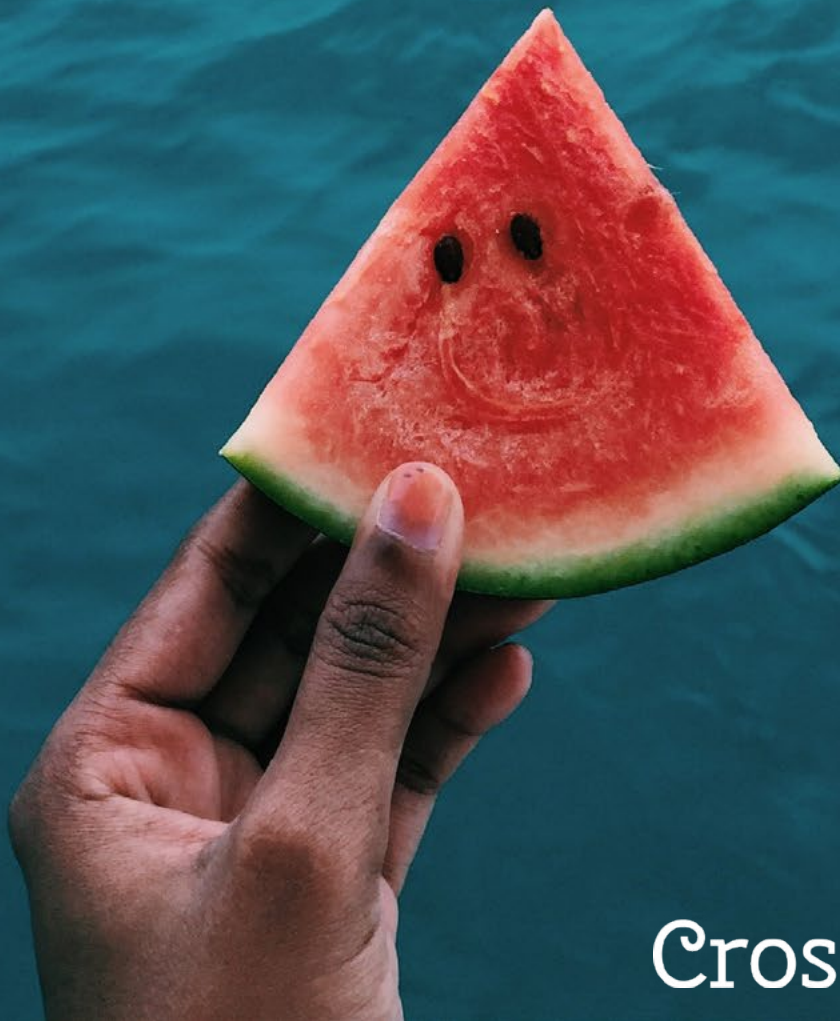


A SPIRITUAL
SUMMER
BUCKET LIST



CrossCards

Would you like to spend this summer growing closer to the Lord? How about taking several weeks to learn how to discern His voice, enjoy His presence in the outdoors, or fall in love with His Word again?

Whether you plan to visit the beach, head to a large city, camp in the mountains, or enjoy a quiet staycation in your own backyard, **here are 12 ways to jumpstart your spiritual life in the next month or two.** Some of these ideas will help you get in better spiritual and physical shape. And some of them will simply help you enjoy the Son this summer.

- MEET HIM IN THE MORNING.
- GAIN WISDOM WHILE WALKING.
- PLAN A PRAYER PICNIC.
- SWITCH IT UP.
- SING AT SUNRISE.
- START AN EVENING REFLECTION.
- ADOPT A WIDOW.
- PRACTICE GRATITUDE.
- HELP SOMEONE IN NEED.
- RECORD YOUR RESCUES.
- MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD.
- GET OUT OF THE BOX.

MEET HIM IN THE MORNING

Throughout the Psalms, the songwriters declared that they met God “in the morning.” Try meeting Him in the same place each morning this summer with a cup of coffee or tea, your Bible, and an open heart to hear Him speak through His Word. While you may start this habit out of obligation, you may soon find you come to Him each morning out of inspiration. By mid-summer, you may find yourself thinking, I can’t wait to meet Him in the morning.

GAIN WISDOM WHILE WALKING

The Bible is full of wisdom – especially in the book of Proverbs. And there’s no better way to learn and store biblical wisdom in your head this summer than to listen while you walk. Download a Proverbs podcast (from TheBibleStudyPodcast.com or LearnOutLoud.com) and gain wisdom with every step you take. In addition to counting your steps this summer, you may find yourself reciting Scripture, too.

PLAN A PRAYER PICNIC

Jesus often “withdrew by Himself to pray” ([Matthew 14:13](#)). Plan a day to unplug from all your devices, withdraw to a quiet place, and spend time communing with the Lord. Bring your Bible, a sack lunch, some devotional books, and a picnic blanket so you can spend literally hours out by yourself with just you and your Maker. (Don’t forget the sunscreen!)

SWITCH IT UP

Chances are you have your preferred Bible translation. Why not switch it up this summer by reading a book or two of the Bible in a different, easy-to-read translation? Let your favorite, familiar verses fall on your heart in a fresh new way by reading from The Message, New Living Translation, Contemporary English Version, or another one you'd like to try. Taking a fresh new approach to the Word of God may get you out of a reading rut and perhaps help you see something in God's Word that you never noticed before. Remember, "All Scripture (not just one English translation) is inspired by God" (2 Timothy 3:16). Allow Him to touch your heart in a fresh way this summer.

SING AT SUNRISE

Rise early, go out to find the sunrise (unless you can see it from the window of your home, hotel room, or vacation spot), and sing a song of worship to your Creator. Sing an old hymn, a favorite worship song, or get out your Bible and make up your own tune to one of the psalms – after all, they were each written to a tune and meant to be sung, not just read. Make your joyful noise to Him and see how it fills your heart with joy in return.

START AN EVENING REFLECTION

In [Genesis 5:22-24](#), we learn that Enoch "walked with God" for 300 years before God whisked him off of this earth. (Pretty cool, huh?) Ever wonder what they walked and talked about? What if you started walking with God in the cool of the evening for 30 days this summer? When we take time to slow down and reflect on the day and we invite God into our reflection, we allow Him to teach and transform us. When you add movement (like walking) to the mix, you keep your mind fresh and your body healthy. Start a summer habit of an evening walk through your neighborhood with your spouse, an early evening stroll on the beach, or (if you're immobile) an evening reflection time sitting near your living room window when the house is quiet.

ADOPT A WIDOW

[James 1:27](#) tells us that pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is “to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” Is there a recent or longtime widow in your church, in your neighborhood, or at your workplace? Bring her flowers, leave a gift by her door, prepare a meal for her every Saturday night, or better yet, have her over to eat with you and your family. Jesus cared about the orphans and widows. Seek one out this summer and extend a hand to help.

PRACTICE GRATITUDE

Every day this summer say aloud three things you're thankful for. Share them with your family or loved ones and invite them to join you in practicing an attitude of gratitude. [First Thessalonians 5:18](#) says, “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” Stretch yourself by including in your list one or two things that don't necessarily look good to you right now. That is obediently being thankful in all things, not just the good things, as you trust God to work them for good in your life ([Romans 8:28](#)).

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED

Jesus said we will always have the poor with us, but He wasn't saying that as an excuse to ignore them. Be deliberate and intentional about extending the love of Jesus to someone in need. Bring a sack lunch to the homeless man on the corner who is always holding a sign. Stop to give someone a ride who clearly can't get where they need to go on their own. Listen for needs among people in your neighborhood or church or at your children's summer activities. Do something for the poor this summer. Jesus would.

RECORD YOUR RESCUES

Start recording in a journal each day that coincidence that worked in your favor, the money that came in the mail just in time, the car that veered out of your way so that you missed the accident. The writer of [Psalm 71:15](#) said, “My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long—though I know not how to relate them all.” Call it a “Blessing Book” or your “Record of Rescues,” and start the habit of noticing God’s “saving acts all day long.” It will do wonders for your perception of your God who always comes through.

MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

I know you think you can't. But anything you read, recite, and especially HEAR a number of times will stick in your brain no matter how difficult you think it is to memorize. Set a goal and start memorizing a verse a week this summer. Pick five Psalms, six Proverbs, three verses each in James and Philippians, or mix it up. In addition to sharpening your brain and practicing your memory skills, you'll be making a wise investment of hiding God's Word in your heart ([Psalm 119:11](#)).

GET OUT OF THE BOX

Just do it! Go on that summer missions trip you've been talking about taking. Sign up to help at your church's Vacation Bible School or Summer Kids' Program. Take an Evangelism Explosion course to learn how to share the Gospel with confidence. Volunteer to be a camp counselor at your church's youth camp, even if you don't know any of the kids going. Or, offer to house sit or pet sit (free of charge) for a family that has an opportunity to take a vacation. Take advantage of extra time this summer to serve.