

Praying

IN THE DARK



Pastor Mason Phillips | September 6, 2026

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Day 1: When Silence Feels Like Abandonment

Devotional: David did not dress up his pain before bringing it to God. He cried out with raw honesty, asking how long God would hide his face. This is not a failure of faith -- it is faith in its most honest form. To bring your unfiltered anguish into the presence of God is to declare that he alone is trustworthy with what is broken inside you. You are not hiding from him; you are running toward him. Today, resist the urge to sanitize your prayer. Tell God exactly where you are. He can handle it.

Reading:

Psalm 13:1-6 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

*How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?
Consider and hear me, O Lord my God;
Enlighten my eyes,
Lest I sleep the sleep of death;
Lest my enemy say,
“I have prevailed against him”;
Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved.
But I have trusted in Your mercy;
My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord,
Because He has dealt bountifully with me.*

Personal Reflection: What pain have you been keeping at a careful distance from your prayers? What would it look like to bring that specific hurt, unedited, before God today?

Practical Application: Set aside ten minutes to write out an honest prayer that does not attempt to sound polished or faithful. Write what you actually feel. Let that be your offering to God today.

Day 2: Faith That Faces the Facts

Devotional: Abraham did not pretend his body was young or that Sarah's womb was anything other than what it was. He looked directly at the impossibility of his circumstances and still believed. Scripture is careful to note that this honest reckoning with reality did not constitute weak faith -- it was the very context in which his faith was strengthened. God is not honored by our denial of hard

circumstances. He is glorified when we acknowledge what is true about our situation and choose to trust what is true about him. Honest faith is not blind faith. It sees clearly and still believes.

Reading:

Romans 4:16-22 NKJV

Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.”

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

Personal Reflection: In what area of your life are you tempted to either deny the difficulty of your circumstances or to let those circumstances have the final word over God's promises?

Practical Application: Identify one promise from Scripture that speaks directly to a current struggle. Write it down alongside an honest description of your circumstances. Read both aloud as an act of faith that holds both realities at once.

Day 3: Tethered When You Cannot See

Devotional: A sixteen-year-old boy fell eighty feet down a mountainside and survived because a rope connected him to an anchor that did not move. The writer of Hebrews uses the same image to describe the hope we have in Christ. When life

disorients us and darkness closes in, we are not left to grip the walls of our circumstances and hold on by willpower. We are tethered to something -- someone -- who cannot be moved. Jesus has gone through the veil ahead of us. Our hope is not wishful thinking. It is a rope attached to an immovable anchor, holding us when we cannot hold ourselves.

Reading:

Hebrews 6:17-20 NKJV

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Personal Reflection: When your circumstances begin to spiral, what do you instinctively reach for to stabilize yourself? Is that anchor able to hold the weight you are placing on it?

Practical Application: Memorize Isaiah 26:3-4 this week. When anxiety or confusion rises, recite it aloud as a deliberate act of redirecting your focus toward the unchanging character of God.

Day 4: The God Who Hears in the Dark

Devotional: Hebrews 5:7 tells us that Jesus prayed with loud cries and tears -- and that he was heard. Not despite his anguish, but through it. He did not compose himself before approaching the Father. He came undone and was still received. John adds that the confidence we have before God is this: he hears us. Not eventually, not conditionally based on the quality of our composure, but he hears us. The darkness that surrounds you does not muffle your voice before the throne of God. Psalm 139 reminds us that darkness and light are alike to him. He sees you. He hears you. You are not lost to him.

Reading:

1 John 5:14-15 NKJV

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Hebrews 5:7 NKJV

Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,

Personal Reflection: Do you genuinely believe that God hears your prayers when you are in a dark or desperate season? What would change about how you pray if you were fully convinced of this?

Practical Application: Pray today specifically about one thing you have felt too ashamed, too confused, or too overwhelmed to bring to God before now. Speak it plainly. Trust that you are heard.

Day 5: Praying Through Into Praise

Devotional: David's psalm does not end in despair. It moves -- through petition, through trust, through to praise. This is not a performance of optimism or a denial of what came before. It is a genuine arrival at a different place, made possible only by the journey through honest prayer and anchored trust. Psalm 119:68 declares that God is good and does only good. If what we are experiencing does not yet reflect that goodness, it simply means God is not finished. The praise that rises after lament is not hollow. It is the most costly and therefore the most genuine praise there is -- forged in darkness, offered in faith.

Reading:

Psalms 13:5-6 NKJV

But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.

I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Psalms 119:68 NKJV

You are good, and do good; teach me your statutes.

Personal Reflection: Is there an area of your life where you have been waiting for circumstances to change before you allow yourself to praise God? What would it mean to offer praise now, not as denial, but as faith in what God is still doing?

Practical Application: End each day this week by writing down one evidence of God's faithfulness from your past. Let those recorded mercies become the foundation from which you choose to trust and praise him in your present darkness.