

BUILDING YOUR DEVOTIONAL LIFE

By Neal Pollard

Maybe you have resolved repeatedly to become a better, more faithful Bible student, person of prayer, or simply one who truly desires to build a closer relationship with God. While a lot of that will be personal and peculiar to you as an individual, you may lack direction about how to get started or give yourself the best chance to succeed in that goal. Perhaps these few suggestions can prove helpful to strengthening your daily connection with your Creator.

Adjust your wake up time. 15 to 30 minutes head start will prove the most vital moments of your day.

Find a quiet, solitary place. Distraction can equal detraction.

Study and pray with pen and paper or computer nearby. This will aid specificity and memory.

Do not rush. Better a paragraph or chapter pored over than ten chapters glossed over.

Take advantage of the commute. Pray through it or play the Bible on audio, if you can.

Pick a book or topic of interest and drill down. Pick it for its relevance to your weakness, need, ignorance, or curiosity. Drink it in deliberately and carefully.

Be specific and transparent in your prayers. In the solitude of prayer, drop all pretense, denial, and pride. He knows it all anyway.

Always seek application in the Bible text you are reading. This is not a history lesson or academic exercise. This is spiritual food, armor, and survival.

Create a list of ways you can enact the principles you read from Scripture. See yourself in the text of Scripture, and challenge yourself to think, say, do, and be what God desires of you.

Ask questions of the text. Don't pass over what you don't understand. Don't skim the surface. Mine for meaning.

Build a prayer list. Challenge yourself and add people that many others may overlook in your local circle—widows, little children, new Christians, struggling folks, those facing an anniversary of loss, leadership, missionaries, non-Christians where you work and play, the poor, etc. This ever-expanding prayer list will bless lives in ways you won't know here on earth.

Mean what you say. When you tell someone you'll pray for them, have integrity. Make an honest effort (write it down, put it in your phone) and honor your word. Ask the people you encounter how you might pray for them, then do it.

Review. Revisit prayer lists or notes from Bible study periodically. Make it live on through reflection.

Pray for what to study and study prayer. You will find that these two spiritual strength-building exercises are interconnected. This is about relationship with God. Spare no exertion.

Consider these "jump starters." You will come up with more and far better ways to help yourself to a closer walk with God. These days, we're being pulled in every direction and most lead away from Him. You will have to be deliberate to swim against the tide. May God bless you as you let Him bless you through a vibrant devotional life!

Remember in Prayer

Livvy Langley had surgery Wednesday to remove tonsils and adenoids.

Jess Leonard has had flu-like symptoms. He is feeling some better but still fatigued.

Lee Wright is in the U.S. having tests run to determine the cause of some severe arm pain.

Rachelle Gammon's aunt, **Marcia Gerrity** is on hospice care.

Services for Chris Lowry's uncle, **Wayne Lowry** will be in McKinney Thursday 2/19 with a graveside service on 2/21 in Henderson.

Neely Lovelady is scheduled for surgery on Feb. 27th.

Sharon McMillan saw her cardiologist and will be scheduled for three tests in the near future.

Loree Mixon will be seeing her doctor on Feb. 24 to check on the status of her foot.

Remember Also:

Melva McManus, Toni Johnson, Archie & Nancy Underwood, Joy Tull, Judy Mitchell, Samuel & Diana Ramirez, Steven Coats, Donna Roberts, Kerry & Teri Clark, Branden Skinner, Jimmie Ivey, Roger Elam

IMPORTANT DATES

February 22- Pot Luck Luncheon
February 22 - (immediately following the potluck) Men's Meeting in the auditorium

February 26- NH Birthday Party/2:00

If you would like to host a get-together for the youth, please see Jim Gammon.

MARCH

calendars are available in the information room.



Feel free to submit questions to the box in the back to be answered by the elders or Anthony on 5th Sundays.

Please join us for a wedding shower for Gracie Dobbs & Colt Rollins



"Catch of a Lifetime"
February 28th
10:00-12:00

Mabank church of Christ
Registered at Amazon & Target

HOUSEWARMING

for Nick Carano
February 28th
12:00-2:00
6142 Inca Dr.
Mabank, TX 75147
Registered at Amazon

March/April
Nursing Home Birthday Party & Food Committee

*Luanne Patterson
*Bobbi Guinn
Whitney Osborne
Cara Dyer
Magen Marcum
Sharon McMillan
Yvonne Nelon