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International Church of Barcelona



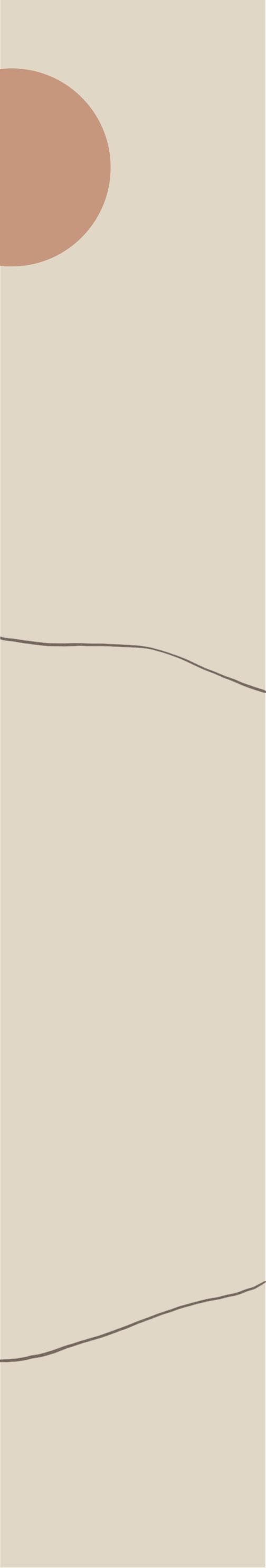
PRAYER AND FASTING  
FOR YOUR WALK  
WITH GOD

Gifts of the Spirit

# H E L L O *Hola*



These are interesting & unprecedented times we are living in. We can all agree that these last 2 years have been HARD. We can also probably all agree that it's in the darkest of times and in the most challenging of moments where we experience God's grace the most. It's when we grow in depth and maturity and where character is forged. It's where God's joy becomes our strength because we have come to the end of our own. It's where His peace passes understanding because without it we would crumble. It's where we realize that we aren't in control now and we never really were. It's in these HARD seasons that we are able to experience surrender and trust in new and greater ways.



That's what Fasting & Prayer is all about. It's about surrender and trust. It's about His strength in our weakness and intentionally spending time in prayer, listening and worship. It's about seeking forgiveness, direction, blessing, strength and breakthroughs! It's about tuning out the distractions of this world and tuning into the voice of the Lord through His Word and in time with Him.

At ICB we start every year this way. Every year we choose a special focus as we fast & pray, and this year our emphasis is on Spiritual Gifts. Each day we will read about a specific gift and then ask the Lord to awaken and increase that gift in our lives and church. This Prayer Journal will accompany us on this journey and we ask that you spend time in prayer and in God's Word each day as we listen and grow together. Also please join in the special corporate times of prayer for the needs of our church and world!

We are EXPECTANT for all that this year holds, and we are believing God for BIG things in our lives and in His Church! We love you and we are here for you, and by God's grace we believe that the best is yet to come!

*John and Brandi Carrano*

Lead Pastors | International Church of Barcelona

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# PRAYER IS POWERFUL

Prayer is not only genuine communication with God through words or thoughts, but also a spiritual encounter with Him.

Depending on your background in religious and spiritual life, prayer may come with many different connotations. However, here at ICB we believe that prayer is at least three things. First, prayer is talking to the Creator God who made you and loves you. There are a vast number of examples of people who pray in the Scriptures, including Jesus, therefore we, too, practice this spiritual discipline.

Second, prayers should be genuine. God wants to know your heart and when you share even the deepest and darkest parts of who you are with Him, it demonstrates that you love Him and trust Him. Prayer can be done anywhere, at any time, and in any physical position (even though you may notice in the Bible that certain positions tend to be used more often than others, such as standing or kneeling instead of sitting). But! make sure it is sincere. Third, prayer is more than communication...it is spiritual connection. Although we can't put the experience into words perfectly for you here, trust us that there is something spiritually special which occurs when you speak to God. We encourage you to come to God not just as the One who can give you what you want, but rather to open yourself up to Him as your Heavenly Father. He desires to embrace you as you spiritually communicate and connect with Him.

If you feel lost regarding how to pray, feel free to ask a staff member for advice. You may also like to look at the prayer that Jesus told us to pray (Matthew 6:9-13) to discover, not only an example for us to follow or memorize, but also the key principles of prayer. These principles, outlined below, can be included any time you pray.

“

*Declare His greatness and  
holiness*

(“Our Father...”)

*Declare His agenda*

(“Your kingdom come...”)

*Declare your needs*

(“Give us this day...”)

*Declare His forgiveness and  
your own*

(“...and forgive us...”)

*Declare your weakness*

(“And lead us not into...”)



# WHY SHOULD WE FAST?

Fasting: to take a break from everyday consumption in order to connect with God more intentionally.

Although fasting is mentioned less than prayer in the Scriptures, this doesn't mean that it isn't a significant part of the biblical narrative. Many people believe that fasting is an excuse to diet, a way to manipulate God into doing what you want, or a way to earn approval from God. However, fasting is none of those things. Rather, believers in the Scriptures fast to accomplish one or more of the following purposes.

# SEEK

## Forgiveness

Many in the Bible repent using fasting as a means to seek forgiveness. Fasting may also be used to help you discover if there is an “idol” in your life (i.e., something you value or worship above God).

## Strength

Some fast to receive strength to fight off temptation and the things in their lives that they know God does not want them to do.

## Breakthrough

Still other people in the Bible use fasting as a way to overcome an obstacle or to discover the way in which a problem can be solved. This purpose is similar to seeking direction, but it is more than that. If there is a spiritual blockade in your life and you don't know how to even approach it, fasting is a way we can give that obstacle over to God for Him to take care of it.

## Direction

A number of believers in the Scriptures don't know what to do next and so they decide to fast. So, if you are wondering if you should take this job or that, whether you should marry this person, or if you should move to this country, then fasting is an excellent way to bring those questions to God.

## Blessing/Favor/Empowerment

There are various people in the Bible who know what God wants them to do, but it is scary. Thus, they turn to God in fasting and prayer to present their request to God so that they may have the courage and strength to actually do it.

"So we fasted and earnestly prayed that our God would take care of us, and he heard our prayer."

Ezra 8:23

# How to FAST



## *Absolute Fast*

Traditionally, to fast meant to abstain from all food and drink for an extended period of time. Although this is the classic example of a fast, many people today will still drink water or juice during an absolute fast.

Disclaimer: if you are ill, pregnant, or have a medical condition, we at ICB advise that you do not attempt this type of fast. If you choose to do so, know that it is at your own risk.

## *Fasting from Worldly Desires*

Over the years, some people have been unable to fast from food or they have realized that they were more dependent on and distracted by the things of this world than by food. So, during times of prayer and fasting they chose to take a break from those things instead.

Examples include: cell phone, social media, music, movies/television, video games, weekends out, shopping, sex (if married—1 Cor 7:5), etc. Notice that these things are not inherently evil. We choose to "fast" from such things in our lives, not only to have more time in the day, but also to replace those things with God-centered activities (praying, meditating, silence, Scripture memorization, evangelism, service, reading & studying the Scriptures, etc.)

## *Partial Fast*

This refers to restricting yourself to eating only certain types of food or drink for an extended period of time. This could include omitting a meal during each day, omitting a type of food (e.g., sugar, coffee, meat), only drinking liquids, the Daniel fast (Dan 1:12) and so on. Again, remember that this is not a diet, but rather an opportunity to choose to abstain from something that isn't necessarily bad so that you have time to commune and seek after God more frequently and/or with less distraction.

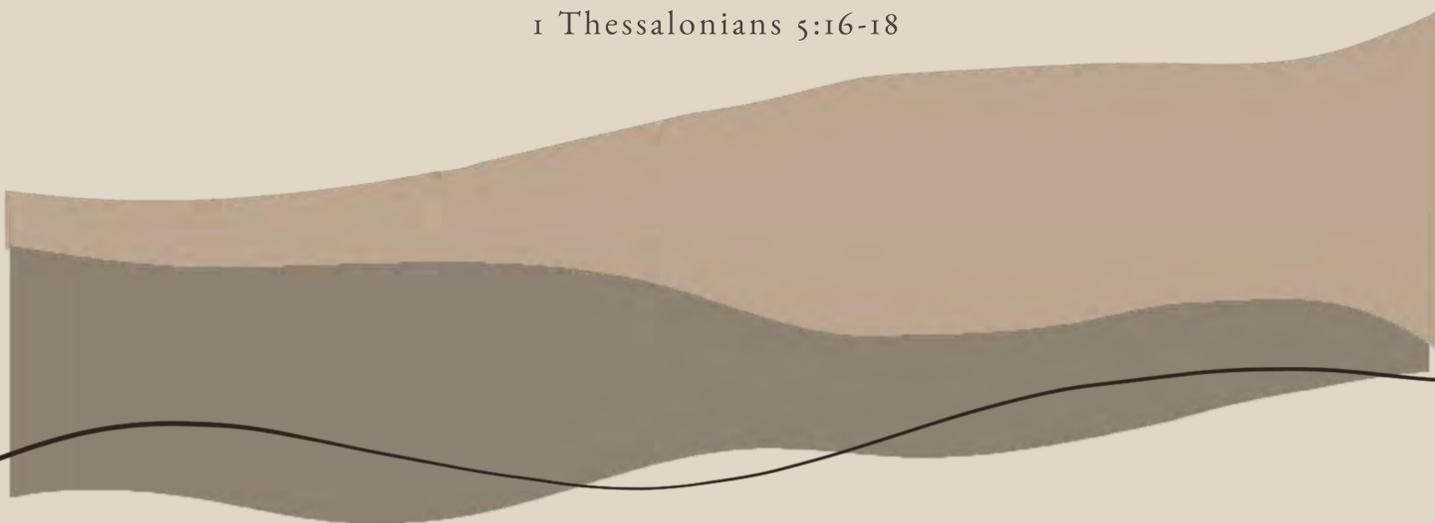
things to fast

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"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



day<sup>01</sup>

# SPIRITUAL GIFTS

There are many spiritual gifts listed in the Bible. While different in nature, they all come from the same Spirit, the same God. The manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit may look different among us, but they are designed to work together, in unison, to build the Church. As Paul encourages us, we should be informed and aware of the spiritual gifts.

“Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.” 1 Corinthians 12:1

We need to understand the gifts God has made available to us and the responsibility we have as followers of Christ to utilize these gifts as He designed. Like all gifts, the spiritual gifts are meant to be both received and given. In Jesus’s last days before His ascension, He promised that the Father would send us a very special and powerful gift; the Holy Spirit, also known as the Helper.

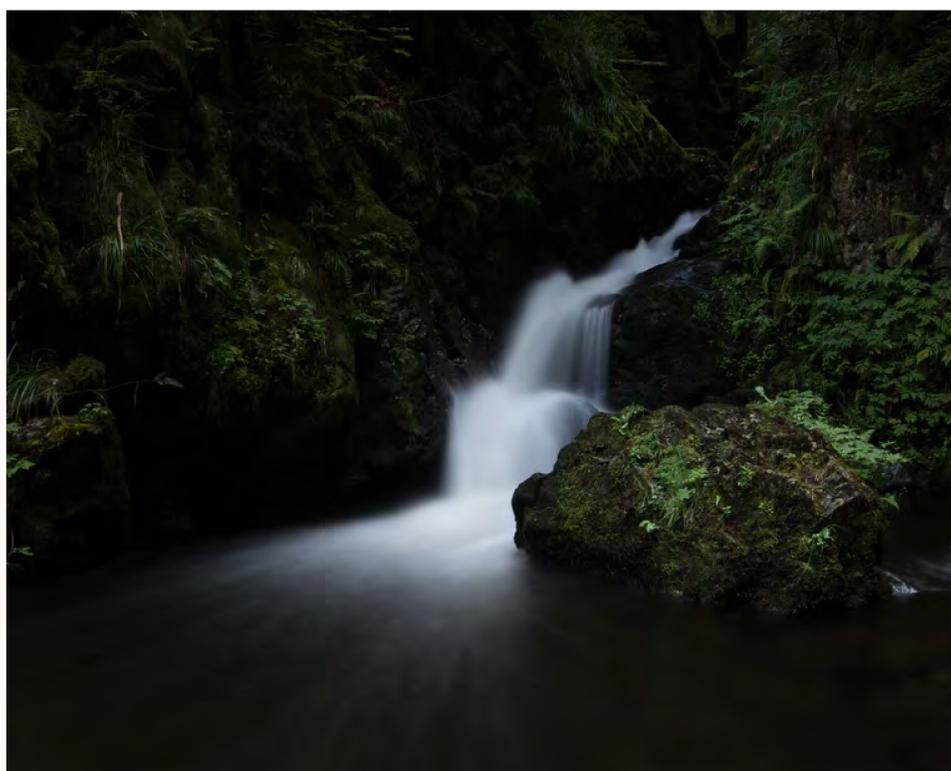
“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever”  
John 14:16

## OI SPIRITURAL GIFTS

It is through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit that these spiritual gifts are available to us. However, gifts are only a benefit to the recipient if they are received openly, freely and willingly. For example, if someone were to buy you a new car for your birthday, it wouldn't be yours until you accepted the keys. You would have the choice to refuse the gift, but why would you? A free car! As amazing and awesome as a free car sounds, the gifts we receive through the Holy Spirit are so much more powerful, beneficial and fulfilling than anything we could receive in this world. But, we must be open to receiving them. We must have an open heart, mind and spirit to be able to fully receive what God has for us through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

The gifts that we receive from the Holy Spirit are not meant solely for our benefit. As we receive and accept the gifts of the Spirit, it is our responsibility to be thinking of how we can use these gifts to build the Church, to benefit others around us, and to be a “Helper” to others just as the Spirit is to us. To use our gifts is to “give” them for the benefit of others.

As we enter into this dedicated time of prayer and fasting, take this first day to truly prepare your heart, mind and spirit to acknowledge and receive the gifts that God has given us. Read through 1 Corinthians chapter 12. Spend time today in prayer seeking understanding of the spiritual gifts, open your heart to receive, and ask God how He wants to empower you to build the Church.



# reflection

DAY 01

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Thank You for the spiritual gifts You empower me with. I am open to receiving what You have for me. Use me to build the Church and to bless others in Jesus's name.
- Empower this church to be a beacon of light and a place of hope for the people of Barcelona, Spain and all across the world. We pray for a spirit of unity and encouragement as we seek to utilize our spiritual gifts as the body of Christ.
- Empower me to utilize the spiritual gifts You have given me in order to be a blessing to others. Spirit, lead me to those who are in need. Lead me towards those whom You have called me to help. Give me the confidence and boldness to act on Your behalf.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>02</sup>

# SERVICE

*read* Romans 12:7 "If serving, then serve" (NIV)

I love Paul's words; if your gift is service, then serve. In other words, don't just sit there - serve others! The gift of service, sometimes called the gift of helps, can be seen in roles such as greeting people at the door, translating, serving food, setting up, cleaning up and so much more. It includes any act of service which enables others to use their gifts so that the church can grow.

A great example of this is in the book of Acts. The apostles were feeding so many widows that they did not have time to preach and pray. The apostles knew feeding widows was important but they also knew that they were called and gifted to preach the gospel and pray for the church. So they looked for seven deacons who could take care of feeding widows in the church. Notice what happens after these deacons (which means "servants") began to feed the widows...

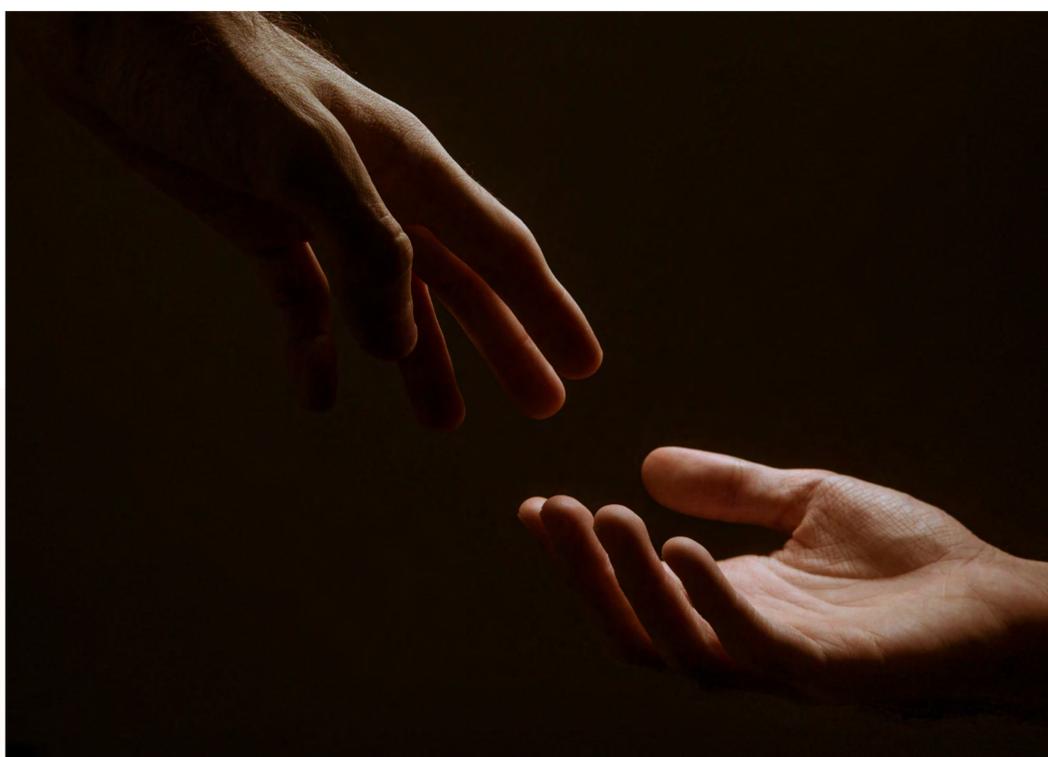
"So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too." (Acts 6:7 NLT)

## O2 SERVICE

Once the apostles were freed up to do their job, the church grew and many of the new believers were Jewish priests. This is the first time we read in the Bible that the priests were coming to faith in Jesus. Perhaps these priests came to faith because the apostles were freed up to talk to them, or perhaps the priests saw the widows and orphans being cared for so well that it spoke to them of the love in the Christian community. Either way, the result of these seven men's service was that the church grew and a good number of priests who had been unsure of and sometimes opposed to the gospel now believed. It was the service of these seven deacons that played a part in sparking this revival!

I have a confession. Whenever I take a spiritual gifts test, like the one we offer in our Serve class, I often score very high on service. In the past I was not very excited about this. I thought it was just helping. Anyone can do that, right? But a Colombian missionary set me straight. He told me, "your gift enables others to do their part so the church can grow. Never despise the gift God has given you. You help the church reach its potential."

Now I delight in the gift of service. It gives me such joy to see others flourishing in their gifts and the church growing because I was there to help or serve. Remember the words of Paul - if your gift is serving, 'then serve'.



# reflection

DAY 02

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Fill me with the capacity to serve others so that Your Word can spread. And if my gift is service, help me to do it with joy knowing that it frees up others to use their gifts so that the church can grow.
- Raise up people to serve just as You did in Acts chapter 6, so that our pastors and leaders can be freed up to serve in other ways and the Word of God can spread.
- As people step up to serve, cause our influence at ICB to grow and bring people to faith who were previously unsure about or opposed to the gospel like the priests in Acts chapter 6.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>03</sup>

# PROPHECY

read 1 Corinthians 14

Prophecy– what a loaded word! The word “prophecy” may stir up many different thoughts and emotions depending on your experience. Maybe when you hear “prophecy”, you think of Old Testament prophets who admonished kings, rebuked Israel regularly, and spoke God’s truth of love and repentance. Or maybe because of unhealthy church practices, prophecy makes you think of control and fear– perhaps a fellow believer has “prophesied” future events that never came to pass or spoke shame over you instead of life. Whatever your preconceived thoughts are about prophecy, today we are going to the New Testament to evaluate the gift of prophecy given to believers by the Holy Spirit.

Fun fact: Prophecy is actually the most frequently mentioned gift of the Spirit! The apostle Paul is very fond of the gift of prophecy. He tells us to eagerly desire all the gifts, but especially to prophesy! (1 Cor 14:1). He encourages us a second time (1 Cor 14:39) to be eager to prophesy. Why does Paul care so much about the prophetic gift? Let’s start a fresh with the definition of the prophecy in the New Testament:

“The one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.” 1 Corinthians 14:3

## 03 PROPHECY

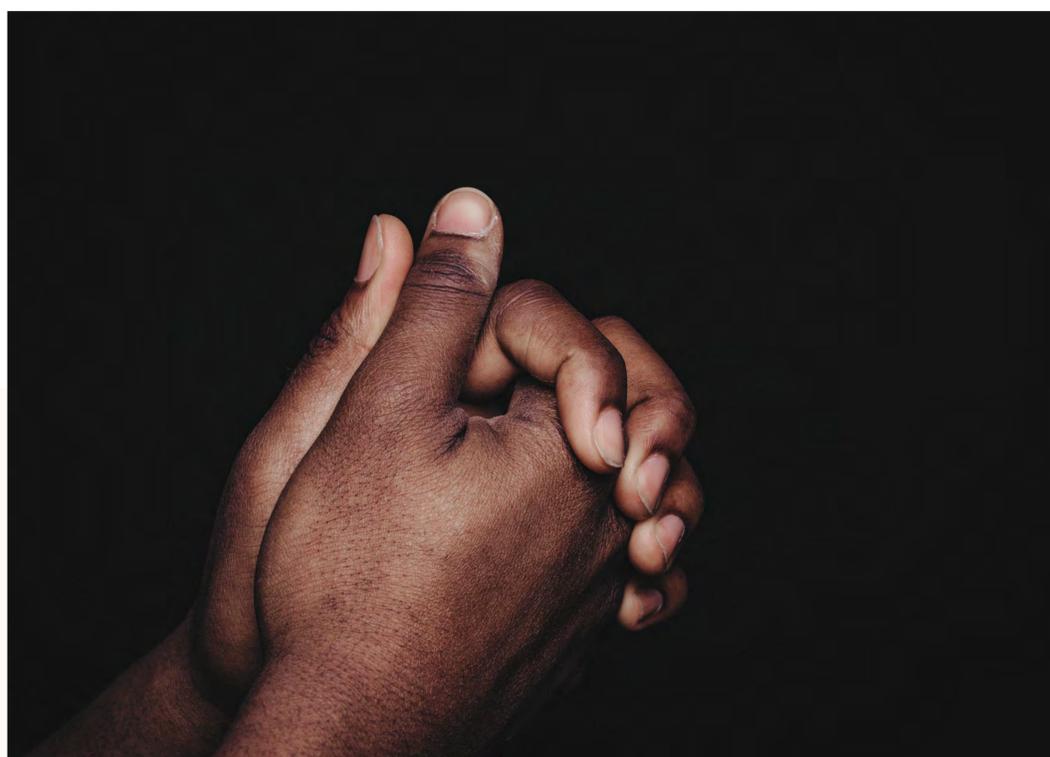
New Testament prophecy is meant to: strengthen, encourage, and comfort! The gift of prophecy is simply this: Hearing from the Holy Spirit to receive and then communicate a message of strength, encouragement, and comfort to others. The Hebrew word for “prophet” means: delegate or mouthpiece of another. As the Holy Spirit lives in each one of us, we act as delegates of encouragement on His behalf! Practically speaking, we can pray daily for other people in our lives and ask the Lord to give us a message of encouragement just for them.

“Let two or three people prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said.” (1 Cor 14:29)

There are a few ways that we are to evaluate prophetic words. Ask yourself:

- Is this encouraging, strengthening, or comforting?
- Does this agree with what we know about the character of God?
- Does this agree with what Scripture says?
- Does it honour God, yourself, and other people?

Take time today to ask the Holy Spirit for prophetic encouragement for someone you know! The Bible shows us so many ways that we can hear God’s voice: through Scripture, prayer, a still small voice, pictures/dreams, impressions, nature, and music. When you sense the Spirit speaking to you, evaluate with the questions above. Then with humility, pass along the encouragement to them!



# reflection

DAY 03

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- I ask today that I would hear Your voice on behalf of the church. I am listening- give me a name to pray for and verses to send them!
- We pray that You would activate the prophetic gift within ICB!  
Empower our congregation with Your Holy Spirit so that we can hear Your voice and encourage one another daily.
- We want to be filled with Your gift so that others will know who You are!  
As we seek Your voice and heart for the people around us, give us prophetic words to share with them. May more see Jesus because of the Spirit's work of prophecy in our lives. Speak through us!

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)



“

Fear not, for I am with you;  
be not dismayed, for I am  
your God; I will strengthen  
you, I will help you, I will  
uphold you with my  
righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10



day<sup>04</sup>

# WORDS

*read* 1 Corinthians 12:8

Words of Knowledge and Wisdom are revelatory gifts of the Spirit by which the Lord delights to work in His children for the purpose of perfecting the Saints and equipping the team (1 Cor 12:8).

A word of knowledge is about a past or present fact that the Holy Spirit reveals in a supernatural way. The purpose is to encourage faith in both the giver and the recipient. When both have confirmation of the truthfulness of the word, both are blessed, faith is increased, and the Lord is glorified!

When the Holy Spirit gives a word of wisdom through a believer to an unbeliever, the latter person is surprised and curious about the fact that an unknown person knew an intimate detail of his or her life. It is a tool of evangelism since the unbeliever may then accept the love and mercy of Jesus for their life.

As we review the life of Jesus and the Apostles, we observe endless words of knowledge given by the Holy Spirit, which bring healing, salvation, encouragement.

For example, the Samaritan woman (John 4: 1-26), and Paul and Cornelius (Acts 10).

The Holy Spirit gives words of knowledge in many ways. One common way is through promptings, where The Holy Spirit puts someone on our heart with an urge to contact them. By being obedient we may find that there is a great need for ministry and thus we know that we have heard the Lord clearly.

## 04 WORDS

Another way is through receiving a vision in our minds. We receive images: an accident, a house, a vision or a dream. We may hear a clear word for a specific person. We may feel pain and identify that it is someone's pain that God wants to heal.

If we step forward and take a chance, putting “revelation” to the test, we realize that we are walking in the Spirit.

Only through our growth and surrender to the Holy Spirit are we able to develop spiritual sensitivity (Eph 1:17). He is able to flow through us as we grow in His Love, intimacy and obedience. Our faith is tested as we take risks. We must be willing to let go of our pride even when we feel like we are making a fool of ourselves.

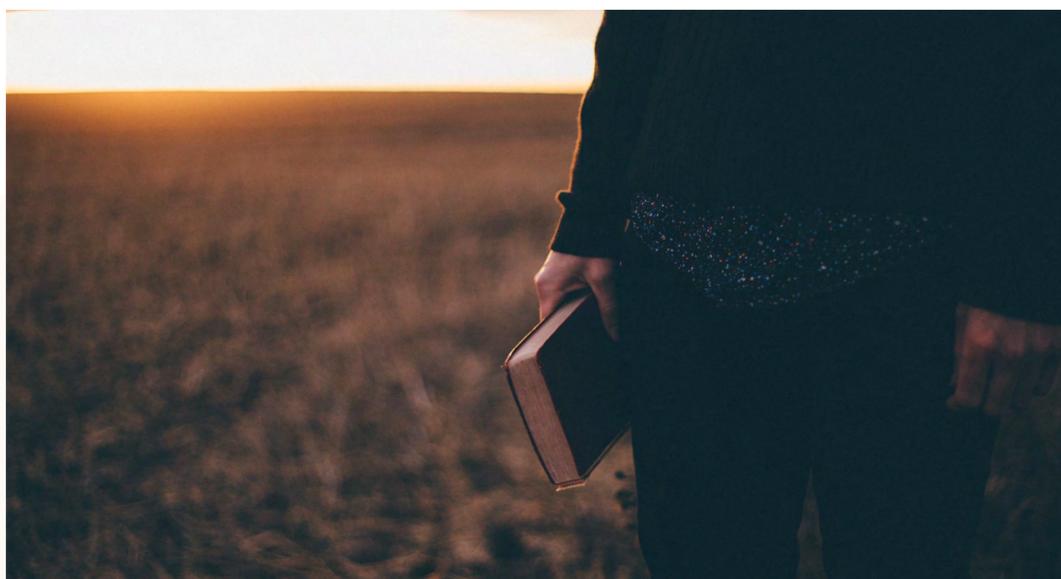
Failure is part of the growth process in the work using of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual gift of words of wisdom refers to an intimate knowledge of God's Word and His commandments which result in a holy and worthy way of life.

In the context of 1 Corinthians 12:8, it refers to speaking of an individual's life or a specific situation with greater understanding and correct perspective in order to guide others to a holy and worshipful life.

The Holy Spirit gives some the spiritual gift of wisdom not only to impart truth and understanding to believers, but also to invoke a response of holiness and worship lived out in the world and among God's people. Wisdom does not end with knowledge, but is expressed through transformed hearts and lives.

“Each one of you put the gift that you have received at the service of others, faithfully administering the grace of God in its various forms” Romans 12:6.

“But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” Acts 1: 8



# reflection

DAY 04

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Teach me to live a truly supernatural life that brings maximum glory to Your name. Make me sensitive to Your heart so that You can entrust Your Words to Your beloved children and to others to whom You are calling.
- We as a congregation give You control and invite You to take charge of our gatherings so that Your glory is manifested with signs, wonders, testimonies and the free flow of the words of knowledge and wisdom among us.
- May we burn for the salvation of our city and our world, just as You do, Lord. Make us lay down our lives, listen to your instructions, be brave and risk obedience to see Your glory manifest in our city.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>05</sup>

# TEACHING

Over the centuries, cultures have made sure to pass on their knowledge, common values, ways of doing things and even their recipes. This has been done in a very specific way, by appointing people to teach in order that the understanding would be spread.

In the Bible we can see how God appointed specific people to do this; a clear example is Jesus Himself. In Matthew 7:24 (NLT) we read “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock”. Such a bold statement! I am particularly impacted by the truth of the last seven words “who builds a house on solid rock”.

For instance, I would not like to send my children to a school where I know that the teachers have no vocation or have not been tested to do their jobs. On the contrary, I would want to make sure that anything that enters my children's ears is true, healthy and always in their best interest (1 Tim 6:3-4).

In the same way, God our Father intends that when we receive or share teaching, we hear and speak only what comes out of His heart.

## 05 TEACHING

Jesus, our greatest Teacher, always shared such God-inspired lessons. His teachings not only brought knowledge but radical real-life transformation to those listening.

Matthew 22:36-40 reads “Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.

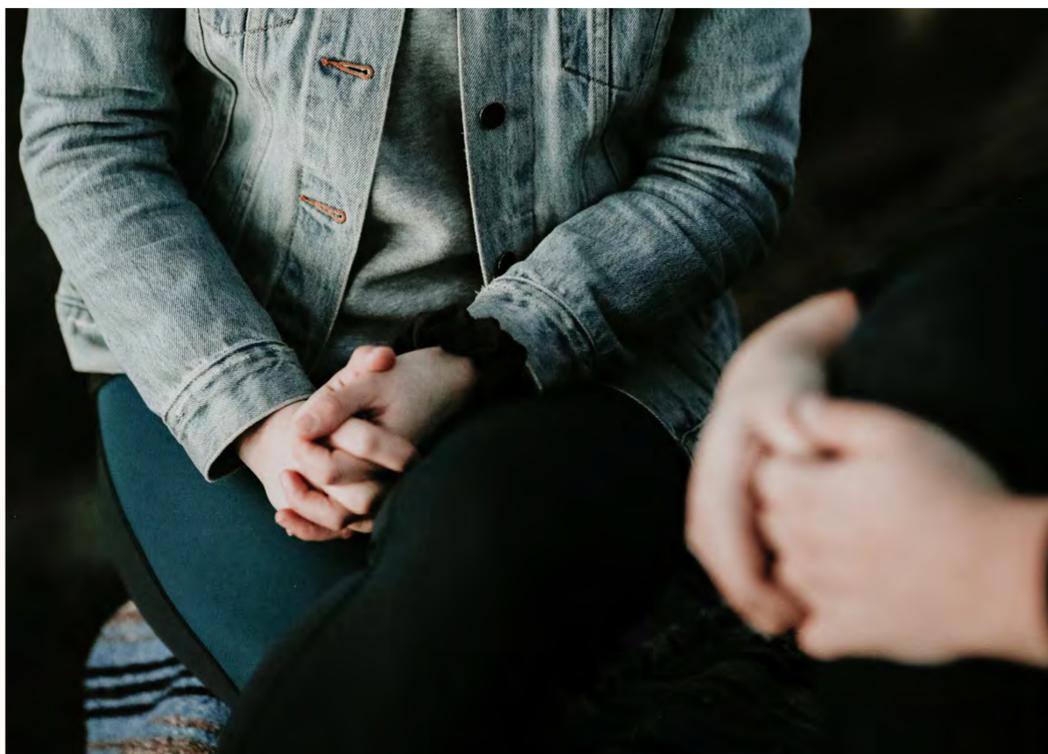
And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself...”.

Jesus not only taught them about love (knowledge) but commanded them to love one another (radical change).

The gift of teaching consists of exactly that, the passing on of a teaching that is God-inspired and inspires others.

Some teaching examples are :

- Discipline and correction - Proverbs 29:17
- Passing on of wisdom - Colossians 1:27-29



# reflection

DAY 05

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Please inspire me to share teaching from Your Word with someone who needs it today.
- Thank You for the teachers we have at ICB, we pray that You will raise up more teachers among us who will inspire us with Your Word.
- Lead us to be a church that teaches with love so that the world will see that You are in us and we can reach many for You.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>06</sup>

# GIVING



While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. “I tell you the truth,” Jesus said, “this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has.” ~ Luke 21:1-4 (NLT)

Ask a missionary about their funding and you will likely hear beautiful stories of how God repeatedly provides through individuals. What you may not hear are the stories of how God works in the heart of those who give.

The giver is often not aware that they are functioning out of a spiritual gift. For the giver, it is simply a gentle nudge from God on the heart to quietly give.

Examples of extraordinary giving in Scripture reveal that the giving is not necessarily large, not a result of the emotional tug of others, and not contingent on the giver’s circumstances.

Exodus 35:21 says “those whose heart moved them” gave so much that Moses ordered them to stop giving!

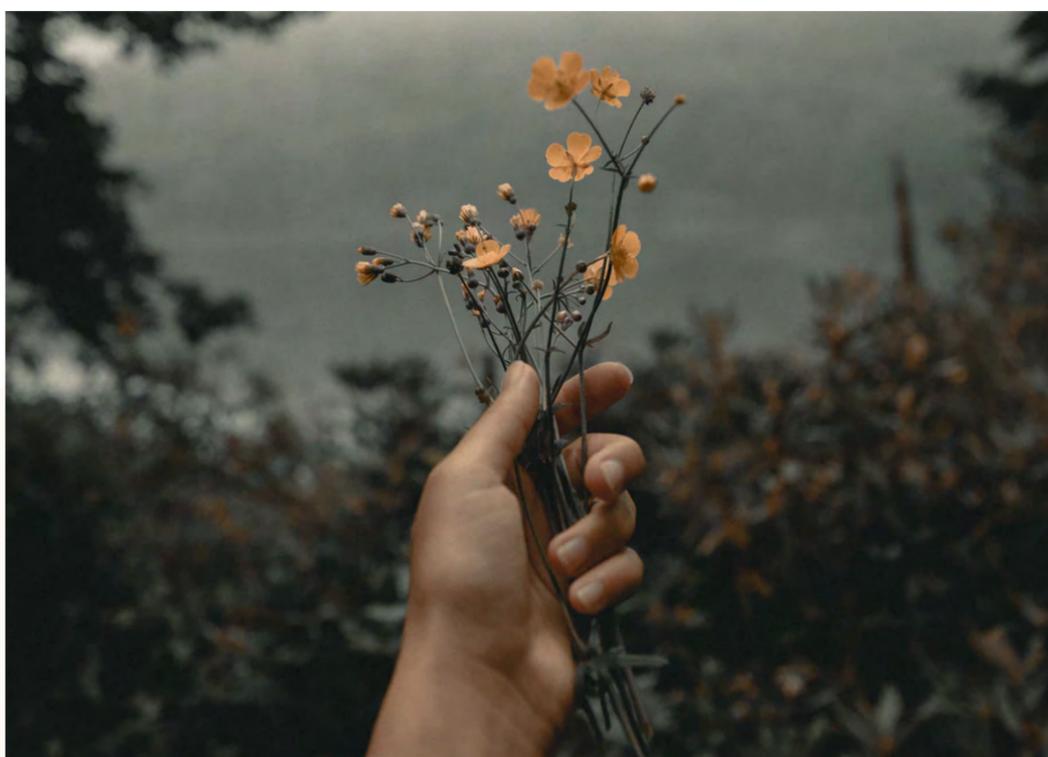
## 06 GIVING

The Macedonian church is commended by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8 for being richly generous even in the midst of severe trials and extreme poverty. Paul later reminds the church in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that “each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Similarly, Acts 4:32 describes the heart and mind of the spiritually-gifted giver: “...they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had.”

Jesus teaches in Luke 21, quoted above, that the extraordinary gift was given by the one who had very little. When we see, as the widow in Luke 21 did, that everything we have is God’s, we are able to be gently nudged by God to give in extraordinary ways.

Read the Scriptures mentioned previously in their biblical context. Look for more examples of giving in the Bible. Think about your experiences of giving or receiving. What might the Holy Spirit be saying to you about the spiritual gift of giving?



# reflection

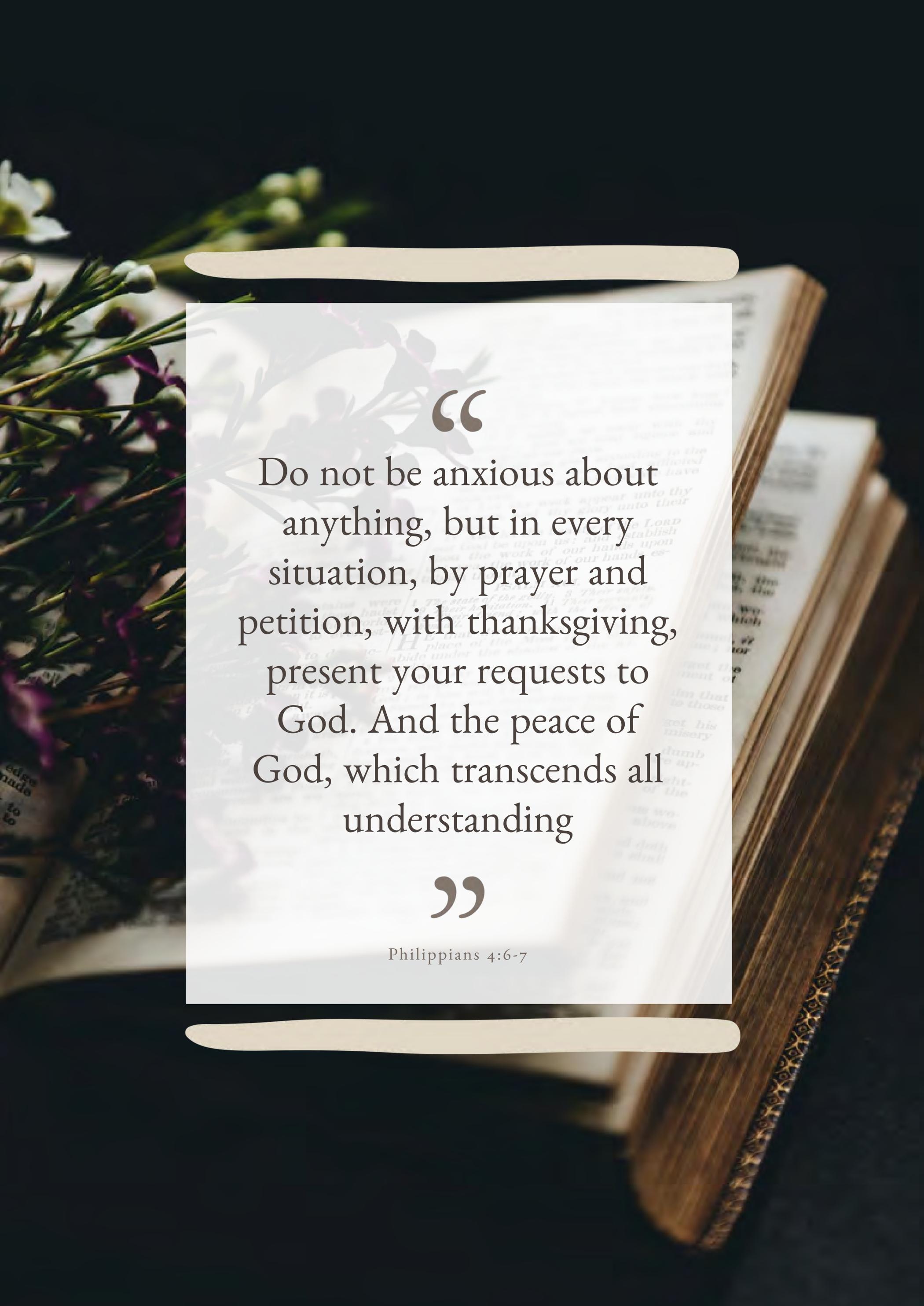
DAY 06

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- All I have is Yours. Please soften my heart and teach me to respond to Your nudge to give. Show me where I need to bring Your order to my finances so that I can experience the joy of participating in Your work through the gift of giving.
- We are Your hands and feet. Remind us to encourage one another to live our daily lives empowered by Your Spirit. May Your name be lifted high in this city and around the world because of our extraordinary giving.
- You gave everything for us. May I not hold back when You prompt me to give. May I not lean on my own understanding of what the world needs or what Your church needs. May I trust You to guide me in extraordinary giving to bring others to You.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)



“

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding

”

Philippians 4:6-7

day<sup>07</sup>

# ADMINISTRATION

read Acts 6:1-7

Leading a country like Joseph, building a wall like Nehemiah, or caring for vulnerable populations like the early Church, all require strategy, organization and discipline. This is exactly what the lesser-known spiritual gift of administration is all about.

Joseph's life is a beautiful illustration of this gift in action. In a succession of highs and lows, we see him continuing to exercise his gift in all circumstances.

First attending to Potiphar's household and seeing it thrive (Gen 39:3-6), then being in charge of the people held in prison & their work whilst being a prisoner himself (Gen 39:21-23), to successfully leading the land of Egypt through prosperity and famine (Gen 41:41-57).

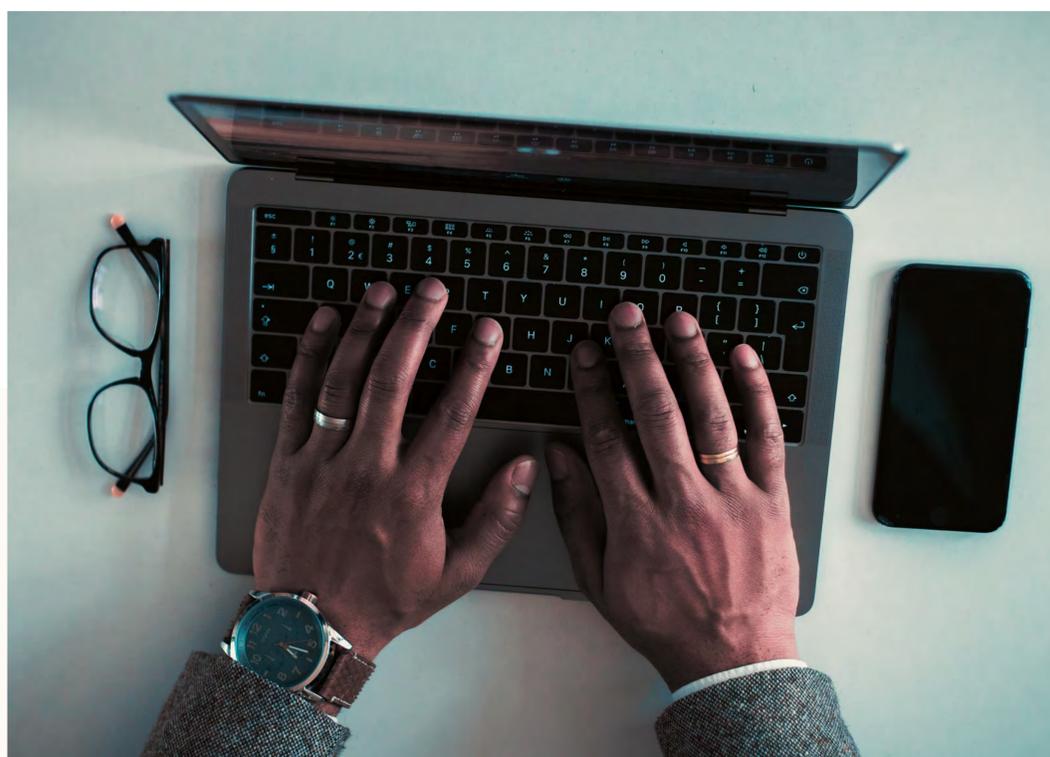
His obedience saved his brothers who had previously betrayed him, and through them came the bloodline that led to Jesus.

## 07 ADMINISTRATION

Further along in the Old Testament, we can read about Nehemiah's resilience and leadership in overseeing the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem, which brought glory to God.

Later in the New Testament, we can see the gift at play in Acts 6:1-7. Choosing people “full of the Spirit and wisdom” to take on the important duty of food distribution, allowed the Twelve to concentrate on preaching the Gospel “and the numbers of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly”.

These examples perfectly illustrate that the gift of administration is more than only organizing resources and teams towards tasks. By building up processes & structures, it allows for a larger purpose: building up the Kingdom.



# reflection

DAY 07

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- I ask You today to empower me with the gift of administration. Help me to be orderly with my time, finances and talents to bring You glory!
- Fill ICB with the gift of administration. Empower us with wisdom to organize resources and equip volunteers to build Your Kingdom!
- May this gift be used to support people in vulnerable situations all around our city while also spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>08</sup>

# DISCERNMENT

*read* 1 Corinthians 12:7, 10b, 11

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good ... to another distinguishing between spirits ... All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.” 1 Corinthians 12:7, 10b, 11

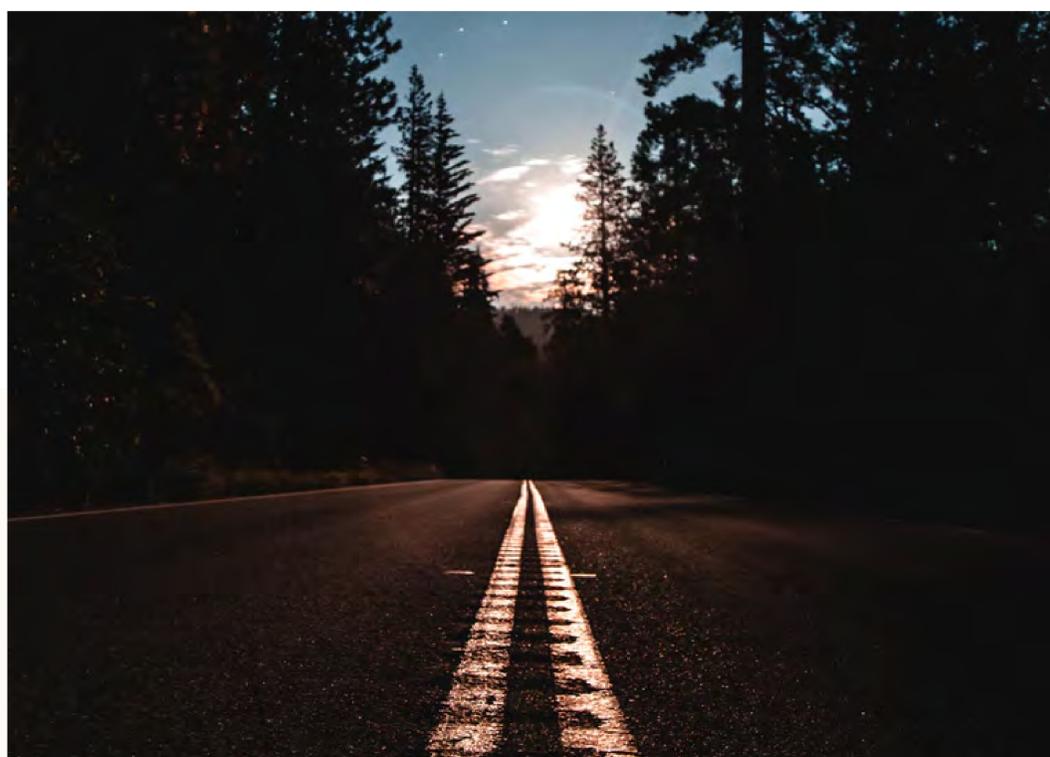
The apostle Paul was writing to the church in Corinth which was surrounded by earthly ideas, materialism, evils, and spiritual beliefs and that is why he said it is important to be able to discern between good and evil, as verse 10 calls it “distinguishing between spirits.” As believers, we need to understand that we are at war with the devil. The devil even tried to use Scripture against Jesus while tempting Him in Matthew 4. The real war we are in, as stated by Ephesians 6:12, is a spiritual one and as warriors we need to know when and how to battle the enemy in order to distinguish good from evil (Heb. 5:14) and not be taken captive (Col. 2:8). The gift of discernment is a gift to distinguish what is of God and what is from Satan no matter how “good” things may appear.

## 08 DISCERNMENT

As soldiers in Christ's army, distinguishing the spirit of the world as opposed to the Spirit who is from God (1 Cor. 2:12) is the key to be able to fight properly. When Jesus was interacting with His disciples and explained how He was going to die, not all accepted his words. "Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" (Mark 8:32b-33).

We may face opposition even from people we can normally trust, but they may be used by the enemy to get us off track. During times of difficulty, struggle, and decisions, we have to ask God for discernment to determine His will. Before coming to Spain as missionaries we were faced with several options, Spain being one of them, and discerning His will was essential. Our obedience in seeking Him and our process of coming here was a testimony to many of His hand upon us; we were able to choose His plan, through exercising discernment.

At times finding direction as to where to invest our time in God's kingdom work can also be a challenge. In these cases, we need to discern what God's will is and the process may not always be quick and easy. We must continually stay focused on Christ and His purposes, fighting against the temptation of distraction (Col. 2:8) and being vigilant in prayer (Eph. 6:18) to discern His will and be sure the one influencing isn't the enemy.



# reflection

DAY 08

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- I desire & need the gift of discernment. I recognize my need for You to help me navigate my life assertively, and I see that not being deceived is vital. With the gift of discernment, teach me to distinguish Your workings from the enemy's in all areas of life.
- Give ICB the gift of discernment. Teach us to steward this gift wisely for our protection & alignment with Your ways & plans. Escaping the enemy's schemes is Your plan as we use the gift to distinguish between Your Spirit and the spirits of this world.
- As I exercise the gift of discernment, please help me to navigate when & how to engage with those I encounter from day to day.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>09</sup>

# HEALING

Growing up I heard stories of miracles.

One of my favorites is about my Abuelo who was here in Spain during the time of Franco. A young man with a deadly disease was not expected to live through the night. But believers prayed...all night! By morning God had healed him! Everyone was told to keep it a secret, but the doctor couldn't keep quiet. As a result, my Abuelo was kicked out of Spain for "practicing medicine without a license."

I was born without a bone in my hip, but believers prayed for me. When my mom took me to the specialist, he looked at my X-ray without the hip bone, comparing it to the infant on the table. He said to my mom, "Ma'am, you brought the wrong baby girl because this baby is perfectly normal".

I also saw miracles first hand. I remember when my dad was healed of an internal hemorrhage, my brother healed of childhood arthritis, and the woman who dropped her crutches and ran around the church.

But mingled with these joyous testimonies are the disappointments of my uncle who died of cancer, my brother who died of a congenital disease, and my brother-in-law who died of Coronavirus.

## 09 HEALING

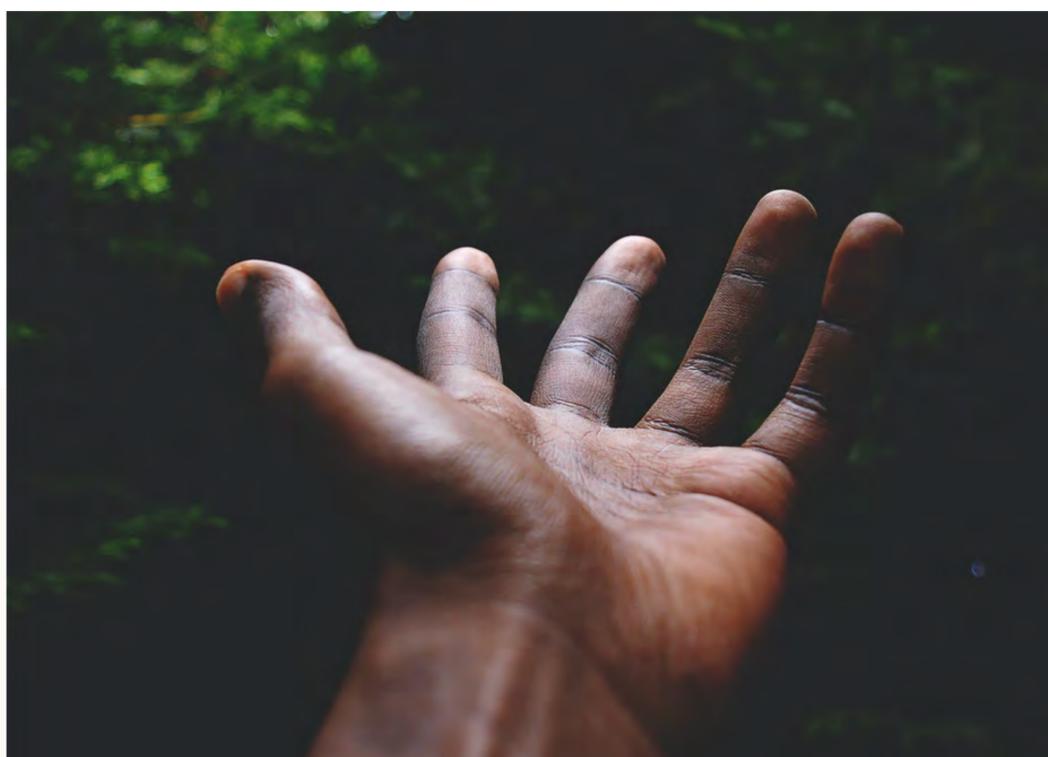
The gift of healing is not a magic wand. God is sovereign, and I don't pretend to be able to explain the complexities of why some are healed and some aren't.

Yet, even with the questions and scars we carry, we read in His Word that He gives some the “gifts of healing.”

Healing was a hallmark of Jesus's three years of public ministry. He passed on this gift of healing to his disciples. Remember Peter and John at the temple gate called Beautiful?

“Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have, I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” (Acts 3:6)

The phrase that strikes me is “but what I have, I give you.” Peter knew God had given him the power through the Holy Spirit to pray for healing. This gift of healing wasn't given to Peter for his own benefit. It was given for the benefit of the beggar who received healing and was able to walk. My challenge to us is to dare to pray for healing. We can say with Peter, “What I have, I give to you.” His Spirit was given to us not only for our benefit, but for the benefit of those we will pray for. Maybe one day, someone you pray for will write a story and tell it to their children. “I was sick, but believers prayed.”



# reflection

DAY 09

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- I ask that you would give me the courage and faith to pray for healing. As I hear of a sick or hurting person this week, I will risk praying for their healing. I won't demand or tell You what to do. But I will ask. Then I will surrender to You and trust You no matter what happens.
- Please pour out Your healing gifts to ICB. May people find healing for their bodies as well as for their hearts. May our relationships be healthy and our souls be whole. May this church be a place where people come to meet Jesus who still heals.
- May we be known as a house of healing, as a place where miracles happen. May the broken in heart and broken in body come to know You here.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

“

Peace I leave with you;  
my peace I give you. I  
do not give to you as  
the world gives. Do not  
let your hearts be  
troubled and do not be  
afraid.

”

John 14:27

day<sup>10</sup>

# EXHORTATION



As I scroll through social media, I occasionally see a small animated figure. Sometimes it's an animal, or a person, and once it was an avocado. It will often pop up and say "You're doing great!" or "You've got this!" or "I'm proud of you!" And, as silly as it sounds, it always makes me smile and encourages me, even if just for a moment.

We all need to be exhorted in our daily life, especially in our Christian walk. Just as we need encouragement to get up and go to work on Monday morning, we often need the same with our Christian walk. Have you ever listened to a message that made you eager to go out into the world or make a change in your life? That was a message that exhorted you because it encouraged you to take action.

## IO EXHORTATION

These gifts are not just given to us by the Spirit, they are also gifts for us to give to those around us. So how do we give this gift to others?

1 Thessalonians 5:14 says we should “warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” It’s always easy to uplift others, but exhortation is also lovingly correcting and encouraging other people to make changes. There are people in my life who, because of the fruit in their own life and mutual trust and respect, are able to exhort me to make changes and become a stronger Christian.

Titus 1:9 says “He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.” We should have knowledge of what the Bible says and use the wisdom and truth found in Scripture to speak into other people’s lives.

So, let’s see how our community grows as we exhort each other today.



# reflection

DAY 10

## HOLY SPIRIT...

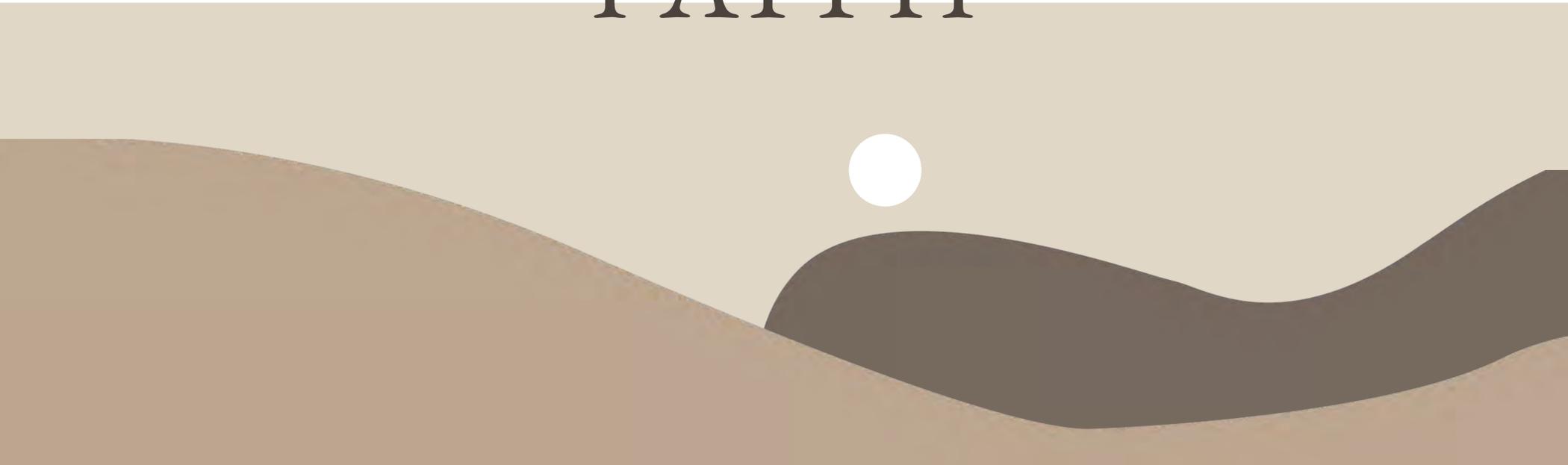
- Give me the desire to dig deeper into Your Word to learn how to lovingly help others.
- Open our ears to hear and accept wisdom and truth from people You have placed in our lives so we can grow as a community of faith.
- Help me to open my eyes to people around me who are in need of exhortation today and grant me boldness to speak the words You give me to share.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>II</sup>

# FAITH



Faith is crucial in our walk with God, for it is through faith in Jesus Christ that we are saved. We also know that "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6a). We need faith to believe and trust in God as we commit our lives to Him daily and face the inevitable hardships of this world. It can be challenging to live by faith when we feel trapped, limited, or frightened by our circumstances, the news, or even our own flaws.

The good news is that faith is given to us as a gift from His hands, so that we can have a real relationship with Him - a Being we can't see or comprehend, but in whom we can trust.

*"it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" Ephesians 2:8*

Through the Holy Spirit, we also have access to the spiritual gift of faith, given by Him for the common good. The gift of faith enables believers to trust in God and His power and to inspire others to do the same.

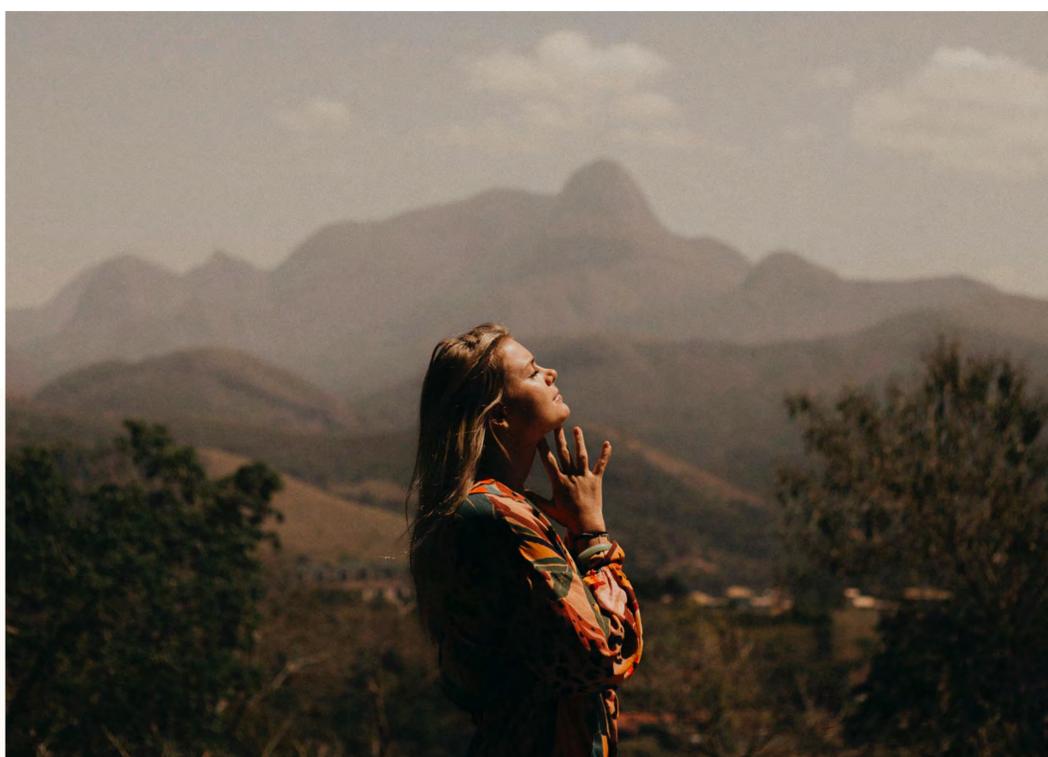
## II FAITH

It also serves to display the glory of God through the lives of the ones who believe Him and His Word with no reservation, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did in the fiery furnace. When threatened to be thrown in the fire if they didn't worship the idol built by King Nebuchadnezzar, this was their response:

“King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” Daniel 3:16-18

When their lives were miraculously spared and the witnesses testified that they were alive and well, they were all amazed. The King praised the Lord and declared that their God is a God that saves like no other. Their faith in God and complete trust in Him (even if He didn't deliver them!), led others to believe.

May we be like them and so many other faith-filled men and women in the Bible who allowed God to show Himself, His power, and His glory to the world through their faith.



# reflection

DAY 11

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Give me the gift of faith. The gift of believing in what I cannot see or understand, rooted in the assurance that You can do all things. Help me trust in You unconditionally, and use my faith to lead people to You.
- We ask that You would give the spiritual gift of faith to believers in our community. Use our faith for Your glory, give us the opportunity to believe in the unbelievable and be known as a church full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.
- Show me a person who is in need of someone to believe alongside them or even on their behalf. Show me what specific things I can believe, hope, and pray for others around me as they struggle to have faith.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>12</sup>

# MERCY



When I consider the spiritual gift of mercy (Romans 12:8) I think of it being synonymous with compassion - but it's more than that. It's also coupled with a key element of forgiveness, where one party has been wronged and they chose to turn the other cheek.

Take David and Saul in 1 Samuel 24:1-22. Saul is out with his army, pursuing David to kill him, even though David has done Saul no wrong. There is a moment in a cave when it would have been so easy for David to finish it all... to kill Saul and put an end to David running for his life. But by the conviction of the Lord, David showed Saul mercy. He didn't kill him. That merciful decision led to peace.

When Saul saw that David could have slain him, he was emotionally disarmed and he stopped his murderous chase of David. We may not have a person hunting us down to kill us, but we have all been wronged and in this merciless culture there are many opportunities to show mercy both inside and outside of the Church. What about when you're overlooked at work for that promotion when you know you've done all the work. What about those hurtful words from a friend who has misjudged you. What about the abuse from a family member that broke your heart, body and soul.

## I2 MERCY

While we may have been truly wronged, it takes courage and the merciful loving kindness of Jesus to forgive and extend mercy to that person. God the Father showed us the truest form of mercy by sending His only Son Jesus to die for our sins and then conquer death by rising again.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

So even before we turn to God to repent for the wrong things we’ve done, He has already provided the way out, He has already extended us true mercy. What’s more, Jesus didn’t leave us to deal with life alone once He resurrected and ascended to the Father’s side in Heaven. He sent the beautiful, loving, truth-filled, all giving, powerful companion of the Holy Spirit to comfort, equip and lead us through the meandering journey of life.

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” 1 Corinthians 2:12

So let’s remember God’s ultimate mercy towards us, so we don’t become proud in our own strength and not extend mercy to others. We can do this cheerfully, because He first loved us (1 John 4:19)



# reflection

DAY 12

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Thank you Heavenly Father for Your awesome, merciful gift of Jesus and Your eternal plan to have me with You always. Help me to receive the beautiful spiritual gift of mercy in all its fullness.
- Help me to put the gift of mercy into practice with my fellow believers. May I play my part in keeping the unity of the Spirit in ICB and the wider Church community.
- Show me the opportunities to extend Your gift of mercy to those around me, both to those who I know and who I don't know. Amen.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

“

Rejoice always, pray without  
ceasing, give thanks in  
all circumstances;  
for this is the will of God  
in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



day<sup>13</sup>

# MIRACLES

read 1 Corinthians 12:10

Our God is above all and He has all authority and power - He is the God of miracles!

There's a difference between walking with the favour of God and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to work a miracle. We can, and should, be displaying the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) in our daily encounters with those around us; however when faced with an emergency, some kind of desperately urgent situation, we need empowerment from on high and the grace to be used by Him supernaturally (1 Cor 12:11).

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines." 1 Corinthians 12:11

## 13 MIRACLES

Consider Moses (Exodus 13:17-14:31). The group of newly-freed slaves whom Moses led out of Egypt were a community of people, not a modern army. The men, women, children, teenagers, babies and elders, some weak and some strong, could see the dust kicked up by the Egyptian horses' hooves as they galloped towards them across the desert. The diabolical Egyptian soldiers were charging in their chariots with murder and revenge raging in their grief-stricken hearts. Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide, the expanse of sea before him, desert on either side, no navy or rescue boats on the horizon, no air support waiting to swoop in on the enemy; Moses needed urgent and immediate help. He knew that he had done his best; the rest depended on the God of miracles (Deuteronomy 20:1; 1 Samuel 17:47; 2 Chronicles 20:15). Moses believed, trusted in God, prayed and obeyed, and what a mighty miraculous work the Lord performed through him!

Let's remember that Jesus is the ultimate miracle worker - He healed the sick, cured the blind, deaf, crippled and diseased; set the oppressed free, walked on water, commanded the storm, multiplied the bread and fish, raised the dead, overcame satan and his hordes and vanquished death itself (John 21:25) - yet He said that we who believe will do greater works than Him (John 14:12).



# reflection

DAY 13

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Please continue to remind me of Your power and grant me the grace to hear and obey Your voice in Jesus' name.
- Help our unbelief - we need Your grace to believe and to receive, to pray and to obey, today! That we may work miracles in Your name. Amen
- We know You desire to save those around us - please help us to step out in faith and work miracles in the lives of others for Your name's sake.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)

day<sup>14</sup>

# TONGUES

read 1 Corinthians 12:10

The Holy Spirit gift of tongues has 2 expressions. The first expression is a personal prayer language, and it is available to every believer who receives the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). The second expression is one of the gifts that is available when followers of Jesus come together as the church body (1 Cor. 12: 10, 28-30, Acts 2:5-12). This second expression is a sign of God's power when accompanied by the gift of interpretation, where someone in the church gathering follows the gift of tongues with an interpretation of what was said (1 Cor. 14:22).

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul addressed a situation where it seems the church was having a hard time with how to operate in the gifts in an orderly way. Some people were praying out loud in their personal prayer language, and it was causing confusion (1 Cor. 14:2-12). Paul was simply saying that the personal prayer language should be reserved for private prayer (1 Cor. 14:28), and the body gift of tongues is only helpful when it is exercised in conjunction with the gift of interpretation (1 Cor. 14:27).

## I4 TONGUES

This doesn't mean that the personal prayer language is prohibited in all church gatherings. There can be a beautiful "flow" between praying in the Spirit (prayer language) and praying with understanding (in a known language) when there is a leader who can guide the group through simultaneous private prayers. (1 Cor. 14:13-17).

The gift of tongues can be awkward and risky if no one interprets the message. When someone feels they have a message in tongues, they can offer it in humility by explaining that they feel it is a message in tongues for the body, not just an expression of their private prayer language. Then the people in the group can also ask the Holy Spirit to give someone the interpretation. This interpretation is an explanation in the group's known language of what was said through the message in tongues.



# reflection

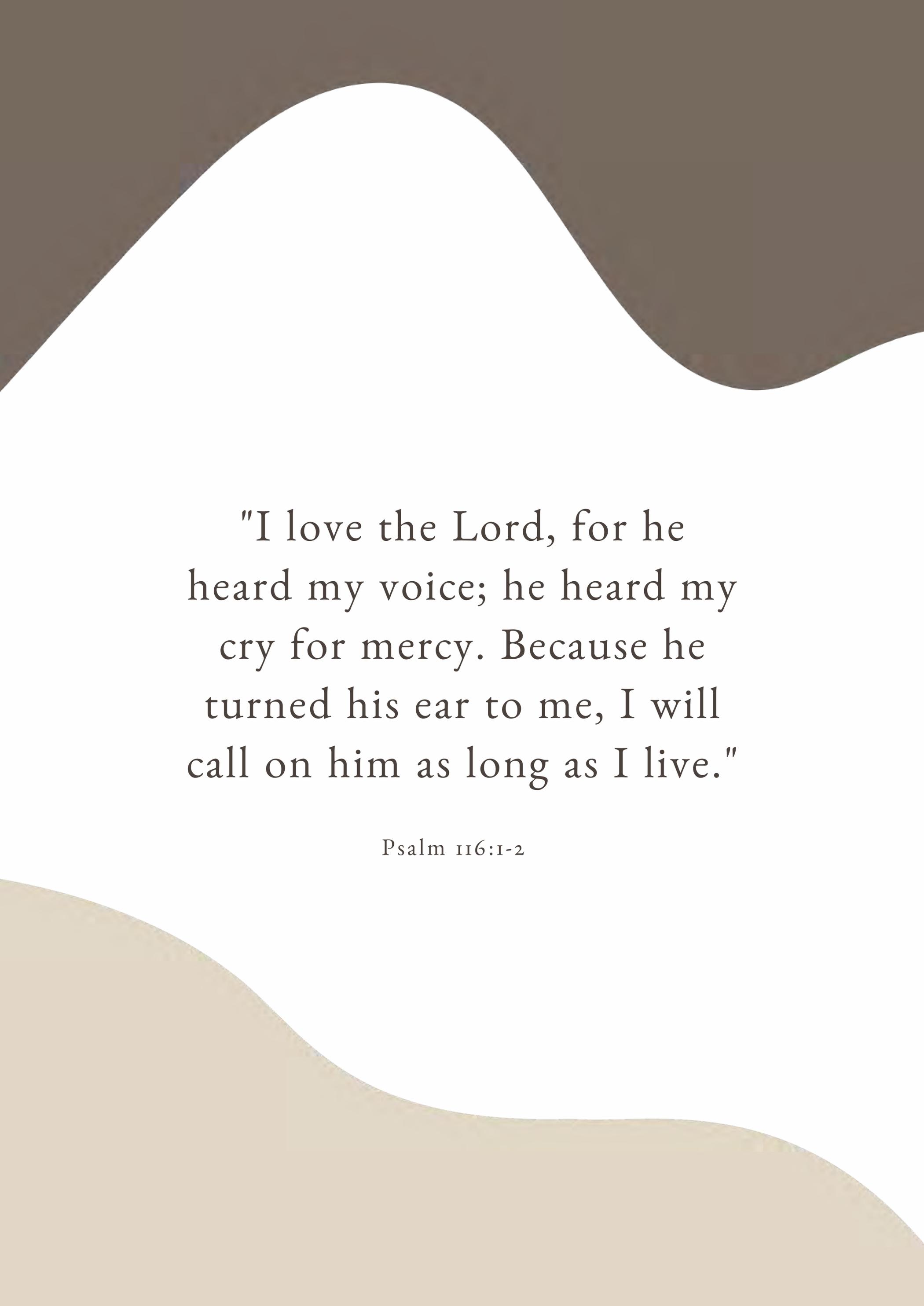
DAY 14

## HOLY SPIRIT...

- Fill me today. I give You control of my tongue—please give me my own personal prayer language.
- Please release the gifts of tongues and interpretation into ICB, that we might see Your power.
- Sometimes I don't know how to pray for my family and friends who don't know You. Please pray through me as I pray for them.

## RESPOND

(Type Notes Here)



"I love the Lord, for he  
heard my voice; he heard my  
cry for mercy. Because he  
turned his ear to me, I will  
call on him as long as I live."

Psalm 116:1-2



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# THE ICB TEAM

This journal was lovingly composed by members of the ICB Team. We pray that it blesses you and strengthens your walk with the Holy Spirit. We have prayed over these pages and are excited and expectant for what God is going to do in and through your life. We are here to answer any questions you might have or to pray with you. Fill out the form below to connect with an ICB Team member.

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