

To Draw Close to the Lord

Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.

(Psalm 24:3-4)

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

(Psalm 32:5)

Of course we feel unworthy to come into the presence of God. He is all-knowing, so He is aware of our depraved thoughts. He is all-powerful, so He might (justifiably) swat us into oblivion. And, if we're being completely honest, we all go through dark places from time-to-time when we don't want to be around anybody...much less a holy God.

Today we embark on a 21-day journey of prayer and fasting upon which we—as individuals and as a fellowship—conspire to draw near to God. We acknowledge that deeper intimacy with God is something that we need, and we're confident we will be better for the effort. Still, how do deeply flawed humans go about approaching the ruler of the universe?

Jesus taught that His followers would have instant and complete access to the Father when we invoked His name (John 14:13-14). Also, we know that we do not approach God based on our own merit, but on the completed work of Christ (Ephesians 2:6-9). We are invited to come boldly into God's throne room to ask for the help we need, again, because of Jesus (Hebrews 4:14-16). Can you imagine?

Over and over, in the most conspicuous ways possible, Jesus has affirmed (and reaffirmed!) His love for us. As we embark on this prayer pilgrimage, let's resolve to rest in His love—to draw energy from Scripture's persistent assurances of His acceptance. Know that you will not be rejected because of failure...Jesus knows you are broken. There is no sin you can confess that will surprise Him. In fact, the Word says that God's strength is made perfect in our weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Together, let's make a commitment to come every day for the next 21 days into the presence of God, whether we feel like it or not, and make space for Him to become big in our lives. There is no telling what might happen!

Pray

Heavenly Father, reveal the things in my life that keep me from You. Heal my shame and help me see my sin through Your eyes. Thank You for loving me in spite of my failures. Lord, it is your loving-kindness that leads me to repentance.



Monday, January 8th

RECURRING NEEDS

Revival
Repentance
Wisdom
Marriages
Families
Sick/Grieving
Depression/Mental illness
City Church
Church leaders
Children
Youth
Singles
Senior citizens
Volunteers
Teachers and support staff
Emergency personnel
Business community
Elected officials
Missionaries
Worldwide church
The lost

REFLECTIONS
