you get your mind around fasting, and help you get started in this powerful Christian habit! **BTW: if you want to know more, hit up some of the online resources at www.awake21.org.**

What is fasting?

Biblical fasting is, very simply, denying oneself food for the sake of seeking and honoring God. Prayer is connecting with God; fasting is disconnecting ourselves from the world. That's a great way to describe the feeling. You can fast from other things that keep you connected to the world, too. Things like TV, video games, social networking, snap chat, and more.

Why should I fast?

Over time, it's very easy for our souls to get "gunked up". Fasting is a way to give our bodies and our souls a deep cleaning. When we do, we find that not only do we feel better, but as we draw closer to God, we are more in tune with His voice.

How do I fast?

There are several different types of fasts. In this guide and over the next (21) twenty one days, we have laid out a plan that will help you detach from some of the distractions of everyday life. This twenty-one day plan involves cutting out some food items, and has a few days where you only drink liquids (like juices, smoothies and such). Other days you will eat just fruits and vegetables.

The plan provided in this guide is just that– **don't make this time thinking about what you eat, or don't eat.** This is all about drawing closer to God and replacing some of our common distractions with time to pray, read our Bibles and seek God like never before.

How should I prepare to fast?

For a 1-day fast, it doesn't take much preparation. It's best to slow down your eating before the fast, then pick it back up slowly by eating small, simple foods. For a longer fast, **DEFINITELY** prepare this way. **It's smart to plan ahead and make sure you'll have plenty of the fruits, vegetables, juices, etc.**

What should I do while fasting?

Drink lots of water. Pray. Read your Bible. Listen to worship music. Think.

Grab your Bible, this devotional, and a journal to capture your thoughts and what God shows you.

Get ready, this experience is going to be like no other!

Drink lots of water



Pray



Read your Bible



Listen to worship music



Think



Write your thoughts



FASTING GUIDE

January 10 -January 31, 2021

Note: *This is a 24 hour a day Fast starting 12:00 AM Sunday, January 12th and ending 12:00 AM Sunday, February 2nd.*

—————→ (Choose one)

Daniel Fast (Option #1) For all 21 Days ←————

Week One: Fruits and Vegetables (Lots of Water)

Week Two: Fruits and Vegetables (Lots of Water)

Week Three: Liquids (Lots of Water)

While everyone is encouraged to seek the Lord on how they are to fast, please consider the suggested model of fasting by eating only fruits and vegetables (weeks one and two) and all liquids, meaning 100% fruit and/or vegetable juices (Store bought or by juicing through blender and so forth) and water. (week three). Remember to limit or avoid television, electronics, or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus. For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord and write your thoughts from the daily devotions. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Modified Fast (Option #2) For all 21 Days ←————

No fried foods

No meats (No Red Meat, Pork, Turkey) *(Only Chicken and Fish)*

No BREAD

No soda, soft drink, power aide, caffeine *(WATER AND NATURAL JUICES ONLY)*

No sugar or sugar additives

No fast foods

No more than 2-hours of media entertainment per week -

(includes television, movies, newspaper, texting, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter, Hulu, etc.)

You may watch Christian media

Wednesday SALAD only—(lettuce, tomato, cucumber, onion, carrots, beets, peppers) *Drinks Lots of Water

For more information on Fasting Suggestions and Tips please visit:

Saint John Baptist Church – <http://saintjohnbaptistchurch1900.com>

Jamey O Graham Ministries - <http://jameyograhamministries.org>

Scripture Reference

Matthew 6:25-34

New Living Translation (NLT)

25 “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are?

27 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

28 “And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing

29 yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are.

30 And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

31 “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’

32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.

33 Seek the Kingdom of God^[a] above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

34 “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today

Scripture Reference

Matthew 6:25-34

New International Version (NIV)

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[a]?

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Scripture Reference

Matthew 6:25-34

New King James Version (NKJV)

25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 Which of you by worrying can add one ^[a]cubit to his ^[b]stature?

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not ^[c]arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.

Scripture Reference

Matthew 6:25-34

Amplified (AMP)

25 Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life, what you shall eat *or what you shall drink*; or about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life greater [in quality] than food, and the body [far above and more excellent] than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father keeps feeding them. Are you not worth much more than they?

27 And who of you by worrying *and* being anxious can add one unit of measure (cubit) to his stature *or* to the span of his life?

28 And why should you be anxious about clothes? Consider the lilies of the field *and* learn thoroughly how they grow; they neither toil nor spin.

29 Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his magnificence (excellence, dignity, and grace) was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive *and* green and tomorrow is tossed into the furnace, will He not much more surely clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 Therefore do not worry *and* be anxious, saying, What are we going to have to eat? or, What are we going to have to drink? or, What are we going to have to wear?

32 For the Gentiles (heathen) wish for *and* crave *and* diligently seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows well that you need them all.

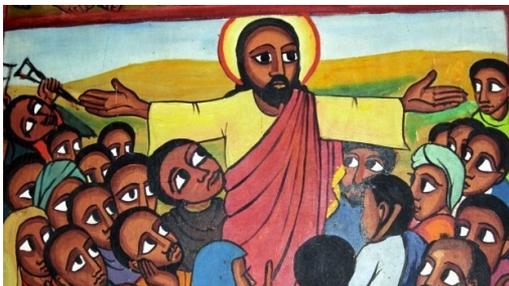
33 But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.

34 So do not worry *or* be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries *and* anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble.

Insight and Background Information of Text

Matthew chapters 5-7 are known as the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus gave these messages while being on a hillside near Capernaum. Jesus' preaching and teaching series about the Kingdom of God probably spanned over several days. This Sermon on the Mount series consists of teachings on the Mystery, Purpose, Character, Attitude, and Practices of the Kingdom of God. His teachings deal with the Spiritual implications of Christ's authority over the lives of those who believe in Him.

It is here on the slopes of a hillside near Capernaum where Jesus sits at the top of the hill, with the disciples sitting closer to him, while multitudes are spread out among the lilies and wildflowers, and the birds flying and singing in the background. *Matthew 6:25-34, is the section of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus teaches his disciples about overcoming worry and anxiety.*



Daily Devotional

Making the Right Choice!

Day 1

Sunday
01/10/2021

Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

24 “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Life is full of choices. We all make many choices and decisions everyday. When you rise for work or school you have to choose what shoes to wear or what to have for breakfast: pancakes or toasts, grits and eggs, or oatmeal.

With the pandemic and economic hardship, many people find themselves having to choose between medicine or food; the car note or the rent. Regardless of the situation you must decide.

Jesus is saying to us, you must decide, serve God or money.

The question for you is: Will you choose God or money; God or material wealth? Who or what do you find superior? Make the right choice and choose God!

Prayer:

Heavenly father, amid all the choices I have in life today, help me choose You, God, so that I can live a strong, confident, and faithful life that is pleasing to You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Day 2

Monday
01/11/ 2021

Daily Devotional

“Don’t Worry – Be Happy!”

Matthew 6:25 (NKJV)

25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

I am reminded of a popular song “Don’t Worry Be Happy” The songwriter states, “**When you worry, you make it double.**” Most times when I would sing that song I would only focus on the upbeat tempo and the refrain to “**Don’t Worry Be Happy.**”

This is what God is sharing with us in this verse: Don’t worry about everyday life (food, drink, clothes). God wants his children to live a worry-free life. When you worry you make it double; double the trouble, double the anxiety, double the burden. That’s why Jesus asked the question, “**Isn’t life more than food, and the body more than clothing?**”. God cares about you and your life, not the clothes that you wear or the fine food you eat.

What are some things that are worrying you? I challenge you to give your worries to God. Remember, your Heavenly Father loves you unconditionally so don’t worry be happy.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father help me to focus on what is meaningful to You, to life, and to my soul. Father, help me to fully rely on You so that I will worry less and trust You more. Amen

Daily Devotional

A Lesson from the Bird

Day 3

Tuesday
01/12/2021

Matthew 6:26 (NLT)

26 Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?

Sometimes I love to sit out on my deck and just enjoy the sweet rays of sunshine, get a breath of fresh air, or just enjoy the splendor of God's creation.

Most times while I'm out in nature, I will observe a bird or squirrel enjoying God's beautiful creation as well. I've noticed that these creatures freely go about without a care or without the worries of the world. This is what our Heavenly Father desires for us.

We are reminded that the smallest of God's creation does not worry itself with planting, harvesting, or storing large amounts of foods. The Master freely provides the needs of the bird; therefore, He is able and willing to provide our needs as well.

If God can provide the needs for a bird, He can and will provide for his children. God loves you more and will provide all your needs. Remember He created his children to have dominion over the birds. Your Heavenly Father has promised to supply all your needs. Trust God to provide what is needed at the right time.

Prayer:

Gracious and Loving Father help me to rely on You and trust that You will provide for me. Thanks for reminding me that I am created in Your image and that I am valuable to You. Amen

Day 4

Wednesday
01/13/ 2021

Daily Devotional

Rocking To Nowhere

Matthew 6:27 (NLT)

27 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

When my cousins and I were younger we would play the rocking chair race. Many of you may have played that same game where you sit in a rocker and rock yourself away trying to get to the predetermined finish line. Indeed, this game gave us something to do but it got us nowhere.

This passage reminds me of the rocking chair game. Worrying simply gives you something to do but doesn't get you anywhere. We can get so busy in this world being preoccupied with worrisome and unimportant things. **My question to you is: What does worrying get us?** Worrying gets us nowhere; **worrying robs** us from having a productive day, it **robs** us of having a day of joy and thanksgiving. *Life is so full of things to worry about: What will others think of this outfit?, How will others feel about the decisions I make,? Do my colleagues like me?* If we don't keep our focus on God, worrying can and will consume our lives. This passage challenges us by asking the question: **Can worry add a single moment to your life? The answer simply is "no."** So put your trust in God. Choose Him to help carry you through the difficulties and challenges in your life. Just don't sit there and rock yourself away.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father we thank You for this day. Help us to be good stewards of this day. Help us so that we do not spend a moment worrying about the cares of this world. Amen

Daily Devotional

A Lesson from the Lily

Day 5

Thursday
01/14/ 2021

Matthew 6:28 (NKJV)

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

In a recent survey it was noted that during the average life span *“approximately \$125,000 is spent on clothing and accessories.”*

Many people work and thrive on the essence of looking good. However, Jesus challenges his children to ponder the following question: *“So why do you worry about clothing?”* Why do we worry about the latest designer shoes? Why do we worry about the designer jeans or handbag?

If the Lord takes great care of lilies, will He not care for you? The message bible states verse 28 this way: *“All this time and money wasted on fashion - do you think it makes that much difference? Instead of looking at the fashions, walk out into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They never primp or shop.”* Learn a lesson from the lily, trust God to clothe and take care of you.

Prayer:

God You are our Creator, and we trust and believe You to be our provider. Lord help me to keep my focus on You and not the temporal things. Thank You for teaching us a lesson from the Lily. Amen

Day 6

Friday,
01/15/2021

Daily Devotional

Best Dressed!

Matthew 6:29 (NLT)

29 yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are.

Seniors, during their last year of high school, get to cast their votes for *Senior Superlatives*. One of the prized categories is for best dressed. I can still remember the names of those who were voted for best dressed in our Senior Class!

If there was a best dressed in the Bible, the votes would all be for King Solomon.

King Solomon was the climax of earthly splendor, yet he was not clothed like the lilies. If the Lord takes meticulous care in clothing little flowers with such majesty, why should we place so much concern on our clothing? Jesus is telling us that if His Father has clothed each individual lily, why do we need to be anxious about our temporal needs?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You have shown us through the splendor of Your creation that You intimately and meticulously care for the flowers of the field, and for that we trust that You will care for us also. In Your name we pray. Amen

Daily Devotional

Here Today, Gone Tomorrow

Day 7

Saturday,
01/16/2021

Matthew 6:30 (NLT)

30 And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

My children taught me a lot about spending money on clothes. Every season our children would look forward to purchasing the latest fashion trends. Last March, we began purchasing spring dresses to wear for the season. Well, we were faced with a world-wide pandemic and forgot about the spring dresses. Upon going through their closets, we decided to pull the dresses out to wear. Just as suspected, they had already outgrown the garments. So, they were bagged to find a new owner.

Jesus reminds us in this passage that the lilies in all their splendor are only here for a season. Just like the fashion we spend our money, time, and effort coordinating. They are here today and gone tomorrow.

Jesus reminds us that the Lord sent His only begotten Son to die for us in order to take away the penalty of our sins and provide Christ's perfect righteousness to clothe us. As Believers, we should know that Christ will also clothe us physically. This eliminates worry and increases our faith in God.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for caring for us. Thank for being a constant provider in a fleeting world. We know that You will always be with us. Amen

Day 8

Sunday
01/ 17/ 2021

Daily Devotional

God Will Provide

Matthew 6:31 (NIV)

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

It is easy to worry about the necessities of life and to become anxious when food is getting scarce, clothes are getting worn, the rent is due, or when we lose a job or our home. Human nature has taught us to fear and to have anxiety, but this is not how God wants us to feel. God wants his children to live above the world's system. We are called to trust God's ability and His willingness to provide for us.

Jesus teaches us that God is both able and willing to provide, all we must do is trust and believe. We know God can provide because He feeds the birds and dresses the flowers. **His word tells us that His children are far more valuable to Him than birds and flowers (Matthew 6:26–29).** My question to you is: *Will you trust Him with your most basic needs? Are you willing to change your mindset and attitude from self-sufficiency to God-sufficiency?*

Jesus is not telling us to stop working, planning, or spending wisely. He is not teaching us to just sit and wait for the world to feed us. God gives us work and wisdom to meet our needs.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for providing us with the necessities of life. Thank you for giving us work, wisdom, health, and strength that enables us to receive your bountiful provision. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Daily Devotional

“Don’t Worry About A Thing”

Day 9

Monday
01/18/2021

Matthew 6:32 (NLT)

32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.

We have all had a day where we had a big exam or a large project to complete. It seems like all we are able to do is concentrate or focus on making sure we studied all the content or completed all of the tasks. It seems like the exam or the project dominated our thoughts until everything was done.

In this fourth explanation about anxiety, Jesus teaches not to allow worrying about the future dominate our thoughts. Future things like: What will my retirement look like, how am I going to live when I reach my senior years? Jesus reminds us that as believers our thoughts should be different. Unbelievers organize their life around getting food, drink, and clothing. They let these things dominate their thoughts. Unbelievers sometimes find themselves competing with others and competing with the world. They find themselves storing up wealth for the future.

Jesus reminds us that God knows and takes responsibility to meet the needs of all of His children. As His children, we do not have to live in a state of worry that God is not going to take care of us. As believers we should pray and consult God and His will. Just know, and trust that God is in control.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for taking care of me and supplying all of my needs. I will not let the cares of this world dominate my thoughts. I will put my trust in you and not worry about

Day 10

Tuesday
01/19/2021

Daily Devotional

First Things First

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

When I first went off to college, my family and the elders of my Church shared with me many valuable life lessons. One, that I will always remember is to **“put first (important) things first.”** Just like athletes are expected to condition and train first, before they play the game, Christians, are called to put spiritual conditioning and training first place in their lives.

Jesus is teaching us in this verse to **“put first things first!”** We can keep God and His Kingdom first when we put reading our Bibles, spending time with God in prayer and devotion at the top of our priorities. Making God and His word the top priority in our day to day endeavors is putting **“first things first.”** In other words taking care of the health of our souls is putting **“first things first.”**

We should strive to have the same attitude as Mary who made her top priority to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn the Principles of the Kingdom so that she could serve Him better.

Will you heed the command of Jesus, to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? What steps have you taken to insure that you spend time with God in prayer and daily devotion? What are a few things that you have to intentionally move around or give up in order to spend time with God? These are some key questions to ponder as you strive to put **“first things first.”**

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for reminding me to “put first things first.” I know that when I put first things first by seeking your righteousness, you will give me everything that I need. Amen!

Daily Devotional

Embrace Today

Day 11

Wednesday
01/20/2021

Matthew 6:34 NIV)

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

On January 1st I sat with my daughters and encouraged them to put together a vision board for the new year. They shared dreams, plans, ambitions, and aspirations for the future. As we were working on our vision boards, I thought about this scripture, where it states **“Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.”** That’s when I began to praise God, because I realized that there is a difference between worrying about tomorrow and planning for tomorrow.

When you worry about tomorrow it ruins the joy of today. It does not allow you to work and plan today with hope and faith for tomorrow.

But when you embrace today, you realize that God has given you sufficient provisions for today. With faith in God, you embrace today with new mercies, new provisions, new grace, new strength, now hope, new peace, and a new opportunity to grow and shine for God. **When you have faith in God, you don’t worry about your future; you plan for the future with confidence and faith that God will bring your future to fruition.**

Don’t let tomorrow ruin your day, **enjoy today, live in today, love today, give lots of hugs today, make someone smile today, give someone hope today.** Let tomorrow’s worries take care of itself. What can you do to enjoy your day? Do you worry and dread tomorrow or do you plan for tomorrow with great anticipation?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the supply of new mercies, strength, and faith for today. I trust You for the provisions for today and wait for the Blessings of tomorrow. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen

Day 12

Thursday
01/21/2021

Daily Devotional

What's More Important: Food or Life?

Matthew 6:25 (NIV)

"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?"

When Jesus was tempted about food, he was presented with a question, **"If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread."** Jesus knew life consisted of more than bread or food for life and living. And he answered the question of what's more important, saying, **"Man must not live by bread (food) alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."**

Food alone cannot satisfy life, it takes the word of God to sustain you, strengthen you, and build your faith that will help you overcome the world. So, when you think about food and life, remember life consists of more than food. It takes the word of God to empower you to live your best life. It takes the word of God to build your faith to the point where you can firmly trust God.

So, when the hunger pains come, while you are fasting, ask yourself, what's more important? Bread and food or the word of God and life? Are you craving the food that perishes or the word that sustains, empowers, and builds your faith?

Prayer:

Lord, you have shown us that we must not live by bread (food) alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. For that Lord, we know that our life consists of more important things than food. In our hunger Lord, help us to feast on your word. In Jesus name I pray. Amen!

Daily Devotional

What's More Important: The Body or Clothes?

What God Fearfully Fashioned verses the Latest Fashion

Day 13

Friday
01/22/2021

Matthew 6:25 (NIV)

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?”

While walking out of the Footlocker store, a little boy was complaining to his mother about not having the latest tennis shoes. As soon as they turned the corner, they saw a man who did not have feet to put shoes on. It was at that moment that this little boy realized that his body, (his feet) are more important than what he put on his feet.

This proves to us that sometimes we worry about the less important, rather than the more important. When will we realize that the body is more important than the clothing we wear? While many people stress, trying to purchase Prada, Jordan's, or Louis Vuitton to impress others or to make a worldly status statement, we should be thinking about how fearfully and wonderfully God has made our bodies.

So instead of worrying about how to get the latest fashion to clothe our bodies, let us worship the God who fashioned and formed our bodies; which house our vital organs, house our souls, and house our Spirit man in Christ Jesus. **What are you thankful for? What is more important to you?**

Prayer:

Lord, help me to be mindful of what's more important in life. Help me to be thankful for the body that you've given me rather than worry about the latest shoes or clothes to put on my body, in Jesus name. Amen.

Day 14

Saturday
01/23/2021

Daily Devotional

You Are Better Than That

Matthew 6:26 (KJV)

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Can't you just hear a mother telling her daughter or a father telling his son, **"You are much better than that!"** A coach calls time out, pulls his team off the court and says, **"Get your act together, get your head in the game, stop fearing your opponent, and let's win this game because you are better than they!"**

This is what Jesus is saying to his disciples, why are you worrying about food, when God is supplying food to the birds, that do not sow, reap, or store up food in barns. You are much better than the birds in that you can sow, you can reap a harvest, and you can store up your food in barns, food pantries, refrigerators, and freezers.

You are much better than the birds, in that you are made in the image and likeness of God, you are God's chosen and covenant children. You can rest in the fact that if God can feed the birds of the air, and you are much better than the birds, surely God will feed you and meet all of your needs.

Like that parent or coach, **Jesus is saying to you today, "stop worrying about food, you are better than that! Stop worrying about whether your basic needs will be met or not, you are better than that!"**

Can you remember a time when you let your guards down and acted out of fear or worry, but you regained your faith and said, **"I'm better than this?"** Have you ever done something that was completely out of character, and you say to yourself, **"I'm better than that?"** What can you do now that can help you overcome worry and anxieties in your life?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, help me to be mindful that I am better than being worried all the time about my needs? Help me to understand that you value me and think of me more than you do the birds of the air? I thank you for supplying all of my needs according to your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Amen!

Why Is It Not Adding Up?

Matthew 6:27 (AMP)

And who of you by worrying and being anxious can add one unit of measure (cubit) to his stature or to the span of his life?

The boy kept telling his mother, **"I counted, and I counted, but it's just not adding up?"** She gave him another way of looking at the problem, and he came up with the right answer. Many people are like this little boy today. They are trying to put 2 and 2 together, but it just never seems to add up. They are trying to make ends meet, but it never seems to add up.

This is what Jesus equates to worry and anxiety in your life. He said, ***"Can all your worries combined add a single span, inch, or moment to your life?"*** No! It will not add up!

On the other hand, pay attention to the person who has faith and trust in God to do the impossible. You have seen them. Their backs were against the wall, they were down for the count, the doctors gave up on them, the Cancer or Covid-19 were supposed to take them out. But their faith in God gave them a Hezekiah experience. Instead of dying, God worked a miracle and added more years to their lives, increased their income, and brought them out of their dark valley. Now when people look at their life, they shake their heads, saying, **"It does not add up!"**

Which option will you choose? Will you choose to worry which does not add up to anything positive and productive? **Will you choose faith? Will you choose to trust and believe God to work a miracle that just does add up to human logic?**

Prayer:

Lord help me not to worry, knowing that worry will not add anything positive or productive to my life. Help me to have faith, trust, and believe that you will supply all my needs and work a miracle in my life that will defy the odds. In Jesus name I pray. Amen

Day 16

Monday
01/25/2021

Daily Devotional

A Question About Faith

Matthew 6:30 (NIV)

If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

There is a song that says, **“If you pray don’t worry, and if you worry don’t pray.”** Worry drains faith by constantly meditating on doubts that God is able to supply your needs. You are either worrying and have very little faith, or you are living and walking by faith with no worries. This teaching on worry and the kingdom is really a question about your faith.

Jesus is really asking where is your faith? In other words, if God can clothe the wildflowers of the field that are here today and gone tomorrow, will you not have Faith in this God? Will you not believe and trust that God will provide and clothes you? Where is your faith?

Where is your faith in this matter of God our provider? Where is your faith in the God who promised to supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus? What more evidence do you need that God will provide for you when Jesus himself stresses that if God clothes the grass of the field, will He not much more clothe you?

As we fast and pray for God’s continued provision for our lives, we are encouraged to see that our faith can be strengthened by our belief in God’s power to provide. Our faith can only be weakened by our worries and doubts about God’s provision.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for helping me to check and evaluate my faith. I have learned through Your word that worry can weaken my faith. It is Your word that reminds me of our Heavenly Father’s constant provision for me, by showing me the Father’s provision for the flowers of the field. For that Lord, I choose trust over worry about Your constant provision for my life. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Daily Devotional

What are You Speaking? Questions of Worries or
Statements of Faith?

Day 17

Tuesday
01/26/2021

Matthew 6:31 (AMP)

Therefore do not worry *and* be anxious, saying, What are we going to have to eat? or, What are we going to have to drink? or, What are we going to have to wear?

Within the song entitled, **“Be Careful Little Eyes,”** one of the stanzas cautions, **“Be Careful Little Mouth what you say.”** This song speaks to the spiritual truth in Proverbs 18:21, which states, **“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.”** Likewise, Jesus is cautioning us in this lesson saying, do not speak of your worries and doubts, because life and death is in the power of the tongue. If you speak of your worries and fears you are going to get your worries and fears. That’s why he said, **“Therefore, do not worry *and* be anxious, saying, What are we going to have to eat? or, What are we going to have to drink? or, What are we going to have to wear?”**

We see this truth manifested in the life of Job who started worrying and speaking his worries, and what he worried about came true (**see Job 3:25**). What are you speaking today, questions of worries or statements of faith?

I challenge you today, do not speak your worries and anxieties, but speak your faith and hope in God. For the scriptures say, **“You will have whatever you say.”**

Prayer:

Lord, I thank you, that I do not have to speak questions of worries and doubts over my life. I can speak statements of faith. Therefore, I speak life, peace, provision, favor, and blessings over my life. In Jesus name I pray. Amen!

Day 18

Wednesday
01/ 27/2021

Daily Devotional

When You Are Worried About Food Consider the Birds

Matthew 6:26 (AMP)

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father keeps feeding them. Are you not worth much more than they?

Before we get stressed and worried about food and life, Jesus said we ought to *consider*, ponder, and learn thoroughly from the birds of the air. What do we need to consider about the bird? What do we need to ponder and learn thoroughly about the birds that will help us not to worry about food and life?

First, consider what the Birds don't have that you have. Birds don't have seeds to sow, they don't have a harvest to reap, and they don't have barns or storehouses to store up food for hard times or a rainy day. And yet our Heavenly Father *keeps feeding them*.

Secondly, *consider* what the Birds do have. Birds have a Heavenly Father and Creator that *keeps feeding them*. Winter, spring, summer, or fall, *He keeps feeding them*. Rain, sleet, or snow, *He keeps feeding them*. In times of Abundance and Prosperity, *He keeps feeding them*. In times of drought and famine, *He keeps feeding them*.

Therefore, when you consider, ponder, and learn thoroughly what the Birds don't have that we have; when you consider, ponder, and learn thoroughly what the Birds do have, that should build your faith to the point that you know and trust that God will keep feeding you. Why, because we are much more valuable to God than the Birds.

We should never be worried or stressed about food ever again, because we have the Birds to consider, ponder, and learn thoroughly from.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, you have given us great examples of your bountiful care and provision in your creation. Because you keep feeding the birds, we will never have to worry about food ever again, in Jesus' name I pray. Amen

Daily Devotional

When You Are Worried About Clothes Consider the Lilies

Day 19

Thursday
01/28/2021

Matthew 6:28-30 (AMP)

And why should you be anxious about clothes? Consider the lilies of the field and learn thoroughly how they grow; they neither toil nor spin.²⁹ Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his magnificence (excellence, dignity, and grace) was not arrayed like one of these.

When you are stressed or worried about the latest fashions, *consider*, ponder, and learn thoroughly from the lilies. Jesus uses weak, frail and fragile wild flowers of the field to show us his tender care and provision for his children. Why are we so anxious about the latest fashions, when God takes frail, fragile, and helpless lilies and clothes them?

What shall we consider, ponder and learn thoroughly from the lilies? *Consider*, ponder, and learn thoroughly what lilies cannot do that we can do. Lilies and other wildflowers cannot labor, get up, and go on a 9 to 5 like many of us. Yet, God clothes them and they are adorned better than the rich and famous, and Hollywood celebrities.

Consider, ponder, and thoroughly learn that the lilies cannot design, create, sew, or make their own clothes. They don't sew or design fashion like the popular designers. Yet God clothes them in something splendid, glorious, radiant and stately.

When you are worried about the latest fashion, *consider* that we are more valuable than lilies. We are created in the image of God. We have dominion over all the earth and its creatures. We are loved so much by God that He gave His only begotten Son to die for our sins. Therefore, we should find comfort in knowing that the God who clothes the lilies will take care of us.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, when we consider and ponder the fragile, and frail lilies and how you clothe them with splendor, excellence, majesty, and beauty we cannot help but be hopeful and confident that you will dress us. We have the assurance that you have abundant provisions for us. In thy name we pray. Amen

Day 20

Friday
01/29/2021

Daily Devotional

All These Things

Matthew 6:32-33 (NKJV)

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

What is so significant about the phrase, **“All these things,”** that Jesus had to mention it three times in two verses? Does Jesus want us to see how **“All these things,”** have taken precedence over everything else in the life of unbelievers? Does Jesus want us to see how **“All these things,”** have distracted believers from seeking and trusting in God? Does Jesus want us to see how **“All these things”** have caused believers to worry rather than worship and trust God to provide for them?

I believe Jesus mentions **“All these things,”** three times to move the **love, desires,** and **longing** for material possessions from the main things we desire. It is Jesus’ plan and purpose to make **“all these things,”** secondary to the primary focus of **God’s Kingdom Blessings and Righteous Rule.**

Jesus purposely shows the contrast between His disciples who seek the Kingdom and the pagans who strive for and scramble after **“all these things.”** Do you know someone in this category of running after, worry over, and scrambling for **“All these things?”**

Continued on next page...

Daily Devotional

All These Things

Day 20

Friday
01/29/2021

(Continuation)

Jesus purposely assures the disciples that the Father already knows that you have a need for **“All these things!”** Are you comforted in knowing that your Heavenly Father already knows what you are in need of? And since, He knows, He will provide.

Jesus purposely assures the disciples that when they seek God’s Kingdom Blessings and Righteous Rule first, **“All these things”** will be added to their lives. Have you made God’s Kingdom Blessings and Righteous Rule your top priority? Have you experienced the overflow of **“All these things,”** being added to you?

Prayer:

Lord, God, Thank You for teaching me about the distractions of All these things, God’s foreknowledge of our need of all these things, and how when we make the kingdom blessing and righteous rule our top priority, God gives us overflow of all these things. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen

Day 21

Saturday
01/30/2021

Daily Devotional

Your Top Priority: Food and Drink
or The Kingdom of God?

Matthew 6:33 (AMP)

33 But seek (*aim at and strive after*) first of all His Kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.

When you seek first the *Kingdom of God*, you are craving after **Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost**, rather than food and drink. Jesus knows that the Believer can overcome worry over material possessions such as food and drink, when He makes the *Kingdom of God* top priority.

What happens when you make the Kingdom of God your top priority?

Seeking first the *Kingdom of God*, helps you obtain the Righteousness of God by Faith. This gives you right standing with God, empowering you to be right and do right and reign in life.

Seeking first the *Kingdom of God* also gives you peace with God and man. This also gives you the Peace of God that guards your hearts and minds against worry, fret, and fears.

Finally, seeking first the *Kingdom of God* gives you Joy in the Holy Ghost. This Joy in the Holy Ghost is what satisfies, strengthens and sustains you in the dry seasons of your life, until the overflow of "all these things are added unto you."

Continued on next page...

Daily Devotional

Your Top Priority: Food and Drink
or The Kingdom of God?

Day 21

Saturday
01/30/2021

(Continuation)

Are you content with the Kingdom Blessings? Have you experienced the Overflow of “**All these things** “ being added to your life?” Have you allowed food, drinks, or other material possessions to take top priority over the Kingdom's Blessings of Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost?

Prayer:

Lord, help me to make your kingdom blessings of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost a top priority in my life. Help me not to be distracted by material possessions such as food, drink, and clothes, in Jesus name we pray. Amen

12 Expectations From the Fast

We Expect God:

1. To increase our FAITH, eliminate our fears and override every curse.
2. To give us Divine Favor and Protection.
3. To Anoint us to supernaturally increase, multiply, prosper, take dominion over every area of our life and to cancel every debt.
4. To empower our membership to expand the Kingdom through Evangelism.
5. To Bless our family, marriage, and our children.
6. To give us clear directions to his Masterplan for our lives.
7. To give us total healing in our mind, body, and soul.
8. To give us deliverance from every form of bondage.
9. To make us reign as champions and winners in life.
10. To give us a testimony of the GREAT things He has done.
11. To make our witness stronger for God.
12. To hear and answer our prayers.

Information about Anxiety & Reaching out for Help Facts

Give your worries to God *Philippians 4:6*

Pray

Petition

Be Thankful

- Retrain your brain to relax when you begin to feel anxious or panicked.
- Work environment may impact your anxiety, prioritize your schedule. Remember to include time to spend with God.
- More than 20% of adults are affected by anxiety
Lifestyle choices impact anxiety.

Skipping meals

Scrolling on social media too often

Staying up late

Drinking too much coffee or caffeinated drinks

Sitting at home all day

- Some people suffer from anxiety because of nurture (experiences from life).
- Everyone have different experiences, anxiety is not one size fit all.
- Anxiety is highly treatable (it is one of the most treatable conditions).

Search for the right therapist.



Resource Available:

South Carolina Mental Health Department

www.scdmh.net

21-Day Corporate Fast Prayer Schedule

January 2021

GROUP	LEADERS	DATE	TIME	MEMBER GROUPS
VISION LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Duncan • Rev. Edward Johnson 	January 13	7:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deacon Board • Preschool • Saint John College Scholarship • Family Life Center • Seven Last Words • Trustee Board
MISSIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leon Corley • Rev. Maurice Watts 	January 13	12:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Pantry • Garden Ministry • Foreign Missions • Lent-So Send I You • Hopeful Dinner • Praise in the Park • General Missionary Organizations • Watkins Nance
EVANGELISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wendell Price • Rev. Daniel Canty 	January 13	7:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Tutorial Ministry • Boys and Girls Scouts • Puppet Ministry
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilbert Lewis • Rev. Preston Wilson 	January 20	7:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacation Bible School • Sunday School • Stewardship • Bible Study • New Member's Class • My Brother's Keeper • College Ministry • Domestic Violence • Bible Institute • Teaching and Preaching
WORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtis Jackson • Rev. Gregory Daniels 	January 20	12:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Ministry • Website/Facebook • Transportation • Musicians • Choirs • Ushers • Jr. Ushers • Hospitality • Parking Lot

God's Promise

You may ask yourself, "How do I get to a place where there's nothing to worry about?" Remember the promises of God. As a Christian, it is easy to seek him in prayer when we remember His promises. Be mindful of all that He promised us. Give your worries to Him, he will not disappoint.

1. God has a plan for all of us God's timing is best when we yield to Him. When we yield to Him, we are stepping out on faith and into His plan. God has a plan for all of us. His plan is to help and not harm.

2. God is Always with You when you give your worries to him. It's not like writing a letter, putting it in the mail, and sending it to another country. Prayer is a loving conversation with God your Father; he is always with you. Give your worries to him and leave them in His care.

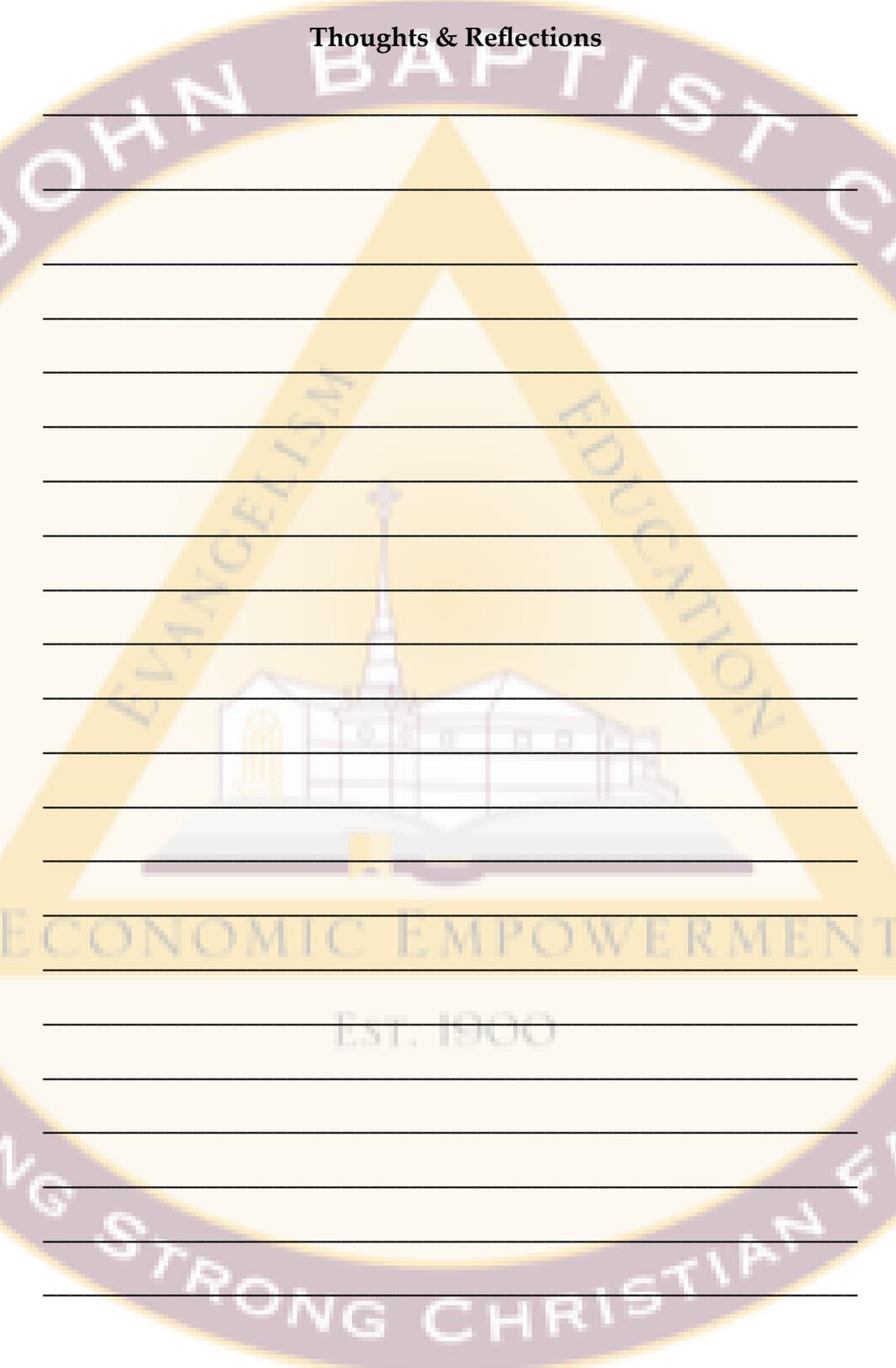
3. God Loves You Always remember God loves you and there isn't anything that can put you outside of his love. None of your worries are bigger than Him. He loves you so much that he made the ultimate sacrifice to be with you. God tells us not to fear troubles because he has overcome the world!

This book has been compiled from the following sources:

Feola, K. (2010). *The Ultimate Guide to the Daniel Fast, Michigan*: Zondervan
Simmons, Sammie (2017). *Fasting Guide SDS Ministries, South Carolina*

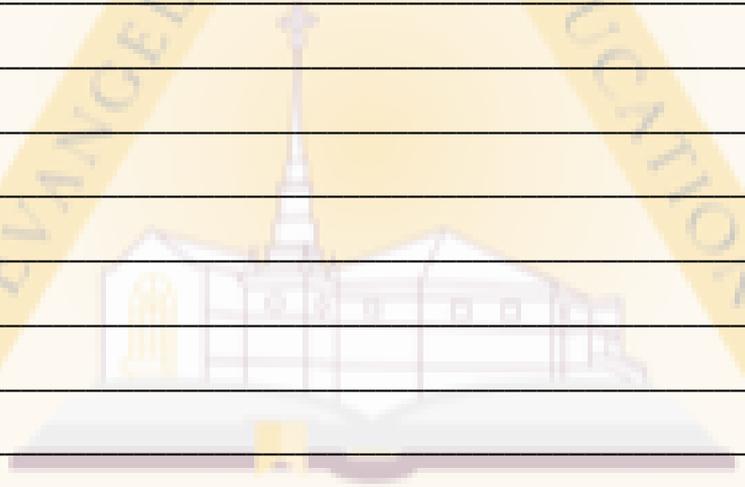
Graham, J., & Graham, Y. (2021). *Reverend & First Lady. The 21-Day Devotional, Matthew 6:24-34*

Thoughts & Reflections



EVANGELISM

EDUCATION



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

EST. 1900

MAKING STRONG CHRISTIAN FAITH