

## Prayer Calendar September 2022

### Bible Reading Plan for James, Mark and Ephesians

As we leave the first chapter of James in August, our Bible Reading Plan for September invites us further into the journey of the pastoral letter of James, on through the gospel of Mark and we end the month with the first two chapters of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The prayer calendar accompanies the Bible Reading Plan reading one chapter a day. A scripture and prayer from that day's reading is offered each day to further your reflection and contemplation.

#### Wednesday, September 1

*James 2:14-17 | What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So, faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.*

~ Lord Jesus, you sum up your commandments: to love one another as you love us. Today, help me act in love through my actions that will reflect my growing faith and love of others.

#### Thursday, September 2

*James 3:9-10 | With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth comes praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters this should not be.*

~ Loving Lord, we are given the gift of language, of thought of communication and we are grateful. Why do we abuse it so? Help us today to think before we speak; to fill our hearts and mouths with blessings and goodness and turn from the temptation to speak ill, to kill or to hurt.

#### Friday, September 3

*James 4:17 | If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.*

~ Loving God, we know what is right, but sometimes to do the right thing is hard. Help us and show us the way to live in harmony with you – even if it is hard and the temptation to do our own will is great.

#### Saturday, September 4

*Rest | Today sit in silence for a few minutes. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Listen to the sounds around you and give thanks for the moment, the place, the people and the activity that surrounds you.*

#### Sunday, September 5

*Reflect | Review the readings of the past week. What one scripture stuck with you. Read it again and reflect on its meaning for your life. In what ways can you take action to let go of sin and embrace wholeness?*

#### Monday, September 6

*James 5:12 | Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.*

~ Holy One, sometimes we take our troubles and our happiness for granted and forget to pray and forget to rejoice in song. We plod along dead to our feelings and forget you are with us, forget you hold us, forget you love us, forget we are your beloved. Help us lift the voice you have given to us in prayer and in song today.

### **Tuesday, September 7**

*Mark 1:17 | "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him.*

~ Lord Jesus, you are calling us today to follow you – to put down those things in the world, our culture and society, that hold us fast to the ordinary, when you call us into the extraordinary. Help us not to be afraid, but trust in your call.

### **Wednesday, September 8**

*Mark 2:14 | As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.*

~ Lord, if we listen to your voice we can hear you call us from an old life of sin, emptiness, pain and loneliness to a life of goodness, forgiveness, healing and community. Open our ears to really listen to you and respond by following you.

### **Thursday, September 9**

*Mark 3:13 | Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.*

~ Lord Jesus, show us how to listen for your voice as you call us over and over again; then move our hearts to come to you so that we may be your faithful disciples and respond with joy to your mission for us. We are not so different from the first twelve, sometimes we are afraid to live into the mission and ministry you have called us to – give us courage.

### **Friday, September 10**

*Mark 4:38-41 | Read the story of Jesus calms the storm several times. Reflect on these words, He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*

~ Lord God, we can trust you in the many unexpected storms of our lives. They come upon us every day – sometimes overpowering, sometimes just little squalls. When we are overwhelmed all the storms feel like hurricanes. Help us trust your voice that speaks out over the winds to be quiet and be still within ourselves so we do not become overpowered by fear. You are with us.

### **Saturday, September 11**

*Rest | Today sit in silence for a few minutes. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Listen to the sounds around you and give thanks for the moment, the place, the people and the activity that surrounds you.*

### **Sunday, September 12**

*Reflect | Review the readings of the past week. What one scripture stuck with you. Read it again and reflect on its meaning for your life. In what ways can you take action to let go of sin and embrace wholeness?*

### **Monday, September 13**

*Mark 5:1 | They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.*

~ Loving God, there are times when you send us “across the lake” to another place where we have never been. You are with us, we are not alone, yet we are anxious. Help us trust you will lead us one step at a time into the unknown and that as we trust and grow you can do wonderful things through us.

### **Tuesday, September 14**

*Mark 6:30-31 | The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”*

~ Jesus, you call us to be apart with you and rest for you know how busy and hurried life can be. You long to be with us in retreat, but we have to take the time to let go and go with you to a quiet place. Show us how to take that time and provide for us the will to do so this week.

### **Wednesday, September 15**

*Mark 7:20 | He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person’s heart that evil thoughts come – sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from the inside and defile a person.”*

~ Loving God, you tell us that evil begins with the condition of our hearts, our souls. Give us the energy, wherewithal and courage to examine ourselves honestly and see those broken and wounded places where evil has taken root. Then help us to confess our sin and trust you are faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all iniquity. , I confess my sins and know that you will forgive my sins and put a right spirit within me. I confess:

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### **Thursday, September 16**

*Mark 8:29 | “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”*

~ Lord God, you ask this question of each of us and each person must answer for themselves. How do I know you and understand who you are to me, to the world? What does it mean to say you are the Lord of Life? The Savior? What does this understanding and relationship look like when lived out? Make clear my understanding and help me live into your call on my life.

### **Friday, September 17**

*Mark 9:35 | Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”*

~ Jesus, you call us to humility and to serve. This is what it means to be your disciple and for some of us it is a hard thing. Give us grace to live as the last in line, trusting there will be enough. Give us the heart to truly serve others with joy and not out of duty.

**Saturday, September 18**

*Rest | Today sit in silence for a few minutes. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Listen to the sounds around you and give thanks for the moment, the place, the people and the activity that surrounds you.*

**Sunday, September 19**

*Reflect | Review the readings of the past week. What one scripture stuck with you. Read it again and reflect on its meaning for your life. In what ways can you take action to let go of sin and embrace wholeness?*

**Monday, September 20**

*Mark 10:13-16 | Read these verses of Jesus and the little children several times. What do you discover about the character of Jesus and what he is calling us to do?*

~ Loving God, we can close our eyes and imagine you taking each of us, in turn, in your arms, placing your hands upon our heads and blessing us. Stir up in us a desire to receive this blessing and in turn bless others in your name.

**Tuesday, September 21**

*Mark 11:1-2 | As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a cold tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.*

~ Holy One, sometimes you call us to do things we do not understand or that makes no sense to us. We spend time trying to figure out what we are supposed to do, for your guidance is confusing to us. Help us trust in your call even when we do not understand. Help us realize we are only a small part in your great plan and everyone is needed to do their part.

**Wednesday, September 22**

*Mark 12:29 | "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'" Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*

~ Gracious Lord, these commandments are your will for our lives and when we live into your call and command for our lives we too, witness Christ Jesus and call others to Christ.

**Thursday, September 23**

*Mark 13:33 | Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come.*

~ Lord Jesus, you tell us to keep alert for we do not know when events will turn the world upside down. Help us hold fast to our faith, allow it to grow and expand so we are able to allow the Holy Spirit to speak through us of our confidence in God's love, forgiveness and provision.

**Friday, September 24**

*Mark 14:22-24 | While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.*

~ Jesus, Host of the Table, encourage us to think of bread and wine, even as ordinary, as holy things. Every time we eat help us remember your last supper with your friends and the gift you gave to them. As you gave thanks, we give thanks and take these ordinary yet holy elements into our bodies and remember you.

**Saturday, September 25**

*Rest | Today sit in silence for a few minutes. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Listen to the sounds around you and give thanks for the moment, the place, the people and the activity that surrounds you.*

**Sunday, September 26**

*Reflect | Review the readings of the past week. What one scripture stuck with you. Read it again and reflect on its meaning for your life. In what ways can you take action to let go of sin and embrace wholeness?*

**Monday, September 27**

*Mark 15:21 | A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way from his country, and they forced him to carry the cross.*

~ Holy One, Simon was chosen to carry the cross of Jesus. We can imagine being called out to carry a cross; to experience fear; to witness violence; to be remembered for such a service. Help us stay ready to serve and to help in fear-filled circumstances and to come along side someone who is suffering. In so doing we can help Jesus and remember Simon.

**Tuesday, September 28**

*Mark 16:6 | Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.*

~ Holy God, it is not hard to imagine how the women felt in that moment for they did not understand what they saw. Like the women we shut down in our fear and cannot function; help us remember your Spirit is always with us and we do not have to be afraid.

**Wednesday, September 29**

*Ephesians 1:18b | ...so that, with the eyes of your heart, enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you...*

~ Gracious God, you call us to hope each and every day no matter the circumstance of joy or challenge. Your Holy Spirit gives us the ability to live beyond circumstance and the temporary to know the fullness of your joy found in our calling to be your disciples.

**Thursday, September 30**

*Ephesians 2:10 | For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.*

~ Holy God, you created us in Christ Jesus for good works which are to be our way of life. This understanding of who made us and for what purpose gives us energy, hope and a path for our lives. Show me what good works you would have me do today.

All scripture is taken from The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

This prayer calendar is designed to aid you in your daily life of prayer.

**Read the scripture** for the day over and over, out loud if possible. As you read, listen with an “ear of the heart” to a word or phrase that strikes you.

**Reflect on that word or phrase** asking yourself the question: “What is God saying to me through this word or phrase at this time?” Spend time in silence with this scripture, mulling it over in your mind and heart.

**Allow God to speak to you in the silence.** Offer a prayer out of your reflection.

**Thank God** for whatever you received in the silence of your prayer and take that with you through your day.

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