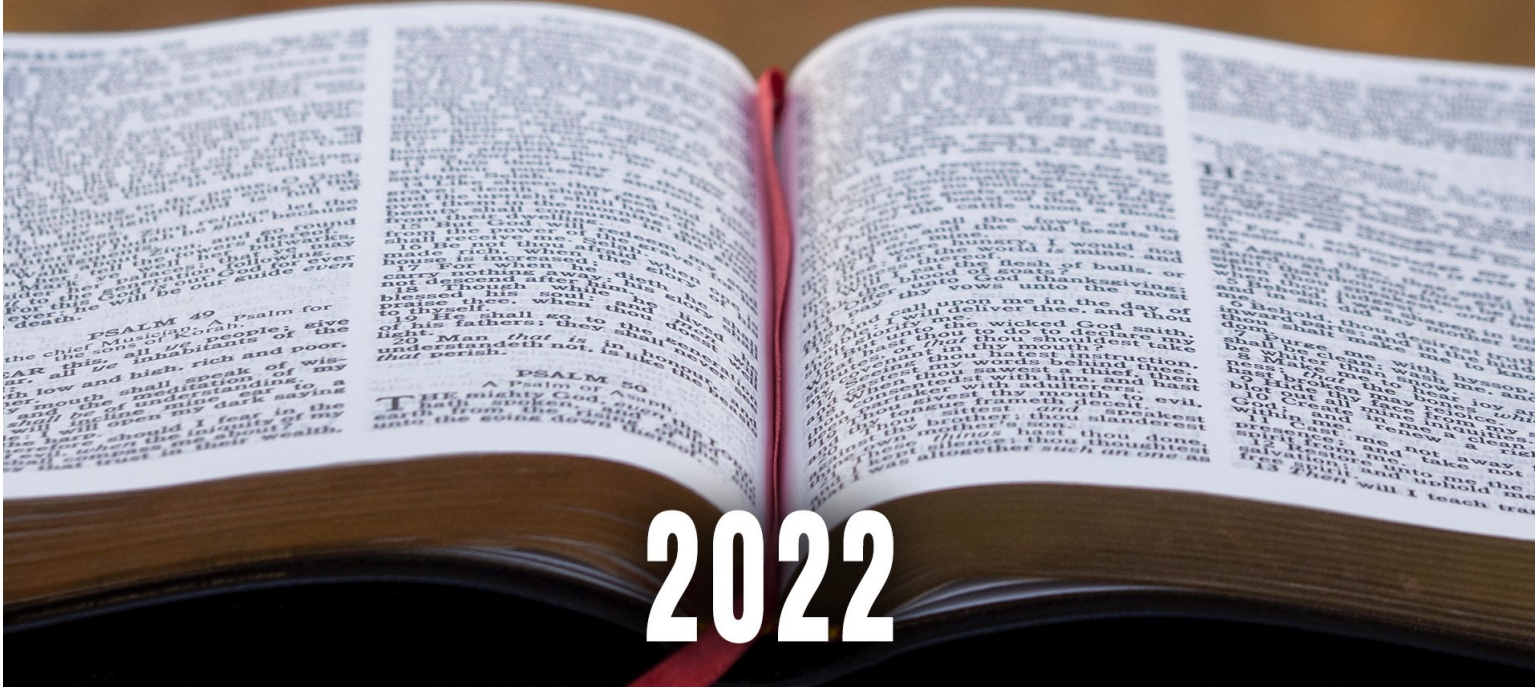




# THE DANIEL FAST

A 21- DAY EXPERIENCE WITH GOD  
January 3rd - 23rd



# 2022

**WORD IN SEASON MINISTRIES**

**Dr. Mack McCullough, Pastor & Freida McCullough, Co-Pastor**

Greetings WISM family,

Welcome to 2022! I hope you are just as excited as CP Frieda and I are about the kingdom opportunities that await us in the upcoming year. As we enter into the New Year, it's only natural to think about all the goals you'd like to set for yourself to achieve over the next 12 months. Entering a new year is like turning the page of a book to start reading the next one where beginnings, unexpected twists await.

None of us can know for sure what the new year will bring. However, we certainly know that the Word of God gives us hope about God's plan for His church and our individual lives. This is why we will continue to trust the promises of his Word. Prophet Jeremiah reminds us of how God has orchestrated this year for his people:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

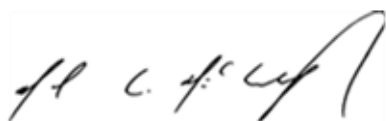
That is great news to know that an immediate outlook for 2022, is that God has plans to prosper you. And it is on this promise and many others found in the Word of God that we march forward in this new year. Are you ready?

We are coming together as a church to kick things off for our annual 21-Day Daniel Fast. The Daniel Fast is an opportunity for you to come closer to God through fervent, focused prayer that includes a 21-day commitment to a fast, which means you restrict commonly enjoyed foods as an act of worship and consecration to the Lord.

While most believe this fast is significant to Daniel 10:1-14, this is not the first time we see Daniel fasting. In the opening chapters of this book, Daniel and his friends chose to fast; the results were astounding:

"As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm."

The text says that they were found to be healthier, more knowledgeable, having more wisdom, and ten times "better" than all of the king's men. Our prayer, thus, is that after these 21 days of fasting, this church will be better and the lives of every fast participant will be better in 2022!



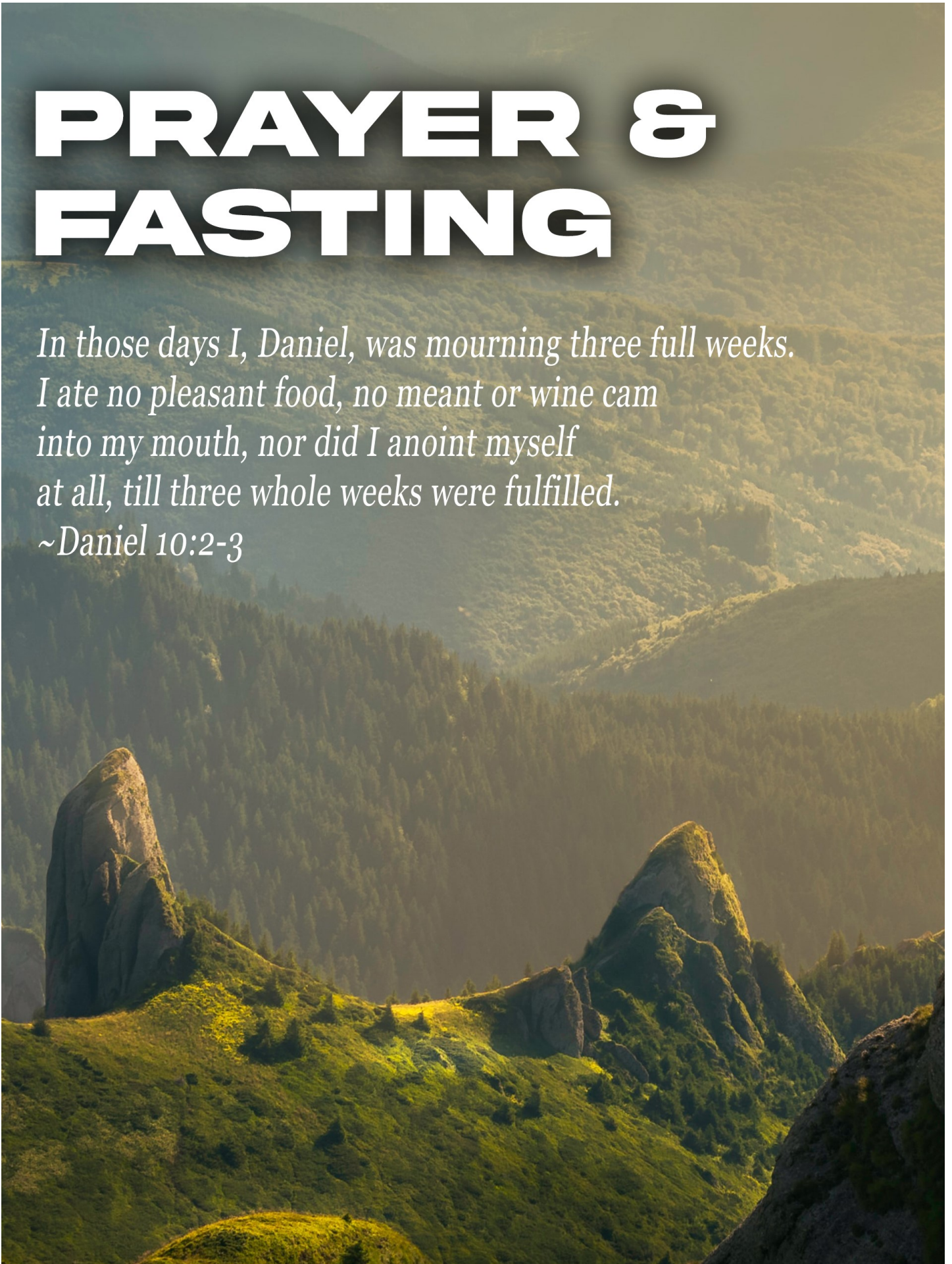
Mack L. McCullough, MDiv.



Freida M. McCullough, B.A.

# PRAYER & FASTING

*In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*  
~Daniel 10:2-3



## Prepare for the Fast

During the Daniel Fast you will not consume any sugar or sweeteners of any kind, nor will you have any caffeine or artificial chemicals. Many people experience a physical detox during the first few days of the fast including headaches, fatigue, leg cramps, and other typical symptoms.

You can reduce these effects by drinking at least a 1/2 gallon of filtered water each day before, during, and after the fasting period. Anytime you have a concern about these symptoms you may experience, be sure to contact your health care professional. Fasting should never harm the body!



**Healthy,  
Happy  
&  
Fasting**

# The Daniel Fast for the Body, Soul, and Spirit

The Bible teaches us that we are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body. The Daniel Fast affects all of these three parts of ours as we enter into a definite period of focused prayer and fasting.

**The Body** – Certainly our bodies are affected as our diet changes during the Daniel Fast, for some these changes can be very dramatic. Many men and women experience detoxing from caffeine, chemicals, and sugar. Most often, the symptoms include headaches, leg cramps, fatigue, and malaise.

Most people lose weight during the Daniel Fast. Many have even reported healing from diabetes, allergies, arthritis, and cancer.

**The Soul** – Frequently referred to as “the flesh” in the Bible, the soul is also greatly impacted during the Daniel Fast. The soul is the seat of our emotions, intellect, personality, and will. It is in the “soulish realm” that we experience cravings, frustration, anger, and happiness too.

During the Daniel Fast, your soul may rebel against the dramatic change in your diet. Experiencing and winning this battle over the flesh is often one of the most powerful lessons of this fast.

**The Spirit** – Our spirit is that born-again part of ours that surrenders to God and then abides with the Father and the Son. It is filled with the Holy Spirit when we yield to Him. During the Daniel Fast, we want to put our spirit in charge of our other two parts. When our flesh is acting out with a craving, we should take control of it (just as a parent takes control of a rebellious child). This should be done with the help of our spirit.

Fasting is always coupled with a spiritual goal. So, during this time of fasting, you will want to focus on prayer, study, and meditation.

# What If You Have Health Issues?

Fasting should never bring harm to the body. If you have concerns, be sure to consult your health professional before going on the Daniel Fast or making any major dietary changes.

The Daniel Fast is a very healthy way to eat! So, health professionals will support this eating plan, but they might suggest a few modifications if you have health issues that need special attention. For example, pregnant and nursing mothers might be advised to add fish, chicken, and cheese into the Daniel Fast while otherwise staying the course. Diabetics may need to add more carbohydrates or include chicken and fish. Also, those who are especially active – either because they are into sports or body building or because they practice certain vocations – may need to slightly alter their eating plan.

## **24 Hour – Day Plan**

I. First Hour: Wake Up – Prayer

II. Second hour: Read a Book (Christian)

III. Third hour: Read Scripture

IV. Fourth hour: Listen to Worship Music

V. Fifth hour: Prayer – Praying the Word

VI. Sixth hour: Rest and Reflection

VII. Repeat Hours II–VI and Retire for the Evening

# What is the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is a biblically based partial fast. It is a method of fasting that men, women and young people all over the world are using as they enter into the spiritual discipline of prayer and fasting.

There are two anchoring scriptures for the Daniel Fast. In Daniel 1 the Prophet ate only vegetables (that would have included fruits) and drank only water. So from these scriptures we get two of the guidelines for the fast:

1. Only fruits and vegetables
2. Only water or 100% juice for a beverage

Then in Daniel 10 we read that the Prophet ate no meat nor any precious breads or foods and he drank no wine for 21 days. So from this scripture, we get a third guideline:

3. No sweeteners and no breads

Another important guideline is drawn from Jewish fasting principles, where no leaven is used during the fast. So that's why yeast, baking powder and the like are not allowed on the Daniel Fast.

Finally, with all the above puzzle pieces, we conclude that no artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are allowed on the Daniel Fast.

When asked about the eating plan on the Daniel Fast, I often say it is a "vegan diet with even more restrictions."

Be sure to read the ingredients on labels of prepared foods to make sure they only include Daniel Fast friendly ingredients.

# The Daniel Fast



## FOODS TO EAT

### Whole Grains

Brown Rice, Oats, Barley

### Legumes

Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas

### Fruits

Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Strawberries, Tangerines, Watermelon.

### Vegetables

Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Ginger, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Onions, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Spinach, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Yams, Zucchini

### Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts

### Liquids

Water, Unsweetened Soy Milk, Herbal Tea, Honey, Natural Fruit Juice (no sugar)

## ! Foods To Avoid

- Meat\*
- Poultry\*
- Fish\*
- White Rice
- Fried Foods
  
- Carbonated Beverages
- Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives
- Refined Sugar or Sugar Substitutes
  
- White Flour
  
- Margarine or Shortening
- High Fat Products
- All Breads
- Dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt, etc.)

\* If you have young children or students, consider adding turkey, chicken and fish to the approved list of foods.

## FASTING CONTRACT

Before beginning a fast, write down a plan and make a verbal commitment to the Lord.  
*"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8).*

**My reason for fasting:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Type of fast:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



"So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer." Ezra 8:23

I believe that God is the only one to answer my prayer and that fasting will draw me closer to Him. Therefore, God being my strength and grace being my basis, i commit myself to the above fast.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Visit [www.lifecoastchurch.com](http://www.lifecoastchurch.com) for tips, recipes, and encouragement.



## DAY ONE

### “We Say What We Believe”

*2 Corinthians 4:13*

Over the years because of some extremists in the church, the emphasis on speaking God’s words or the “power of confession” has been brought into disrepute, really an undeserved rap. Isn’t it just like the devil to take one of God’s most powerful truths and pervert it, thus denying its use by God’s people to destroy Satan’s work? That is what has happened. The devil has invented disparaging, mocking slogans such as “confess it and possess it,” “name it and claim it,” and “blab it and grab it” to make this great truth appear ludicrous.

Our lesson for today is to remember that our confession releases God’s Will, God’s Words, and God’s Purpose in the earth. We were created in God’s image, that is, we are spirit beings who can talk, unlike any other creature. *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”* (Genesis 1:26-27)

When God speaks, things are created. *“God calleth those things that be not as though they were.”* (Romans 4:17, KJV) Paul tells us to *“be imitators of God,”* (Ephesians 5:1) Therefore, if God calls things to be as though they were, then we can also call things that be not as though they were.

Our confession is the key to our spiritual journey. The Bible says, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” (Proverbs 18:21) The word for confession is “homologeo.” It means agreeing with or saying the same thing God says. When you say what God says, you can change the circumstances of your life with His Word.

Reverend Kenneth E. Hagin used to say, “Our words will make us or break us. They will imprison us or set us free.” Confess what God says, His promises, and His blessings, and you will get them, and you will spread them to others. Do not confess negatives, fears, and the lies that the devil says, or you will get them and also spread them to others.

On your journey today, practice speaking God’s Word. There following scriptures can be used for your prayers and throughout your day:

Matthew 12:34

Mark 11:23

Job 22:28

James 3:9

Proverbs 6:2

Matthew 12:37

# Recipes

## Spaghetti Squash Stir-fry

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 cup chopped onion  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 2 cups cooked broccoli, cut into inch-long florets  
 2 cups cooked spaghetti squash, cut into 2" pieces  
 1 & ½ cup cooked or wild rice  
 ½ cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained  
 ¼ cup Bragg's Liquid Amino\* or soy sauce  
 1 teaspoon dried basil  
 ½ tablespoon tahini

2 chopped walnuts or cashews

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions, and cook until they turn soft and translucent. Stir in the garlic, broccoli, spaghetti squash, rice, black beans, Bragg's Liquid Amino, basil, and tahini for 5 minutes or until they are heated through. Keep stirring frequently. Mix well just before serving.

Yield: 4 servings (Serving size: 1 cup)

## Sicilian Beans and Rice

½ tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
 ½ cup chopped onion  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes  
 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, rinsed, drained, and slightly mashed  
 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil  
 1 teaspoon fennel seeds  
 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon dried parsley  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1/8 teaspoon pepper  
 4 cups cooked brown rice

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet, and then add onions. Cook until they turn soft and translucent. Stir in the garlic, and cook the mix for 30 seconds, stirring constantly so that the garlic doesn't burn. Add all of the other ingredients and cook uncovered over low flame for 30 minutes. To serve, place ½ cup rice in a bowl or on a plate, and top it with ½ cup beans.

Yield: 8 servings (Serving size: ~ ½ cup beans and ½ cup rice)

## DAY TWO

### “Boldly Proclaim the Word”

*2 Kings 5:1-2*

The little girl’s faith and Naaman’s quest contrasted with the stubbornness of Israel’s king. God placed her for a purpose, and she was faithful. In many ways, this young lady exhibited the qualities of God, Jesus, the church, and believers.

Brought to live among idolaters, she clung to her faith in the living God and sought to share her knowledge of Him with others. Hers was a strong, contagious faith, enabling her to live in an alien island without any feeling of homesickness or any resentment against her captors. In her mouth were Words that would heal Naaman. The church has been commissioned to bring the Gospel and the good news to a world that needs healing. She has been given the Word to accomplish this task as stated by the prophet. *“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”* (Isaiah 55:11)

Holy Spirit-filled believers in Christ Jesus should expect to see the supernatural as a normal course of life. Not normal according to the world's definition, but normal according to the Word of God. As we stand in faith believing the promises of God through His Word, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, we will see miraculous-healing, deliverance, salvation of the lost, prophecies, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, etc.

These things didn't end when Jesus left the earth; in fact, he said those who believed in Him would do all of the things he did, and even greater works. (John 14:12) These signs and wonders didn't end with the original twelve apostles, as some have taught, because the New Testament books clearly refer to others, most notably, Paul, the apostle who were moving in the supernatural world.

Prophet Joel prophesied thus about the last days: *“Then, after doing all those things, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants—men and women alike. And I will cause wonders in the heavens and on the earth...”* (Joel 2:28)

We don’t know the little girl’s name or much else about her, but her brief word to her mistress brought healing and faith in God to a powerful Aramaean captain. Where has God put you? No matter how humble or small your position, God can use you to spread the Word. Look for opportunities today to tell others what God can do. Who is waiting to hear your message?

# Recipes

## Black Bean Chili Bake

2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, rinsed & drained  
 2 cups cooked brown rice  
 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce  
 1 (14.5-ounce) can corn kernels, drained  
 1 cup chopped and jarred roasted red bell peppers  
 ½ cup diced onion  
 1 tablespoon chili powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put the beans in a large bowl, and mash. Add the tomato sauce, rice, red bell peppers, corn kernels, onions, and chili powder. Stir to combine. Rub a 9" x 13" casserole dish with the olive oil, and place the mixture in it. Bake the mixture for 20 minutes or until it is heated through.

Yield: 6 servings (Serving size: ~ 1 cup)

## Baked Rice with Butternut Squash Asparagus

3 cups water  
 ½ cup brown rice  
 ½ cup wild rice  
 2 garlic cloves, minced  
 1 teaspoon dried thyme  
 ½ teaspoon ground sage  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1/8 teaspoon black pepper  
 1 ½ pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1" cubes (about cups)  
 ½ pound asparagus spears, ends trimmed and cut into 1" pieces  
 1 cup sliced onion, sliced pole to pole (see Recipe Notes)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Rub a little olive oil along the sides and bottom of quart baking. Add the water, rice, garlic, thyme, sage, salt, and pepper. Stir well. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes. Mix in the squash, asparagus, and onions. minutes, stir, and then bake for another 15 minutes, or until the water is nearly all absorbed and rice is softened.

Yield: 8 servings (Serving size: 1 cup)

## DAY THREE

### “Prayer”

*Luke 11:1-4*

Scriptures like Mark 1:35, 6:46, and Luke 5:16 show that Jesus spent sizable blocks of time in intimate contact with God, through prayer.

In prayer, Jesus was still and quiet and He experienced the “Godness” of God. He opened His life to the breezes of God’s Spirit. He prayed daily as a matter of custom and especially when He had a decision to make, a difficult task to carry out, or a cross to face, He would first spend time with God in prayer and then proceed to do what He had to do. The disciples knew that prayer was the source of Jesus’ power. That’s why they asked Him, “Lord, teach us how to pray.” Today, that’s our request too.

To begin with, if we are to learn about prayer from Jesus, we must see that, for Him, prayer was not sporadic. It was not a hit and miss or occasional activity meant for emergencies only. No, for Jesus, prayer was a matter of daily discipline. If we are to gain any satisfaction from our prayer life, ours must be a matter of discipline as well.

There must be a definite time set aside each day for prayer. In Psalms 5:3, “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.” Certainly that is not the only time we pray. Our goal is to reach the place, as Paul put it in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, when we “pray without ceasing” that is, we are aware of God wherever we are, whatever we are doing. But that consciousness begins with daily, disciplined prayer. That becomes the fertile soil out of which all other prayer grows.

One reason daily discipline is so important is that prayer, like anything worthwhile, takes practice. Early on, you probably won’t be very comfortable with it. But you’ve got to stay with it, trusting that God is there wanting to make contact with you, even if you are not aware of His presence at first.

# Recipes

## Romaine Wraps

- 4 romaine lettuce hearts or leaves
- ½ cup hummus
- ¼ cup cucumber slices, cut ¼” thick & into half-moons
- ¼ cup shredded carrots
- ¼ cup zucchini, chopped
- ½ yellow bell pepper, julienned

Spread tablespoons hummus on each leaf. Top with cucumber, carrots, zucchini, and pepper. Eat like a taco or roll up like a tortilla (depending on the size and shape of the leaf).

Yield: 2 servings (about 2 stuffed leaves)

## Mexican Rice & Beans

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup diced red onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 ½ cups water
- 1 ½ cups brown rice, uncooked
- 1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes green chilies (Ro-tel)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon dried parsley

Rinse rice in a strainer under cold running water for 30 seconds, swirling the rice around with your hand. Drain and set aside. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onions and cook until soft and translucent. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring frequently so the garlic doesn’t burn.

Pour in water, rice, tomatoes and chilies, cumin, and cayenne pepper. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for 55 minutes or until rice is cooked and nearly all the liquid is absorbed. Add beans and stir well. Cook another for 8–10 minutes. Add parsley and serve.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)

## DAY FOUR

### “Raising My Expectation This Year: Hope”

*Romans 4:18*

Hope is an expectation or belief in the fulfillment of something desired. A total grounding of one's confidence and expectation in God's goodness and providential care, even in the face of trouble. Hope, it would seem, is a psychological necessity, if man is to envisage the future at all. Even if there are no rational grounds for it, man still continues to hope.

Where there is a belief in the living God who acts and intervenes in human life and who can be trusted to fulfill his promises, hope (specifically in the Biblical sense) becomes possible. Such hope is not a matter of temperament nor is it conditioned by prevailing circumstances or human possibilities. It does not depend on what a man possesses, on what he may be able to do for himself, nor on what any other human being may do for him.

There was, for example, nothing in Abraham's situation to justify his hope that Sarah would give birth to a son, but because he believed in God, he could “in hope” believe “against hope” Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping, believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, “That's how many descendants you will have!” (Rom. 4:18). Biblical hope is inseparable, therefore, from faith in God. Faith is believing, hope is knowing!

Because of what God has done in the past, particularly in preparing for the coming of Christ, and because of what God has done and is now doing through Christ, the Christian dares to expect future blessings that are, at present, invisible. The goodness of God for us is never exhausted. The best is still to be. His hope is increased as he reflects on the activities of God in the Scriptures, “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*” (Rom. 15:4). Christ in him is the “hope of future glory”(Col. 1:27).

Hope, to be sure, is not a kite at the mercy of the changing winds, “*We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,*” penetrating deep into the invisible eternal world (Heb. 6:19). Because of our faith, we Christians have an assurance that the things He hopes for are real (Heb. 11:1); and His hope never disappoints him, “*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*” (Rom. 5:5). What is your hope or what are you expecting God to do in your life and in your church in 2022?

# Recipes

## Tahini Wild Rice Cakes

1 1/2 cups cooked wild rice  
 2 tablespoons ground old-fashioned oats (ground fine like flour in food processor)  
 2 tablespoons chopped onions or green onions  
 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 tablespoon tahini  
 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon dried parsley  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 Avocado slices

Combine all ingredients, except avocado slices, in a large bowl, and stir well. Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Scoop out 1/3 cup of mixture for each cake, and flatten in the skillet with a spatula. Cook 5 minutes, flip rice cake, and cook another 2 minutes on the other side. Serve warm. Top with avocado, if desired.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: 1 rice cake)

## Wild Rice and Almond Casserole

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 cup wild rice  
 1/2 cup chopped green onions  
 1/4 cup slivered almonds  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 1/2 teaspoon salt  
 3 cups Vegetable Broth or water

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add rice, onions, almonds, garlic, and salt. Cook 3-5 minutes or until the rice begins to turn slightly yellow, stirring frequently. Transfer to a 1 1/2 or 2-quart casserole dish, pour in broth, and cover. Bake 1 hour or until liquid is absorbed.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1/2 cup)



## DAY FIVE

### “Worship”

*Revelation 4:11*

The basic purpose of the scriptures is to reveal to us the ONE WHO must be the object of our worship and to instruct us about how to direct and use our inherent capacity to worship. Worship recognizes Christ's worthiness. The bible reads, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”* (Revelation 4:11) Another verse reads, *“And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”* (Revelation 5:11-12)

To worship is to quicken one's conscience by the holiness of God; to feed one's mind with the truth of God; to purge one's imagination by the beauty of God; to open one's heart to the love of God; to devote one's will to the purpose of God. Worship is a lifestyle!

It is not by accident that among the songs and choruses that we sing together are many that eulogize and extol the worthiness of Lord Jesus. Because recognizing His worthiness is essential to worship. The Bible records that the residents of heaven acclaim His worthiness again and again. They are not establishing that worthiness; they are simply extolling it as part of their expression of worship.

The word *worthy* comes from the Greek word *axios* which means of weight or worth. The word *worthy* is used for persons and their deeds: (See Mt. 10:10, 11, 13, 37, 38; 22:8; Lk. 7:4; 10:7; 15:19, 21; Jn.1:27; Acts 13:25 I Tim. 5:18; 6:1; Heb. 11:38; Rev. 3:4; 4:11; 5:2, 4, 9, 12)

Whether we fully understand what is meant by Christ being worthy or whether we say it because it is a scriptural expression, the Spirit within us responds in a most positive way, reinforcing whatever inner attitude we may have concerning His worthiness. To worship is to know, to feel, to experience the resurrected Christ in the midst of the gathered community. It is breaking into the shekinah of God or, better yet, being invaded by the shekinah of God.

Thus, Christ is worthy of being worshipped. The scripture reads, *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.”* (Philippians 2:9-11)

In heaven, the four beasts worship Jesus, the twenty-four elders worship Jesus, the angels worship Jesus, and all of the creation gives worship to Him. We, also, are enjoined to worship Jesus. He is, indeed, worthy of being worshipped! Change your routine and carve out some special time today just for worship by listening to your playlist.

# Recipes

## Easiest Chia Pudding

¼ cup chia seeds

1½ cups cashew milk, almond milk, or coconut milk

1 tablespoon maple syrup, more for serving

¼ teaspoon cinnamon

pinch of sea salt

½ tablespoon Meyer lemon juice or orange juice, optional

lemon zest or a few drops of lemon oil, optional

seasonal fruit and/or chopped nuts, for topping

### Instructions

In a large jar or bowl, stir together the chia seeds, milk, maple syrup, cinnamon, salt, lemon juice, and lemon zest, if using.

Chill covered for 30 minutes, then stir again, incorporating the chia seeds that have sunk to the bottom.

Chill for about 6 hours, or overnight, until the chia pudding is thick. If it gets too thick, stir in a little more milk to reach your desired consistency.

To serve, scoop chia pudding into bowls and top with fruit, nuts, and maple syrup, as desired.

Yield:servings (Serving size: ~ 4)

## DAY SIX

### “Shaped by Your Thinking”

*Proverbs 4:23*

While visiting this mammoth piece of construction called the Hoover Dam, a few years ago, I watched a video in the visitors center about the construction of the dam. A phrase about the dam from the narrator got embedded in my memory. He stated, “There is nothing man could not do, when he put his mind to it.” In other words, our lives are shaped by our thoughts. Thoughts can push us forward, or they can hold us back. They can elevate us, or they can keep us down. Our thoughts can build or they can tear down.

In our text today, Solomon addresses the heart of the matter. In that what takes place in the heart is synonymous with the thought process. In fact, your thoughts are among your most precious treasures.

“Heart” here, as always, refers not to the physical organ but to the mind and even the whole personality of the individual. It is “the wellspring of life,” and in it, the capacity to live with joy and vigor ultimately comes from within and not from one’s circumstances. Considering the fact that Solomon was considered as one of the wisest men to ever live, I think it would be wise to consider what he has to say about our thoughts today.

A controlled-thought life is necessary for spiritual living. Listen to Paul, *“The world is unprincipled. It’s dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn’t fight fair. But we don’t live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren’t for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.”* (2 Corinthians 10:3-6, MSG)

What you think about is incredibly important: revenge, bitterness, lust, discontent, pride, unreality, untruth, etc. The ways in which you think are also incredibly important: negativity, worry, fantasies, brooding, self-pity, distrust, unhappiness, etc. Never take “a penny for your thoughts,” as they are worth infinitely more than that. They can make you or break you spiritually. The writer in Philippians gives a suggestion for believers, *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”* (Philippians 4:8)

Today ask the Holy Spirit to help shape your thinking through prayer and the Word of God.

# Recipes

## Marinated Tofu

8 ounces extra-firm tofu, drained  
 ¼ cup unsweetened pineapple juice  
 2's Bragg's Liquid Amino\* or soy sauce  
 1 garlic clove, minced

Slice the tofu into 1" cubes, and place them in an 8" x 8" baking dish. Pour the pineapple juice, Bragg's Liquid Amino, and garlic in a small bowl. Use a whisk to combine. Pour this mixture over tofu, and put the contents in a refrigerator to marinate for 30-45 minutes. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake the contents (in same dish) for 20 minutes or until they turns deep, golden brown and slightly crispy.

Yield: servings (Serving size: ~ 2 ounces)

## Lentil-Spinach "Meatballs"

½ cup dry lentils, sorted and rinsed  
 1 & ½ cups brothwater  
 ½ cup diced onion, divided  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 1 ½ teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 cup finely chopped white button mushrooms  
 ½ (10-ounce) package frozen chopped, thawed, squeezed dry  
 ½ cup brown rice flour or oat flour (see Recipe Notes)  
 2 finely chopped walnuts  
 2 flaxseed meal  
 1 teaspoon dried basil  
 1 teaspoon dried parsley  
 ½ teaspoon garlic powder  
 ½ teaspoon salt

Place the lentils and broth in a medium-sized saucepan and bring them to a boil. Lower the heat, and add ¼ cup onions and the garlic. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes with the lid tilted.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. While the lentils cook, pour the olive oil over medium-low heat in a large skillet. Add the remaining ¼ cup of onions, mushrooms, and spinach. 5 minutes, stirring frequently. aside.

When lentils are done cooking, drain and stir into them the mushroom-spinach mixture. Add the oat flour, walnuts, flaxseed meal, basil, parsley, garlic powder, and salt. Stir well. Then transfer all of the contents to a food processor or blender and process for about 15 seconds or until the mixture turns smooth. Form the mixture into balls (Take about 2 tablespoons per ball.) Place the balls on an 11" x 17" baking dish that has been rubbed with olive oil. Bake for 30 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings (Serving size: 2 meatballs)

# DAY SEVEN

## “Dependent on God”

*Deuteronomy 8:2-3*

Today’s text is one of the earliest references to the parallel between physical and spiritual eating. It is not directly stated but implied. God intended Israel's experiences in the wilderness to instruct the Israelites that all of life, both physical and spiritual aspects, depends upon God’s providence.

These verses also confirm that leading a good life, an abundant life is dependent upon one's spiritual, mental, and emotional base. These elements of the mind determine one’s outlook, goals, and reactions to the myriad vicissitudes of life. These verses confirm that God directly leads us into many of them as a means of instructing us, producing dual results: first, for us to experience them and develop in us certain characteristics and second, to test us so both He and we can see where we stand, how we cope.

A major problem is that human nature compels us to focus almost totally upon the physical. God-provides us “wilderness experiences” to let us know that there is a spiritual aspect to life that requires feeding and maintenance just as surely as the physical aspect does.

Prayer, study, meditation, and obedience are the assimilation processes in this parallel. Within this feeding/assimilation processes, our relationship with God, worship, and religion should be enhanced to play an effective, positive role in life.

Worship is more than adoration and reverence; it is the response of the whole person to the entirety of God's will in all aspects of life. In the church, at home, on the job, and in the community, our direction must always be toward whatever God wills.

Starvation of the spirit is less obvious on the outside than physical hunger is, for the spirit starves much more slowly, and it resides within. Spiritual malnutrition may go unrecognized for long periods because the body and life go right on. Yet, just as surely as one’s body gives signs that it needs nourishment, so does the spirit. And eventually, it will also be recognized on the outside by its symptoms.

When the body cries out for food, one feels emptiness in the stomach, weakness in the muscles, and even sleepiness. If this goes on long enough, a faintness and headache may arise. But when the spirit is malnourished either from deprivation or by a harmful diet, the gradual reaction in life is different.

Spiritual weakness appears, as does sin. With sin comes anger, irritability, exasperation, depression, discouragement, melancholy, despondency, gloominess, bitterness, hatred, resentment, self-pity, hopelessness, despair, paranoia, envy, jealousy, family conflict, arguments, divorce, drunkenness or other addictions, and competitiveness as self-centeredness deepens.

One of the purposes of Deuteronomy 8:2-3 is to emphasize to us (as it was to emphasize to Israel) that the source of spiritual nourishment is more important than the nourishment itself. If we have the right source, the nourishment will be good. Otherwise, the situation is hopeless. Our source of nourishment must, of course, be God.

# Recipes

## Greek-Style Stuffed Peppers

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
½ cup chopped onion  
½ cup diced zucchini  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1 (8-ounce) can of tomato sauce  
3 chopped and canned artichokes, drained  
½ cup chopped black olives  
1 teaspoon dried oregano flakes or 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano  
1 teaspoon dried parsley or 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
½ teaspoon salt  
6 medium bell peppers (green, orange, red, and/or yellow)  
2 cups cooked quinoa  
1 & ½ tablespoons pine nuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place the artichokes in a food processor, and pulse until they are chopped well. Set them aside. Heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and zucchini and cook them for 3–5 minutes or until the vegetables soften. Lower the heat, and add garlic. Cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly so garlic doesn't burn. Add tomato sauce, artichokes, olives, oregano, parsley, and salt. Cook for 15 minutes, or until the sauce thickens.

While the sauce is cooking, prepare peppers by cutting them in half, lengthwise, and removing their stems and seeds. Place the peppers in boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain them in colander, and place them in a large baking dish. When the sauce is done, mix in the quinoa and pine nuts. Stir well. Spoon the mixture evenly into the pepper halves. Add hot water to the dish to a depth of ½". Bake uncovered for 20 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings (Serving size: ~ 2 pepper halves)

# DAY EIGHT

## “The Principle of Firstfruits”

*Exodus 13:11-13*

There is a specific principle and pattern in God’s Word that I believe is foundational and even fundamental for the manifestation of God’s promises and provision to come to pass in our lives. I am talking about the principle of First Fruits. Known in Hebrew as Yom HaBikkurim, the festival of First Fruits celebrates and recognizes God’s hand of blessing and provision over His people. The First Fruits offering dates back as early as the times of Cain and Abel.

The Hebrew word for first fruits, bikkurim, means “a promise to come,” and shares the same root, bechor, as the word meaning “firstborn.” Yom HaBikkurim, the Jewish festival celebrating the Feast of First Fruits, is one of the most mentioned feasts in the Bible, second only to Passover.

In ancient days, the process of gathering the first fruits of the crops involved painstaking preparations. Each family among the Israelites had to carefully watch for the first budding fruits or grains. Once spotted, they would designate it as the first by tying a piece of red yarn around the branch, limb, or vine. As the crops matured and were harvested, those first fruits were brought into the Temple and presented to the High Priest according to God’s pattern. The Priest would accept the offering from each household and present it to the God of Israel in thanksgiving and recognition of His continued provision and blessing. Once the offering of the first fruits had been made, the people were free to enjoy the rest of the harvest, because the first had sanctified the rest. The principle of first fruits was not limited to vegetation. It is found throughout the Word, and it deals with all “first things.”

Notice the instructions God gave to Moses as He prepared the Israelites to be led out of slavery in Egypt:

*“And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it to thee, That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD’s. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among they children shalt thou redeem.” (Exodus 13:11-13)*

Today we no longer sacrifice the firstlings of our sheep or cattle at a Temple; nor are we required to redeem our firstborn sons with gold. Jesus paid for all redemption through His death, burial, and resurrection; Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant practice and has given us a New Covenant “*founded on better promises.*” (Hebrews 8:6 NIV).

However, the principle of first things -- first fruits -- still remains. God does not change in His character, principles, or patterns. “*He is the same yesterday, today and forever-more*” (Hebrews 13:8)

# Recipes

## Coconut Rice

1 cup dry brown rice  
1 cup dry wild rice  
2 cups water  
1 14-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk (~ 2 cups)  
A pinch of salt  
1 large sweet potato, peeled, diced and cooked (~ 3 cups)  
1 cup sweet peas, cooked  
1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained  
¼ cup chopped green onion  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
½ teaspoon ginger  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
Chopped macadamia nuts (optional)

Rinse rice in a fine mesh sieve to remove the surface starches (to make the rice sticky). Mix water, coconut milk, rice, and salt in a large saucepan. Heat them to boiling point. Reduce the heat thereafter to let the contents simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook until the liquid evaporates, which may take about 30–35 minutes.

While the rice is cooking, prepare the rest of the ingredients so that they are ready to be used. Keep the vegetables and beans warm. When rice is ready, add the remaining ingredients. Stir well, and serve immediately.

Yield: 8 servings (Serving size: ~ 1 cup)



# DAY NINE

## “Desperate Faith”

*Luke 17:11-17*

Our lesson for today is from Luke’s gospel. It is a case of the healing power of faith. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. He was traveling along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten men who had leprosy came by to meet him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

Imagine how desperate these men were. Leprosy was the most terrible disease of Jesus’ day; it was greatly feared. It was disfiguring and sometimes fatal. People in Bible times associated leprosy with sin. Surely, the person thus afflicted, or perhaps their parents, had done something terrible to deserve acquiring such a dreaded affliction.

A leper was considered utterly unclean both physically and spiritually. They could not approach within six feet of any person including their own family members. We read in the Old Testament about lepers, “*His clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, ‘Unclean, unclean.’*” (Leviticus 13:45) The person with leprosy was judged by society to be dead, a living dead, sort of like today’s fascination with zombies. However, the person with leprosy was alive. Yet, they had to wear a black garment, so they could be recognized as from among the dead. They were banished as an outcast, totally ostracized from society both earthly and heavenly. Again the scripture reads, “*All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.*” (Leviticus 13:46) They could not live within the walls of any city; their dwellings had to be beyond the city gates. They were thought to be polluted, incurable by any human means whatsoever. Leprosy was thought to be curable only by God. One reason people believed Jesus to be a Messiah was that he healed people with leprosy.

Imagine the anguish and heartbreak of these people with leprosy, completely cut off from family and friends and society. Imagine the emotional and mental pain. Ten men with leprosy met Jesus as he was entering the city, coming in from a long journey. The lepers had no idea where Jesus was going. He could have been heading for an important meeting, or he could have been tired and exhausted, or he could have had no time for interruptions; but the lepers didn’t care. They were so desperate that they would interrupt him no matter what. They stood at a distance as the law demanded and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

Are you that desperate for Christ’s healing touch, either for yourself or for someone you love? Then began to cry out today in prayer for God to move in your situation. Be desperate for a move of God!

# Recipes

## Brown Rice Stir-fry with Orange Sauce

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups chopped broccoli (stems and florets) or ½ 16-ounce bag cut broccoli, cooked
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¼ cup Bragg's Liquid Amino or soy sauce
- ¼ cup unsweetened orange juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger root or ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- >¼ cup toasted chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons chopped green onion

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and add broccoli, carrots, and onions. Cook until the vegetables soften for 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Increase the heat to medium high. Add Bragg's Liquid Amino, orange juice, garlic, ginger root, brown rice, walnuts, and green onions. Cook for another 5 minutes or until heated through and serve.

Yield: 4 servings (Serving size: ~ 1 ¼ cups)

## Chinese Long Beans and Wild Rice with Roasted Red Pepper Sauce

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup sliced onion, sliced pole-to-pole (see Recipe Notes)
- ½ pound Chinese long beans, cut into 2" pieces (~ 2 cups)
- ¼ cup water
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 2 tablespoons Bragg's Liquid Amino or soy sauce
- 1 cup red pepper sauce

Heat the olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and long beans, and cook until the onions are soft and translucent. Add rice, water, and Bragg's Liquid Amino. Stir well and continue cooking until most of the water is absorbed. This should take 8–10 minutes. Heat Roasted red pepper sauce in a small saucepan over low heat. When heated through, place about ¼ cup of sauce over each serving of rice.

Yield: 4 servings (Serving size: ~ 1 cup)

# DAY TEN

## “Overcoming Fear”

*2 Timothy 1:7*

God has been good to me over the years, but even in his goodness, I have had my experiences. Yet, I am thankful for who He is and how He kept me in his mighty hand. My story is one associated with longstanding fears – the fear of dying and the fear of failure. This is the first time I have ever discussed with anyone or written in a document about these topics.

However, as I closely study myself, I realize that fear and failure have always been present in my life. What has been the impact of fear in my life? One would think fear should paralyze a person, or fear should squeeze the life out of its victim and keep them from succeeding in life. I sense my life has gone in the opposite direction. I believe that instead of blocking or opposing me, my fears forced me to reach unimaginable levels of success.

That being said, the first question is why am I afraid of dying? The reason I fear death is because when I was a young adolescent someone told me that I would never see adulthood. This person was a very close relative, and the words they used have lingered over the years.

As a result, I spent years leading up to my 18th birthday in fear. Even after I turned 18, those words stayed with me. For instance, Was I to die before reaching 21 years of age; or I would die right after I got married and not reach the age of 25? Then it became, I would die before retiring from the military, and the last surmise was that I will die during my children adulthood.

These fears did not stop me from moving forward in life. Yet, there has been this constant reminder about dying at significant milestones in my life. Even though I believe the word, “God has not given me the Spirit of fear, but of love and of power and of a sound mind,” the battle in my mind has been undeniable as it has related to dying.

So, I have learned to deal with this fear by taking life one day at a time. I often recall the message of Jesus in Matthew 6 in which he tells me not be anxious or to worry about anything. Even though the thoughts of dying have not left me even after all these years, I make it a point to trust Jesus and his Word more. Perhaps, that is why I keeping moving in life?

The fear of failure has also been a major concern in my life. Yes, at so many place in my life, I have dreaded failure and the impact it would have on myself and others. Now, I am not intentionally seeking to fail, but I do believe failure to be possible, as I am a human being.

Many years ago Michael Jordan stated, “I am not afraid to fail.” To an extent, I can agree with him on this statement, but at the same time, it helps to express a fear of failure. How does that work?

On the one hand, I don’t want let my fear of failure keep me from trying, for when I try, I always overcome my fears and succeed. For example, I served my country in the Air Force for twenty years. I can’t tell you how many jobs and assignments I completed, but the humdrum thought of failure was always present. I didn’t let my fear of failure keep me from doing the job, but I can’t say I didn’t think about failing. The same holds true for me today as a husband, a father, and a Pastor—even when it comes to attempting this DMin program. While I don’t think anyone sets out to intentionally fail, the reality is that the possibility always exists. To combat this fear of failure, I just keep trying; believing in myself, and hoping in God.

# Recipes

## Baked Oatmeal

- 1 & ½ cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 & ½ cups unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup unsweetened apple sauce
- ¼ cup chopped dried apricots
- ¼ cup chopped dates or raisins
- ¼ cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put all of the ingredients in a large bowl and stir well. Then transfer them to an 8" x 8" baking dish that has been lightly rubbed with olive oil. Pour the oatmeal mixture into a dish and bake for 45–50 minutes or until it turns slightly brown and crispy on top.

Yield: 6 servings (Serving size: 2 squares)

## Brown Rice Stir-fry with Orange Sauce

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups chopped broccoli (stems and florets) or ½ 16-ounce bag cut broccoli, cooked
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¼ cup Bragg's Liquid Amino or soy sauce
- ¼ cup unsweetened orange juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger root or ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- >¼ cup toasted chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons chopped green onion

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and add broccoli, carrots, and onions. Cook these until the vegetables soften, which may take 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Increase the heat to medium high. Add Bragg's Liquid Amino, orange juice, garlic, ginger root, brown rice, walnuts, and green onions. Cook for another 5 minutes or until heated through, and serve.

Yield: 4 servings (Serving size: ~ 1 ¼ cups)

# DAY ELEVEN

## “Called to Serve”

*Romans 12:1-2*

One of the most common mistakes we make in our churches happens to be in the area of encouraging people to serve. Unfortunately, guilt is often one of the leading methods of recruiting. Guilt can be very effective at garnering workers in the short term.

As time goes by, however, those who serve simply out of obligation rather than passion eventually grow weary and simply walk away from it. If the motives of the worker are not rightly centered upon Christ, then frustration and burnout are the inevitable outcomes.

One writer wrote that this particular word “was used here to speak of the believer-priest’s sacred service, not as the Levitical priests, offering a burnt sacrifice that was apart from themselves, but a living sacrifice that was not only part of themselves but also entailed the giving of themselves in connection with the giving of their bodies to the service of God.”

The believer is then strengthened for further obedience by the transformative power of God’s renewal of the believer’s mind. This “renewing” (Gk. *anakainosis*) occurs “through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who when definitely, and intelligently, and habitually yielded to puts sin out of the believer’s life and produces His own fruit.”

The Bible warns again and again of the dangers of pride, and Paul has provided the safeguard when he wrote that each believer was “not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.” (v. 3)

Paul warned that the believer should not direct too much affection toward his own works and abilities (Gk. *huperphroneo*), but he should rather be disposed toward thinking in a moderate way (Gk. *suphroneo*). This should result from the knowledge that everything he has is a gift from God. The apostle reminds us that, “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*” (James 1:17)

Such thinking prevents our own arrogance and leads us to provide “reasonable service” to the One who provided the gifts and abilities in the first place. As Paul wrote in his first letter to the church at Corinth, “*As it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.’*” (1 Corinthians 1:31)

Service to the One who has paid for our sins may be logical and reasonable, but it still requires disciplined participation on our part in order to faithfully obey Him. While God does not need us, He certainly wants us. His desire for us is that we would faithfully execute the tasks He has called us to perform and equipped us for. When we fully understand the grace that has been showered upon us, the idea of giving anything less than our very best in service to God is simply not “reasonable.” Today, will you commit to wholeheartedly serving God and His church?

# Recipes

## Macadamia Nut Cheese

½ cup raw macadamia nuts

Place ½ cup of macadamia nuts in a food processor and finely grind them to get an output like grated Parmesan cheese. Sprinkle on top of cooked pizza.

Recipe Notes:

Substitute lightly-salted cashews with macadamia nuts.

## Marinated Tofu

8 ounces extra-firm tofu, drained

¼ cup unsweetened pineapple juice

2's Liquid Amino\* or soy sauce

1 garlic clove, minced

Slice the tofu into 1" cubes, and place the cubes in an 8" x 8" baking dish. Take pineapple juice, Bragg's Liquid Amino, and garlic in a small bowl. Use a whisk to combine these. Pour the mixture over tofu, and put it in a refrigerator to marinate for 30–45 minutes. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake (in the same dish) for 20 minutes or until the tofu becomes deep golden brown and slightly crispy.

Yield: servings (Serving size: ! 2 ounces)

## Nutty Fruit Cereal

1 banana, peeled and sliced (~ 1 cup)

1/3 cup fresh blueberries

1 tablespoon chopped almonds

1 tablespoon chopped walnuts

1 teaspoon unsweetened coconut flakes

½ cup unsweetened almond or rice milk

Place the banana slices in a bowl, and top them with blueberries, almonds, walnuts, and coconut flakes. Pour in almond milk.

Yield: 1 serving (Serving size: ~ 1 & 1/3 cups)

# DAY TWELVE

## “Pride and Humility”

*Proverbs 16:18*

Pride is human sin number one – the worst of all. According to C. S. Lewis, pride is a “cancer that eats up the very possibility of love, or even common sense.” Webster calls it “vanity, conceit, narcissism, unreasonable delight in one's position or deeds.” Pride is somehow this deep inner part of ourselves that always has the desire to be better than others. It germinates in the swamps of comparison and competition.

Jesus tells of two men who went to pray. One says to himself, “*God, I thank you that I am not like other men-robbers, evildoers, adulterers-or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.*” (Luke 18:11-12) C. S. Lewis once said, “A proud man is always looking down on things and people, and of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot find God because God is always above you.”

One of the finest statements concerning humility in the Bible is from Philippians, Chapter 2. It's in your sermon notes. We call it the Kenosis, the self-emptying of Christ in which he became one among us. “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*” is how Paul starts. “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” That's humility.

Humility comes when you know who you are. You are a child of God. Equality with God is not something to be grasped. We are created in the image of God. We are not God.

Humility begins when we know ourselves, not as doormats but children, children of God. Humility comes when we know our neighbors. They are sinners. So are we. We are not good people who occasionally make a mistake. We are lost sheep who err and stray from God's ways and follow too much the devices and desires of our own thoughts. Humility gives us new eyes with which to see the people around us. Whenever we start thinking that we may be better than someone else, we can be sure that we are being acted upon, not by God but by the devil.

Humility is receiving mercy. The prayer of the tax collector is simple: “*God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*” (Luke 18:13) You can remember that; I can remember that. It's a prayer any of us can pray: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. We should all pray like the tax collector. Why not start today? Not only will you find mercy, but as James says, “*But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*” (James 4:6) Do you need mercy and grace? Ask God to forgive you of pride and began to walk in humility.

# Recipes

## Rice & Cabbage Casserole

½ tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
½ cup chopped onion  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 cup chopped white button mushrooms  
1 (15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed/drained  
2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes  
2 chopped fresh parsley  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
4 cups chopped green cabbage  
1 cup cooked brown/wild rice

Put diced tomatoes in a food processor or blender and process them until they become smooth. Set the processed tomatoes aside. Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large skillet. Add onions and cook them until they turn soft and translucent. Stir in garlic, mushrooms, tomatoes, parsley, oregano, salt, and pepper. Reduce the heat to low, and cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Steam the cabbage for 8–10 minutes or until it turns tender/crisp (or add it to boiling water and cook for 5–7 minutes). Lightly spray or rub a 9” x 13” baking dish with olive oil, and cover the bottom of the dish with cooked cabbage. Place the rice and beans on top of the cabbage. Pour the tomato sauce over all of the contents. Bake the contents for 20 minutes.

Yield: servings (Serving size: ~ 1 cup)



# DAY THIRTEEN

## “Living on Purpose”

*Psalms 57:2*

In one sense, you are always living in God's purpose. ... Nothing can happen without God ordaining it, *“I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me.”* (Psalms 57:2). This is key in understanding God's purpose for your life. God has numbered your days and will fulfill every purpose He has for you.

You will never know the power of purpose without knowing who you are. Now this is no mere psychological pep-up. Jesus himself enunciated it—you are important, he said, *“Not even a sparrow falls to the earth without God noting it.”* (Luke 12:6–7) How much more valuable are you than sparrows? He asked. “Even the hairs on your head are numbered.”

I can't imagine anything that would do more for most of us than to realize what Jesus is saying to us in this word. You are important. God values you. God has gifted you. God is with you, and God is for you.

Knowing who you are has to do with what's on the inside. And you are the only one who knows about that. Now, don't be misled when I say “respect yourself.” I'm not talking about a casual passing over of who you really are. Knowing yourself involves an honest self-appraisal.

This requires not only seeing the greatness, but also the negative. We go back to Paul—he knew who he was and he agonized about it, *“for the good that I would, I do not; and the evil that I would not, that I do, oh wretched man that I am.”* (Romans 7:16 & 24). But he didn't allow himself to wallow in his misery.

Thanks be to God, Paul said in 7:25, I am delivered by Jesus Christ. It is only in an honest self-appraisal that we can respect ourselves. We don't justify our weakness or rationalize our mistakes—we accept ourselves and appreciate the raw material God has given us to work with. Now, this raw material may sometimes seem inadequate. Conversely, it often appears somehow far more than we expect.

But again, that's a part of knowing who you are. To realize that whatever our gifts, they're ours. They have been given us by God, they can be used, and they're worth celebrating. Not only am I *“created in His image”* according to Genesis 1:27, but *“we are fearfully and wonderfully made.”* (Psalms 139:14). **KNOW WHO YOU ARE!** In so doing, we begin to find power in purpose.

# Recipes

## Lentil Soup

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

1 medium onion, chopped

2 carrots, peeled and chopped

2 celery stalks, chopped

2 garlic cloves, chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (14 ½-ounce) can diced tomatoes

1 pound lentils (approximately 1 1/4 cups)

2/3 cup pearl barley

11 cups broth (can be substituted by water)

4–6 fresh thyme sprigs

Heat the oil in a heavy large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, and celery. Add the garlic, salt, and pepper and sauté until all the vegetables are tender, about 5–8 minutes.

Add the tomatoes with their juices. Simmer until the juices evaporate a little and the tomatoes break down, stirring occasionally, about 8 minutes.

Add the lentils and pearl barley, mix to coat. Add the broth and stir. Add the thyme sprigs. Bring to a boil over high heat.

Cover and simmer over low heat until the lentils and barley are tender, about 40 minutes, with salt and pepper to taste.

Ladle the soup into bowls, drizzle with olive oil, and serve.

Yield: 6 servings

## DAY FOURTEEN

### “A Way Out”

*Genesis 39:1–12*

In today’s text, Joseph must have realized as he journeyed that whatever lay ahead of him in Egypt was also a part of God’s plan for his life, and that God would preserve and protect him there. It is encouraging to realize that we do not have to know how God’s plan is going to work out to know that it is going to work out. Joseph learned two lessons: that God had a plan for his life and that the plan required faithfulness on his part. These two truths governed and influenced everything Joseph did and everyone around him took note that there was something different about him.

It is the story of the clash of two cultures or standards of living. On one hand, Joseph represents those who belong to God, those whose lives reflect His revealed truth. Potiphar’s wife, on the other, represents those who see no higher authority than themselves, who live only for the gratification of their own desires. When we view this story from this perspective, we see that it is more than ancient drama. We see it as a drama that is acted out each day even today.

As the people of God, we are still called to live out the revealed truth of God’s word. But we still find that we are living in a culture that is not only hostile to the things of God but is also intent on seducing the children of God to live on their level. In this story, there is a lesson from the life of Joseph for all of us who struggle with temptations in our lives.

“Temptations are real,” they are real for all of us. In Matthew 6:13 & Luke 11:4 it reads, “*Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.*” Why would Jesus have taught us to pray for deliverance from temptation unless he knew we would be subjected to temptation? Let us not be fooled in this place or any other. Temptations are real. They come in varied forms, and they cut at the very core of who we are.

The synoptic gospels all tell the story of Jesus’ temptation, the sinless one struggling in the desert for his very soul. Paul says “*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*” (1 Corinthians 10:13) This verse reminds us that God is faithful. He will always give us a way to escape. He won’t allow us to be tested and tempted beyond our ability to resist. Joseph and Jesus found a way out! Therefore, whether you are tempted today or in the future, pray and ask God to show you a way out!

# Recipes

## Mexican Rice & Beans

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup diced red onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 ½ cups water
- 1 ½ cups brown rice, uncooked
- 1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes green chilies (Ro-tel)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon dried parsley

Rinse rice in a strainer under cold running water for 30 seconds, swirling the rice around with your hand. Drain and set aside. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onions, and cook until soft and translucent. Add garlic and cook for one minute, stirring frequently so the garlic doesn't burn.

Pour in water, rice, tomatoes and chilies, cumin, and cayenne pepper. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for 55 minutes or until rice is cooked and nearly all the liquid is absorbed. Add beans and stir well. Cook for another 8–10 minutes. Add parsley and serve.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)

## Taco Soup

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup diced onion
- 4 cups broth water
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can pinto beans, rinsed, drained, & mashed
- 1 (15-ounce) can corn, drained
- ½ cup dry polenta
- 1 seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook onions until soft and translucent. Add broth, tomatoes, black beans, mashed pinto beans, corn, polenta, taco seasoning, salt, and pepper. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat and cook for 30 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)

## DAY FIFTEEN

### “Forgive”

*Matthew 6:14*

Jesus has concluded a model prayer to God the Father (Matthew 6:9–13). Famously referred to as the Lord’s Prayer, this is meant as an example—not a mantra—for His disciples and followers. Here, Jesus returns to a key point in that prayer. As part of the way believers are to pray, Jesus mentions asking God to “*forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*” (Matthew 5:12). This request can be understood fairly easily. It means asking God for forgiveness, as well as declaring our forgiveness of those who have wronged us.

What Christ teaches here is that forgiveness is conditional, but only in a very specific sense. If you forgive the sins of others against you, Jesus says your heavenly Father will also forgive you. If you don’t forgive, you won’t be forgiven (Matthew 6:15). Of all the instructions Jesus gives in the Sermon on the Mount, this is among the most challenging. If not considered carefully, it is also extremely easy to misunderstand. Taken with no other context, Jesus seems to be saying we earn God’s forgiveness after we forgive the sins of others against us, and we lose forgiveness when we refuse to forgive others. Difficult or not, Jesus is speaking with the authority of God, and He always means what He says. We should never dismiss Jesus’ teaching because it is hard to understand or to reconcile with other teachings. We should also not leap to conclusions that don’t make sense of His other words.

In His other messages, Jesus repeatedly emphasized that God is displeased by those who refuse to forgive others despite being forgiven for much greater wrongs by God (Matthew 18:23–35). There is a clear sense in Christian teaching that unforgiving attitudes are inherently sinful. At the same time, Jesus is speaking before His own death as the final sacrifice for human sin. His blood, His loss of life, is the payment for sin, including the sin of unforgiveness (John 3:16–17). God takes Jesus’ death as payment for the sins of those who trust in Christ and gives to them credit for Jesus’ sinless life.

Paul describes it this way, “*And you, who were dead in your trespasses ... God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*” (Colossians 2:13–14)

Taken together with the rest of the Bible, we see that salvation—forgiveness from God—is based on faith, and it is permanent. However, there are signs and “symptoms” one would expect to see in a person who is truly born again. It makes sense that appreciating all God has forgiven in us ought to make us willing to forgive what others might have done to us. Forgiveness towards others is common sense, an expected indicator of someone who’s been saved.

# Recipes

## Caribbean Wild Rice

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 (8-ounce) can unsweetened pineapple tidbits, juice reserved
- 2 tablespoons Bragg's Liquid Amino or soy sauce
- 1 ½ tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 sliced carrot
- 1 cup chopped snow peas
- 1 cup chopped zucchini
- ½ cup chopped jarred roasted red bell peppers, drained
- ½ cup black beans, rinsed & drained
- ½ cup canned chickpeas, rinsed & drained
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- Avocado slices
- Chopped macadamia nuts

Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Stir in onions and cook until soft and translucent. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly so garlic doesn't burn. Add ½ cup pineapple juice, Bragg's Liquid Amino, and lime juice. Stir in carrots, snow peas, zucchini, red peppers, black beans, and chickpeas. Increase heat to medium high, stirring often. Cook for 5 minutes, or until ¾ of the liquid is absorbed and vegetables are slightly softened. Add wild rice and pineapple. Increase heat and stir-fry until heated through. Serve immediately. Garnish with avocado slices and chopped macadamia nuts.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)

## DAY SIXTEEN

### “Taking Out the Garbage”

*Nehemiah 4:10-14*

In this fourth chapter of Nehemiah, they were halfway through their project of rebuilding the walls. At this halfway point, a fresh wave of discouragement breaks out and Nehemiah has to deal with this discouragement. The way he did it will still work today—recognize discouragement!

Like most attacks of discouragement, there is a trace of truth in the enemy’s words. As builders, the Jews were feeble. They would not complete the task in a day. They didn’t have the best materials to work with. A lying, discouraging attack will often have some truth in it, but it will neglect the great truth: God was with them and had promised to see them through.

Nehemiah was dealing with a people who faced internal and external challenges. The challenge from the inside: discouragement among the people because the work seemed too vast. The text reads, “*Then Judah said, the strength of the laborers is failing, and there is much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall*” (Nehemiah 4:10).

Judah’s was supposed to be the strongest, bravest tribe. It was the tribe of great kings and, ultimately, the Messiah Himself. It was a special challenge and a discouragement to have this word come from the tribe of Judah. Nehemiah and the Jews rebuilding Jerusalem had been standing strong in the face of attack; now that the rebuilding work was at the halfway point, and wall was almost continuous, special challenges arose. The halfway point (mentioned in Nehemiah 4:6) is a dangerous place. Much remains to be done, but fatigue sets in because much has already been done.

It isn’t enough to just begin well. Many a team has had a great first half, only to lose in the final minutes. The rebuilding work has gone very well, and many obstacles have been overcome. However, the job isn’t done yet, the game isn’t over yet, there is still time to lose.

The work of rebuilding the walls was not only construction, but cleaning and hauling away the rubbish. The ruins of the walls, lying in waste for 100 years had become a collecting point for all kinds of rubbish. Clearing away the rubbish was not an option—it had to be done. The destroyed parts of the wall and the accumulated rubbish had to be cleared away so the foundations could be rebuilt upon. If they hadn’t done this, the walls wouldn’t stand at all.

In our Christian life as well, nothing much can be built for God’s glory unless rubbish is swept away. Taking out the garbage can be discouraging work, but it must be done. Today, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the rubbish in your life that keeps you from rebuilding.

# Recipes

## Cajun Red Beans and Rice

- ½ tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped green pepper
- ½ cup chopped red onion
- ½ cup sliced celery
- ¼ cup water
- 2 teaspoons Creole seasoning (see recipe below)
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed & drained
- 2 cups cooked brown rice

Heat olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium heat. Add green peppers, onions, and celery. Cook until vegetables are softened, about 3–5 minutes. Add water and Creole seasoning. Stir well. Mix in kidney beans and rice. Lower heat and cook another 5 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 8 servings (serving size: ½ cup)

## Creole Seasoning

- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1 onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Mix all ingredients in a small glass jar. Cover, and store until ready to use.

Yield: 12 servings (serving size: about 1 teaspoon)



# DAY SEVENTEEN

## “Unconditional Love”

### *1 Corinthians 13*

Paul begins this chapter by describing just how useless—even destructive—spiritual gifts are when not applied from the standpoint of love. Displays of tongues, prophetic powers, and supernatural spiritual knowledge may be impressive, but they are worthless if not used as intended by God, out of love for Him and other believers. Even the most spiritual of activities, selling everything to give to the poor and sacrificing one’s life for the sake of others, gains a person nothing if not given in love. (1 Corinthians 13:1–3).

Paul describes the love he’s talking about. It’s not a love of burgeoning feelings that may come and go. It’s not a love comprising flowery or eloquent words. This is God’s love—from the Greek *agape*—often described as “unconditional love” by Christians, as it does not depend on the one being loved, but on the commitment of the one acting.

Paul uses 14 verbs, actions, to describe this love. Seven are positive statements about what love does, and seven are negative statements about what it does not. In all cases, true Christian love is about setting one’s self aside for the good of other believers. Lack of love was at the heart of nearly all the problems Paul confronted in this letter.

Love is patient and kind. It actively waits and actively moves for the good of others. Love doesn’t envy or boast, not even regarding the spiritual gifts of one’s self or others. Love is not arrogant, convinced of one’s superiority over others. Love is not rude, meaning that it does not act indecently, sinning and breaking cultural norms to bring attention to one’s self.

Those who love like this have given up on seeking their own status and satisfaction first and foremost. Instead, they genuinely commit themselves to seeking good for other believers. As a result, they don’t get irritable or provoked when other people get in their way. The other people are the point, not the obstacle. Love also means truly letting go of past hurts instead of storing them up and keeping a record of wrongs.

Love refuses to take any joy or pleasure from wrongdoing. Instead, it declares that what is true is worth celebrating above all. Love loves the truth. Love doesn’t set limits on itself. Love does not declare, “This far and no further.” Love bears, or puts up with, all things for the good of other believers. This is true even if it means loving from a greater distance to avoid the active abuse of others.

Similarly, love believes all things, pushing the burden of truthfulness onto others instead of carrying the burden of uncovering falsehood. Love doesn’t stop hoping for other believers to do good, no matter the evidence of the past. Love doesn’t quit when the trials of life pile up. Love keeps going.

Paul sums it up: Love never fails. Christians may fail to love, as the Corinthians have clearly demonstrated, but God’s kind of love will always be effective. And unlike spiritual gifts, which will no longer be needed when Christ comes, love will last forever (1 Corinthians 13:4–8).

# Recipes

## Chipotle Black Bean Burgers

- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 cup mashed cooked sweet potatoes (about 1 large sweet potato, peeled)
- ¼ cup oat flour (see recipe notes) or brown rice flour
- ½ tablespoon dried parsley
- ¼ teaspoon chipotle chile pepper seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Preheat oven to broil setting. With a potato masher or fork, mash black beans in a large bowl, leaving about ¼ of the beans whole. Mix in sweet potatoes, oat flour, parsley, chipotle chile pepper seasoning, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Scoop out 1/3 cup of bean mixture and place on an 11x17-inch sheet that has been rubbed with olive oil. Flatten and shape into a circle with a spatula. Repeat with the remaining bean mixture to make 6 burgers.

Broil 4 inches from heat, about 7–8 minutes, or until golden brown. Flip burgers carefully with spatula. Broil for 2–3 more minutes and serve.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: 1 burger)

## Black Bean Chili Bake

- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, rinsed & drained
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can corn kernels, drained
- 1 cup chopped jarred roasted red bell peppers
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put beans in a large bowl and mash. Add tomato sauce, rice, peppers, corn, onions, and chili powder. Stir to combine. Rub a 9 x 13-inch casserole dish with olive oil and spread the mixture in it. Bake for 20 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)

## DAY EIGHTEEN

### “Generosity”

*2 Corinthians 9:2-5*

The Corinthians, though, seem to have lost their eagerness for the collection, perhaps as a result of the tension between themselves and Paul. It would be an embarrassment for everyone involved if fellow believers were to arrive from Macedonia only to find the Corinthians unprepared to contribute. To avoid that, Paul is sending Titus ahead of him to help them prepare for when the time comes (2 Corinthians 9:2–5).

Next, Paul describes why Christians giving is significant for believers and the work of God. It’s not just about money. Nor is it about fixing problems caused by a lack of funds. Christian giving is about the heart of the giver and brings spiritual gains that surpass the physical needs that might be met.

Paul uses the metaphor of planting and harvesting. Those who plant little will harvest little. Those who plant a lot will harvest much more. In other words, the more generously one gives, the more abundant will be the results of that giving. It’s important to remember that the “harvest” Paul refers to is the benefit given to others—not to the giver. Modern false teachers claim these verses as a promise of wealth to those who give. In fact, the point of giving more is not to gain more in return, but to be a greater blessing to others. Giving generously also attunes us to the will of God, spiritually enabling us to be even more generous in the future (2 Corinthians 9:6).

Paul refuses to name a percentage of income or belongings. Instead, God’s word sets a standard according to what each person has decided to give. God does not want us to give under obligation, but willingly and even “cheerfully.” Nobody should fail to give out of fear that they won’t have enough. God, in His grace, is able to provide abundantly so that every believer has all they need at all times and in all ways to abound in whatever good work God has assigned for them (2 Corinthians 9:7–9).

In other words, God wants Christians to do good works, and He will provide all that is needed to do so. God is the provider. He is the one who distributes freely to the poor. He provides both the seed and the bread. He uses generous believers to meet the needs of others, increasing the resources of those who give so that they can give more (2 Corinthians 9:10).

Giving as a Christlike act of grace is about more than meeting physical needs for those who lack. It also causes thankfulness to God to overflow. It builds connections between believers who give and those who receive the gift. Specifically, in this case, the generosity of Christians in Corinth caused Jewish Christians in Jerusalem to glorify God. It encouraged them to long for and pray for their spiritual siblings around the world (2 Corinthians 9:11–15).

# Recipes

## Grilled Portobello Steaks with Sun-Dried Tomato Tofu

4 portobello mushroom caps

### Marinade

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

¼ cup unsweetened pineapple juice or orange juice

¼ cup Bragg's Liquid Amino or soy sauce

2 tablespoons chopped green onions (green parts only)

1 clove garlic, minced

½ teaspoon dried crushed rosemary

### Sun-Dried Tomato Tofu

8 ounces extra-firm tofu, cut into ½-inch rectangular slices (2 ounces each)

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

¼ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes, packed in oil, drained

¼ cup sliced black olives

2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Place mushrooms in a glass dish with gills up. Whisk marinade ingredients together in a small bowl and pour over caps. Marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes.

While mushrooms marinate, prepare sun-dried tomato tofu. Place tofu slices in an 8 x 8 inch baking dish and drizzle with olive oil. Top with sun-dried tomatoes and olives. Add basil leaves, parsley, and garlic powder. Let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to broil setting while tofu marinates. Put tofu in the oven and broil for 5–7 minutes. Preheat barbecue grill. When grill is ready, place mushroom caps over heat for 5 minutes, flipping halfway through cooking time.

To serve, place grilled mushroom caps on a plate, top with tofu slices, and drizzle a tablespoon or two of the rosemary marinade over all.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size = 1 mushroom cap and 2 ounces of tofu)

## DAY NINETEEN

### “Grace”

*Romans 6:14*

If we want to explain to someone God’s grace in our lives, we could point directly to the history of our personal Christian experience; even the fact of our salvation is abundant evidence of God’s work of grace. It has been grace upon grace! And we might even add grace upon grace upon grace. Upon grace upon grace!

Grace is God’s plan and God’s provision to keep sin from dominating our lives. Who but God would come up with such a plan? God provides greatly for His people. There is a way to live one’s life in Christ with sin bearing less and less domination and having an ill influence in our walk with the Lord, and it centers upon the grace of God. God’s loyal steadfast love, by His grace, provides a way for sin to have less and less of a grip on your life and mine.

Grace is God’s unmerited favor. That is, grace is God doing good for us that we do not deserve. In the Bible, grace and mercy are like two sides of the same coin. Mercy is God withholding judgment or evil that I deserve; grace is God giving me blessings or good that I do not deserve. Because of God’s mercy, I do not receive the judgment of God against my sins; because of God’s grace, I receive eternal life and a promise of heaven, even though I do not deserve them. Both mercy and grace come to me through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But grace is more than just unmerited favor. The Bible says, “*And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work.*” (2 Corinthians 9:8) This is a powerful promise to us in God’s word concerning His grace towards us. This means no matter what the situation, we are going through, no matter what the problem we are dealing with and no matter what the task we are involved in, God’s grace and sufficiency will be there to sustain us and help us in all that we put our hand to do.

Grace can also be defined as God’s sufficiency or God’s fullness in the life of the believer. God told Paul, “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*”. (2 Corinthians 12:9) That is, the grace of God in Paul enabled him and empowered him in his weakness. What area of your life do you need God’s grace to enable and empower you in?

# Recipes

## Sweet Asian Salad

2 cups shredded sweet potato, peeled (about 1 small potato)  
 2 cups shredded parsnips, peeled (about 3 parsnips)  
 2 cups chopped kale, ribs and stems removed, lightly packed  
 ¼ cup diced red onion  
 ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 tablespoon Bragg's Liquid Aminos or soy sauce  
 1 tablespoon unsweetened pineapple juice  
 1 tablespoons sliced almonds  
 1 tablespoon chopped pecans  
 1 clove garlic, minced  
 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger or ½ teaspoon dried ginger  
 ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley, lightly packed or 1 teaspoon dried parsley  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Toss well to coat. Chill in refrigerator for about 1 hour.

Yield: 8 servings (serving size: ½ cup)

## Flatbread Pizza with Macadamia Nut Cheese

2 ½ cups whole wheat flour  
 2 flaxseed meal  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 1 cup warm water  
 1 cup artichoke dip  
 1 cup tomato sauce

Topping ideas: Green peppers, mushrooms, olives, onions, and/or roasted red bell peppers.

Mix flour, flaxseed meal, salt, and water in a food processor until the dough forms a ball. Turn the dough onto a floured work surface and knead for 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Let the dough rest at least for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Rub a little flour on a rolling pin, and roll the dough out onto a preheated pizza stone or an oiled pizza pan into a 12-inch or 14-inch circle (depending upon the thickness of crust you prefer). If the dough is too sticky to roll, put some flour on your fingertips and press the dough to the edges. With a fork, poke holes all across the crust dough. Bake for 10 minutes and remove from the oven.

Spread the artichoke dip across the crust and top with the tomato sauce. Add the desired toppings. Bake for 20 minutes or until the edges of the crust are brown and slightly crispy. Remove from the oven and let sit for 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

Yield: 8 servings (serving size = 1 slice)

# DAY TWENTY

## “Connected in 2022”

*John 15:1-11*

I am the vine, said Jesus, as the father loves me, so I love you. Abide in my love. And what will happen? Jesus concluded the passage by answering that my joy will be in you, and your joy will be full. I'm pretty simple, but I'd say that's a rather good offer that will serve us now; more than that, it will serve us for eternity.

He is the vine. We are the branches. It is He that gives us the ability to bear fruit. Bearing fruit is what life is all about. The rest of this passage makes that point unmistakably. Some of us want to bear blossoms, but not fruit. We want to look good. We want others to admire us, even envy us. But we do not want to go about the hard work of bearing fruit. And yet the nonproductive life is an unhappy life.

The Greek word for fruit is καρπός (*karpos*) and normally refers to the edible produce of trees or plants. In the New Testament, *karpos* is frequently used to refer to righteous actions, the “fruit” of one's life. In Matthew 3:8 and Luke 3:8, John the Baptist uses fruit/*karpos* to describe actions that demonstrate a heart of true repentance.

In Galatians 5:22–23, Paul uses fruit/*karpos* as an expression for desirable, righteous qualities in one's life, the “fruit of the Spirit”. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”*

The author in Hebrews 12:11 uses fruit/*karpos* to picture the results of the disciplined lifestyle. It reads, *“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”* (Hebrews 12:11)

We are connected to the vine. We are His branches. We are connected to one another. We draw our nourishment from Him, and by His grace we bear fruit.

Jesus said, apart from me, you can do nothing. Now that's a word of challenge and an offer or promise really. Many people try to be good, honest people and do what is right. But Jesus says that the only way to live a truly good life is to stay close to him, like a branch attached to the vine. Apart from Christ, our efforts are unfruitful. Are you receiving the nourishment and life offered by Christ, the vine? If not you are missing the special gift he has for you.

If a branch is broken off from a vine, it can bear fruit no more: it has nothing in itself independent of the stem; if separated from the stem, it must wither and die.

So, if separated from or not united with the Lord Jesus Christ, we are incapable of bearing fruit, because we have nothing in ourselves independent of him and have no means of deriving grace and strength from him—spiritual life and power.

# Recipes

## Purple Sticky Rice with Cashews

2 cups purple sticky rice  
 1 (14-ounce) can unsweetened coconut milk  
 ½ cup water  
 ½ salt  
 1 extra-virgin olive oil  
 1 cup red onions, thinly sliced  
 1 cup cooked sweet peas  
 ½ cup cashew halves and pieces, toasted  
 Sesame seeds

Put rice in a fine-mesh sieve and rinse well under running water in the sink. You may also pour rice into a saucepan, add water, and swish the rice around to rinse. Pour out the cloudy water and repeat until the water is mostly clear.

Place the rinsed rice back into the saucepan. Add coconut milk, water, and salt. Stir to combine. Cook over medium-high heat to bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cover. Cook for 20 minutes. Stir well, cover again, and cook for an additional 15–20 minutes. Nearly all of the liquid should be absorbed.

While the rice is cooking, heat olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add onions and stir to coat. Cook 20 minutes or until onions are slightly blackened and crispy, stirring frequently. Add cooked peas and cashews to rice and stir. Place a mound of rice on each serving plate and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Top with.

## Fig, Pear, and Salad

4 cups torn romaine lettuce, loosely packed  
 1 Bosc pear, unpeeled, sliced thin  
 ¼ cup diced dried figs  
 ¼ cup chopped walnuts  
 2 tablespoons raw sunflower seeds  
 1 recipe-cinnamon salad dressing

Place 1 cup of greens on each plate. Arrange pear slices on top of each mound of lettuce. Sprinkle each salad with 1 tablespoon dried figs, 1 tablespoon walnuts, and ½ tablespoon sunflower seeds. Drizzle about 2 tablespoons dressing over each salad.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: about 1 cup)



# DAY TWENTY ONE

## “Thy Kingdom Come”

*Matthew 6:10* “Thy kingdom come...” is an appeal. It’s an appeal for God’s presence. “Come and be with us, Lord!” Walk with us as we face the burdens of our days. Walk with us, talk with us, BE with us so we don’t feel alone and on our own. But the appeal is far greater than just a request for God’s presence. It is a petition for God to take control, to make the earth His jurisdiction in the same way He has made heaven  
His own.

Heaven is God’s kingdom. But earth is also God’s kingdom. Why is it called a kingdom?

- First, it’s a kingdom because it has laws that govern it; it has all the moral precepts of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Second, it’s a kingdom because it has subjects; its subjects are all those who believe in Jesus Christ.
- Third, it’s a kingdom because it has a king, Christ the Lord, the Sovereign King of heaven and earth.

When we say “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven...,” what we’re really asking God to do is magnify His presence among us. The only way to accomplish that is to ACCEPT the Gospel, LIVE the Gospel, and SPREAD the Gospel.

“Thy kingdom come; thy will be done.” If the expansion of God’s presence is going to happen, what we need this year is a new approach. We need a new direction, a reset; not a reset of our lives, but a reset of our faith. We don’t need a job as much as we need to believe that God will provide. We don’t need things to return to normal, because in many cases, normal left God out! What we need is a refocus of our faith.

We can’t just sit there and say, “Okay, God. I trust you, and I have prayed to you. Now you take care of it all.” That’s not the response of a genuine Christian. We’ve got to move in the direction He would have us go.

Faith in action...that’s what we need. Our faith doesn’t just need to show up—it needs to show out! God’s love should be in every word we speak, every thought we think, every deed we perform, every choice we make, every prayer we pray, every place we go, and every moment we live.

# Recipes

## Sesame Vegetables with Rice and Tofu

1 extra-virgin olive oil  
1 marinated tofu, marinade reserved  
1 TB extra-virgin olive oil  
1 cup chopped onions  
2 cups chopped broccoli florets, stems removed  
1 cup chopped carrots  
1 clove garlic, minced  
½ tablespoon  
1 ginger  
¼ cup unsweetened pineapple juice or water  
1 ½ cups cooked wild rice  
¼ cup toasted chopped walnuts  
1 tsp sesame seeds

Prepare the marinated tofu and set aside. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat and add onions. Cook until onions are soft and translucent. Add reserved marinade from the tofu, broccoli, carrots, garlic, tahini, and ginger. Cook covered for 8–10 minutes or until vegetables are tender but crisp, stirring frequently. Add pineapple juice, rice, and walnuts, and cook until heated through with juice nearly absorbed. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Stir and serve.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size = 1 ¼ cups)

# Snacks

## Almond Cookies

1 cup almond meal or flour  
 1/3 cup almond butter  
 1/4 cup unsweetened orange juice  
 2 tablespoons flaxseed meal  
 1/4 cup + 3 tablespoons date honey  
 2 tablespoons sliced almonds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix almond meal, almond butter, orange juice, and flaxseed meal. Lightly coat an 11 x 17-inch baking sheet with olive oil. Place dough on the baking sheet and flatten with your hands to about 1/8-inch thickness. Circle the cookie cutter to about the size of a 1/3 measuring cup to cut out cookies (or use the measuring cup itself). Spread about 1/2 tablespoon date honey on each cookie and top with 3–4 sliced almonds. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool.

Yield: servings (serving size: 1 cookie)

## Almond Butter Bites

1/2 cup almond butter  
 1/4 cup raw sunflower seeds  
 1/4 cup raisins  
 1/4 cup chopped almonds  
 2 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut  
 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix all ingredients in a bowl until well combined. Use a 1/2 tablespoon measuring spoon or a large melon ball scoop to scoop the mixture into small balls. Place in an 88-inch baking sheet and freeze until firm. Serve frozen or just slightly thawed.

Yield: 6–8 servings (serving size: 3 balls)

## Blueberry Mango Sorbet

2 cups frozen blueberries  
 2 cups frozen mango chunks (1-inch cubes)

Mix blueberries and mango in a blender until smooth, or feed through a juicer with the blank attachment in place.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: about 1/2 cup)

# Smoothie Recipes

## Coconut Bliss

- ½ cup water
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 cup sliced fresh or frozen banana (about 1 medium banana)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 cup frozen or fresh mango chunks
- 1 cup fresh or frozen sliced strawberries

Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.

Yield: 2 servings (serving size: about 8 ounces or 1 cup)

## Peachy Keen Smoothie

- 1 cup unsweetened non-dairy milk (almond, coconut, rice, soy) or water
- 1 cup sliced fresh or frozen banana, peeled (about 1 medium banana)
- 1 cup sliced fresh or frozen peaches
- 1 cup fresh spinach or kale leaves
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped walnuts (about ½ ounce)
- 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal, optional

Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.

Yield: 2 servings (serving size: about 8 ounces or 1 cup)

## Plum Good Smoothie

- 1 cup water
- 1 apple, unpeeled, chopped
- 1 frozen banana, peeled, sliced
- ¼ cup plums (about 6)
- 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened shredded coconut

Add all ingredients to a blender. Process about 1 minute or until completely smooth.

Yield: servings (serving size: about 1 cup or 8 ounces)

## Blueberry Mango

- 1 cup water or unsweetened almond, coconut, rice, or soy milk
- 1 cup fresh or frozen mango chunks
- 1 fresh or frozen banana, peeled, sliced
- ½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal, optional
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened coconut flakes

## Smoothie Recipes

### Strawberry Banana Smoothie

2 cups frozen strawberries

2 bananas

8 cubes of ice

1 cup almond, cashew, or oat milk

Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.

Yield: 2 servings (serving size: about 8 ounces or 1 cup)

### Spinach Smoothie

1 large green apple

½ cup

¼ cup cashews (or 1 banana and ½ cups mango or pineapple, skip the maple syrup)

4 cups spinach leaves or chopped spinach, loosely packed

10 cubes

1 tablespoon maple syrup

1 ½ tablespoons squeezed lemon juice (½)

Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.

Yield: 2 servings (serving size: about 8 ounces or 1 cup)

### Peanut Butter Smoothies

3 tablespoons butter

2 ripe bananas (room temperature)\*

1 ½ cups

¾ cup milk or non-dairy substitute (like almond, oat, or coconut milk)

Yield: servings (serving size: about 1 cup or 8 ounces)

### Watermelon Smoothie

3 cups watermelon

10 ounces (2 cups) frozen strawberries

1, either frozen in slices or at room temp

Mix all ingredients in a blender until smooth.



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# Revival 2022

AT WORD IN SEASON MINISTRIES



*Dr. Mack &  
Co-Pastor Freida  
MCCULLOUGH*



*PASTOR DERRELL  
MCINTOSH  
Jan 6th*

*DR. TAMEKA  
ROGERS  
Jan 13th*

*PASTOR JUANDOLYN  
STOKES  
Jan 20th*

*BISHOP SHAWN  
SMITH  
Jan 27th*



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**THURSDAYS**  
*@7pm*





**PSALM 49** A Psalm for the chief musician. Give the sons of men, let the heart be lifted up because of riches: they will be as a sound of shawms, and they will be like a pipe. Mark this, ye simple ones, and ye will not be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved. Hearken, O ye simple ones, and ye will understand, and ye will be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved. Hearken, O ye simple ones, and ye will understand, and ye will be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved.

**PSALM 50** A Psalm of Asaph. The mighty God, even the Lord our God, shall be glorified. Hearken, O ye simple ones, and ye will understand, and ye will be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved.

14 Like sheep they are scattered, every one into his own way: because they have no shepherd, they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind. 15 Hearken, O ye simple ones, and ye will understand, and ye will be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved.

**PSALM 50** A Psalm of Asaph. The mighty God, even the Lord our God, shall be glorified. Hearken, O ye simple ones, and ye will understand, and ye will be wise: for ye shall be as a sheep that is led to the slaughter, and ye will not understand, because ye will say, We are rich, we will not be moved.

16 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind. 17 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind. 18 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind.

19 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind. 20 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind. 21 For when he shall call, they shall be terrified, because they have no shepherd, and they shall be as chaff that is driven away by the wind.