

# JANUARY

God is our refuge  
and strength,  
Always ready to help  
in times of trouble.

PSALM 46:1 NLT

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JANUARY 1

# PRIORITIES

*All glory to God our Father forever and ever!*

PHILIPPIANS 4:20 NLT

The temptation we men struggle to overcome is the need for approval, affirmation, or adoration from those around us. We want love and respect from our family members, recognition from coworkers, and good standing within our community. We strive for these conditional social rewards. Something missing within us longs for acceptance, and so we shift our attention to the accolades this world so teasingly offers.

Perhaps we didn't get the approval we needed from our own fathers. Or perhaps we know we are inwardly more fragile than the lofty expectations we have placed upon ourselves. Or perhaps we are tempted to place the spotlight on ourselves. For whatever reason, if we're not proactive, our priorities can become misguided. We can be tricked into thinking, If only others would lift me up. It has been said that the chief end of man is to bring glory to God. The honest question that every man needs to face is this one: In all sincerity, who do I want to see glorified in my life today?

God, whenever I am swayed to seek my own stance upon your pedestal, remind me of who you are and what my priorities should be.

JANUARY 2

# BLESSING

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

PHILIPPIANS 4:23 NLT

At the end of his letter to his friends in the city of Philippi, Paul gave a blessing: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Does anyone in your family or within your network of friends need to receive a blessing like this from you? As a man, you're in a privileged and unique situation to speak life into those who need your love. You have the incredible opportunity, through your words, to curse or to encourage those closest to you.

God wants you to extend his blessing upon others. So, today, receive the grace he has for you through Jesus and then be intentional about sharing that grace with those you love. Jesus loves you, has given his life for you, and offers you unrelenting relationship. Now do the same for others in his grace-full power.

God, may you give me more than enough grace, so I may overflow upon those around me. In the name of Jesus.

JANUARY 3

## CHANGING LIVES

*This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God's wonderful grace.*

COLOSSIANS 1:6 NLT

The good news of Jesus is that our sins are forgiven and our relationship with God is restored through his saving work on the cross. This seed, when planted, grows and bears fruit for generations.

As a man, you have a remarkable twofold calling. First, you are called to embrace the good news wherever you are, making the grace and truth of Jesus the central component of your life. Second, you are called to share this good news with anyone who comes across your path. Sow the seeds of the gospel of Jesus within their lives. Help them to cultivate their faith. Provide the water, the light, the nutrients, and the environment for their faith to flourish. And watch with joy as the good news of Jesus spreads through them. You know Jesus has impacted your life when he leads you to start impacting others.

God, let me never cover up my faith. Continue to change my life by your Spirit and empower me to be bold in the way that I live out my commitment to you.

JANUARY 4

# WORK SO HARD

*That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.*

COLOSSIANS 1:29 NLT

If you were called to a meeting with God, and if it was your special responsibility to introduce the people in your life to him, what would you say? How would you describe them to God? What would be the important aspects you would want God to know as you presented them to him? If you had your lifetime to prepare for this meeting, how would you spend your life? To what would you devote your time each day? What sorts of habits or characteristics would you hope would rub off you and onto them?

Paul tirelessly invested the qualities of his own life into others. His desire was to present people to God, perfect through Christ. He sought God's wisdom in the practice of his own faith so he would know how to teach and represent God to those he cared about. He worked so hard, not for his own gain but so others would discover and embrace the forgiveness and abundance that comes from knowing Jesus.

God, may the work of my heart and hands today be determined, strong, and courageous on behalf of those around me.

JANUARY 5

# CONTINUE TO LIVE

*Just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.*

COLOSSIANS 2:6 NLT

Just because at some point in your life you committed yourself to Jesus, doesn't mean that your faith is to remain static. To be a disciple means to be a learner. In other words, a disciple of Jesus is a learner of Jesus.

Therefore, continue to follow Jesus. In fact, follow him with more attentive steps than yesterday. Learn his thoughts, learn his actions, and learn his will. Seek out his decisions for you, search out his advice, and call out for his wisdom. Run to his healing, walk where he miraculously stands, and get down into the messes in which he so willingly places himself. Embrace him as tightly today as you did at any point in your past. If Jesus is to be your Lord, let him be your Lord in every practical way today.

God, give me the resolve to continue to trust myself to your guidance, your steps, and your presence in my life. I want to follow you again today, as I did yesterday and as I will tomorrow.

JANUARY 6

# DON'T GET CAUGHT

*Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.*

COLOSSIANS 2:8 NLT

In Genesis 3, Satan captured Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He hunted them, he lured them, and then he snared them. They bought his shrewd, high-sounding nonsense. In Matthew 4, Satan tried his alluring arguments again, this time to trip up Jesus in the desert. Each statement and question lobbed by Satan was a like a high-arching softball grenade. If Jesus had taken the bait, the consequences would have been explosive. But he stayed the course. He didn't let the evil one capture him with falsehoods. In fact, he freely dispatched Satan's empty philosophies by being even shrewder than the snake.

How did he resist while Adam and Eve had fallen? What was Jesus' weapon? It was the uncompromising ballistic missile of truth. Staying alert and on course isn't just for your sake. The arguments you buy and the conclusions you accept impact the generations that follow you.

God, as for me and my family, we will serve you. Help me, then, to stay true, for the sake of those around me.

JANUARY 7

# NEW NATURE

*Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.*

COLOSSIANS 3:10 NLT

In Genesis 1, God merely spoke, and the stars were born. He said, "Let there be..." and there was. In the beginning, Christ was the Word (mentioned in John 1) who declared to the darkness that there should be light.

Jesus has spoken into your life today. He declares you free from sin. He proclaims the year of the Lord's favor, release for those who are captured, and sight for those who have lost their vision. He speaks a new vocation for your days. He calls you to him, and he calls you to change the world. His words beckon you to draw near and empower you to move mountains. He asks you to speak with his voice, his authority, his commands, and his creativity. Be refreshed today. Put on the new nature given to you by Jesus, the creator of the world.

God, by your Word, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Let me be refreshed in my soul today. Draw me close to you and help me to share this newness of life with those around me.