

## **Our 12 Core Beliefs**

At Christ's Center Church, there are twelve Core Beliefs which have informed the way we live, pray, and minister to our community. They come in four categories:

### Beliefs about God

- God is a Good Father
- Jesus Christ is Savior & Lord
- The Holy Spirit is Active

### Beliefs about Mankind

- We are Sons & Daughters First
- Our Sin Separated Us from God
- We are Redeemed through Jesus Christ

### Beliefs about the Church

- The Church is God's Family on Earth
- The Church Exists to Glorify God on Earth
- The Church Seeks to Expand God's Family on Earth

### Beliefs about the Kingdom

- The Gospel of the Kingdom is the Only Hope for Mankind
- We are Called to Extend God's Kingdom
- The Kingdom of God is Already & Not Yet

These beliefs are not to be confused with a full statement of faith, which you can find at [ChristsCenter.com](http://ChristsCenter.com). Rather, they are guiding truths that we feel God has highlighted for our congregation. They are a part of our history, and a part of the passion we carry today.

## **About This Workbook**

Over the next three months, we will be preaching sermons on each of these Core Beliefs. This workbook (along with the second volume) is designed to be a companion to those sermons, and a daily devotional that explores each of our twelve beliefs in greater depth. We'll have daily scripture meditations, and ideas how to spend time with God each day. You don't have to use it, of course. Many people have their own preferred ways of spending daily time with God. But for those who would like to join us, we think this is a pretty good (and pretty easy!) way to do it.

Each week will begin with some introductory thoughts on the theme at hand, and will then convene to daily meditations by use of the S.W.O.R.D. method (see next page for details.)

## **Going Deeper**

For those who want to go beyond the S.W.O.R.D. Drill and have a little more time, the Going Deeper section can serve as a helpful short Bible study. For this part, you'll want to use your own Bible, highlighters, and journal. The instructions in this section are just suggestions, of course. Sometimes we will encourage you to read the surrounding chapter for proper context, and draw your attentions to various ideas. Sometimes we'll direct you to other resources: articles, discussions, videos, or podcasts that have helped to shape our beliefs. We encourage you to dive in and think deeply.

*For sermon videos or for more information, check out our website: [www.ChristsCenter.com](http://www.ChristsCenter.com).*

## What is The S.W.O.R.D. Drill?

The SWORD drill is a device for studying the Bible and incorporating it into our soul where it can be readily drawn upon when needed. This process involves the supernatural power of God's Word reaching our heart as opposed to simply giving us head knowledge. This practical tool can be used by anyone. The five steps are defined by the acronym S.W.O.R.D.

### **S** - Scripture

Read the **SCRIPTURE**. Then read it again, only slower. Don't rush through any of it. Let the words sink in. Then, write the verse out. Or if it's too long, write out the part that speaks to you the most.

### **W** - Wait

Read the passage a third time, then **WAIT**. Give your mind and your heart some space to process. What words seem most important to you in this moment? Write those down. Are there any parts that seem to be jumping off the page? Write those down, too.

### **O** - Observe

Okay, now it's time to pay attention not only the words themselves, but to how they are affecting your heart. Ask yourself, "Where am I in these scriptures? Where am I in these words?" Can you **OBSERVE** what your heart is doing? Do these words make you anxious? Do they excite you? Are you uncomfortable as you read them? Write down these observations. Be honest with yourself.

### **R** - Request

Now that you've noticed what your heart is doing, it's time to invite the Holy Spirit to help you understand. It's time to **REQUEST** His input; His direction. What is He saying to you? Remember that we are not studying the Bible as if it were a textbook. You are asking for spiritual direction – and letting the Spirit of God, and the Word of God, lead you. So take a few moments and write down how you feel Him leading you.

### **D** - Dedicate

Based on what you've been reading and sensing, **DEDICATE** yourself to following where God is leading. Write down a prayer, or a response to His words. This is about taking action on what God has revealed to you through His Word.

\*(The S.W.O.R.D. Drill from Conquer Series Journal: Learn more about the Conquer Series Journal today @ [conquerseries.com](http://conquerseries.com))

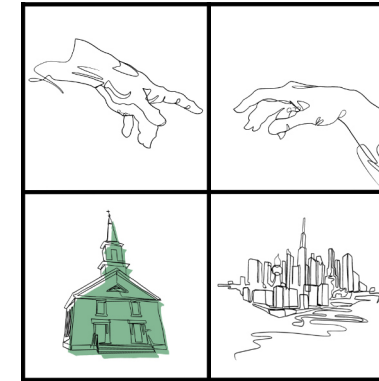
## How do I pray The Prayer of Examen?

Review your day and ask:

- When did I sense the Lord's presence today?
- Is there any place where I missed it?
- Where did I feel the joy of the Lord?

Then, thank God for His presence, and ask Him to be with you the next day.

## Week 7: The Church is God's Family on Earth



### **7 - The Church is God's Family on Earth**

- 2 - Jesus Christ is both Savior and Lord
- 9 - The Church Seeks to Expand God's Family on Earth
- 10 - The Gospel of the Kingdom is the Only Hope for Mankind
- 11 - We are Called to Extend God's Kingdom
- 12 - The Kingdom of God is Already & Not Yet

## The Church

Thus far in our study, we learned that God is a good Father, and that long before we ran off into sin, we were His sons and daughters. We learned about how Jesus, our Savior and Lord, redeemed us, bringing us back into the kinship circle, and giving us His Spirit of adoption. Now, we transition into how we move forward and live our lives. And the first thing we must understand is that we dare not try it alone.

## What is the Church?

Today, we informally use the word "church" to mean many things: it is the building where we meet for ninety minutes on Sundays; it is the meeting itself; it is the organization which plans the Sunday meeting.

But in the New Testament, the word for church is "Ekklesia," which means, roughly, "the assembly of called out ones." That means the church isn't a time or a place or an administrative hub; the church is people. Specifically, it is the people who have been called out of the kingdom of darkness, and assemble in the house of God. The church, in other words, is a family.

Over and over again, the scriptures use family language for God's people. He is our Father, Christ is our older brother, and we call one another "brother" and "sister." When we gather at the appointed time and the appointed day, we come to the living room of God's house. We assemble as a family.



**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Monday

John 13:34-35 (ESV) A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
Think of a person in your life who you have had a difficult time loving. How would Jesus love that person? Can you love them today in the same way?

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Tuesday

John 17:20 (ESV) "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
Jesus prayed for us to be one with Him and the family of God. Are there areas where you are in opposition to His prayer?

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Ephesians 4:11-13 (ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Going Deeper:**  
*Are you aware of the work you are doing to build up the body? Is it hard for you to count on others to build you up as a part of the body? If so, why?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Ephesians 4:15-16 (ESV) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Going Deeper:**  
*Are you more comfortable building people up, or being built up by others? Why?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Friday

Hebrews 10:24-25 (ESV) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*Why is gathering important? Why do you think we are tempted to neglect this?*

**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.

Saturday

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Journaling Day

God has called the church to be a family in order to show the world what He is like. In other words, we are not supposed to live the Christian life by ourselves. Are there any areas you find yourself resisting being part of church as a family?

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**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).







**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Monday

Matthew 5:14-16 (ESV) "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*Ask God to show you some of the good works you are engaged in that He is glorified by.*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

Tuesday

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Romans 15:5-7 (ESV) May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*This verse seems to indicate that if we want to live in harmony, we must have endurance. Why is that? And why is harmony important among believers?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Psalms 96:7-9 (ESV) Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*To ascribe means to give attribution; to identify the source. Why is it important to ascribe glory to God? What happens if we don't?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Hebrews 13:15-16 (ESV) Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*What is the "fruit of your lips?" Be mindful today of what is coming out of your mouth. Invite God to give you insight about this aspect of your life.*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*







**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Monday

Psalms 68:5-6 (NIV) A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing;

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**Going Deeper:**  
*God promises to adopt all of us into family. Why is it so important that people be brought into family as opposed to an organization or state?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Tuesday

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 (ESV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*This is such a hope-filled verse, inviting people to be reconciled into God's family. Is this the way you see yourself? As a minister of God's reconciliation?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Acts 1:8 (ESV) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
Jesus tells us that as we go we are to share the good news with the whole world. Why is it important that we receive Holy Spirit first?

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Psalms 22:22-23 (ESV) I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
The Psalmist says he will tell of God's name to his own brothers. What role does your testimony play in expanding the family of God.

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).









**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Monday

Col 1:13-15 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*What does this mean to have been taken out of the domain of darkness and now being in the Kingdom?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

Tuesday

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Isaiah 9:6-7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*What areas do you see His government of peace increasing in our community? What areas are you praying for that it will all the more?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Luke 4:17-21 (NIV) Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*In this verse, Jesus is proclaiming freedom, goodness, and favor. This was His mission. How do we, as followers of Jesus, continue that mission?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Matthew 6:9-10 (NIV) 9 "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
*What are the implications of praying "on earth as it is in heaven?"*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*







**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Monday

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Going Deeper:**  
*Do you find yourself responding to the Great Commission with a sense of empowerment or of being overwhelmed? Perhaps a mixture of both? Ask the Lord what He would like to say to you about this.*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

Tuesday

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Psalms 145:10-13 (ESV) All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you! They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Going Deeper:**  
*What do you think of when you picture the "glory of God's Kingdom" here on earth?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*



**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Mark 4:30-32 (ESV) And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Going Deeper:**

*Jesus is describing how the Kingdom expands from something very small and continues to grow into something big. Are you valuing the small seeds that God has called you to cultivate in your areas of responsibility? Take a moment to identify them.*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.*

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Revelation 1:5-7 (ESV) To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Going Deeper:**

*No matter what your vocation, God has given you a job: you are a priest in His kingdom. Do you see yourself this way? What difference would it make if you did?*

**Afternoon  
or Evening  
Meditation**

*Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).*







**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Monday

Revelation 21:1-5 (ESV) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:** What do you feel when you read this passage? What does your heart most long for?

**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.

Tuesday

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

Mark 1:14-15 (ESV) Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
To repent is to change your mind and turn away. What was Jesus wanting these people to turn away from? What might you have to turn away from in order to embrace the Kingdom of God in a greater way?

**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Wednesday

Revelation 11:15 (ESV) Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
What are the things that can be accomplished now? What things can only be accomplished when Christ returns?

**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Take a few minutes to quiet your heart before the Lord. Revisit today's Dedication (above). Pray it through again, and thank God for hearing you.

**Morning Meditations**  
Start with 2 minutes of silence before God

# Thursday

Luke 17:20 (NASB) Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."

**Scripture** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Wait** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Observe** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Request** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dedicate** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Going Deeper:**  
Why is it so important that we know the Kingdom is always in our midst?

**Afternoon or Evening Meditation**

Pray the Prayer of Examen before you go to bed (see Page 3).

