



25 DAYS TO A

Joyful Christmas

PLUS DAILY SCRIPTURE & PRAYER

Day 1

Less of Me, More of Others

This Christmas season, we're going to work toward a more selfless attitude. We spend so much time focused on ourselves that we can miss the people God has put in front of us. More than that, we can miss God himself when we get too caught up in the hustle and bustle.

READ: John 1:9-13; Matthew 5:14-16; Mark 12:30-31; Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 3:16-18

WRITE: Now, on sticky notes or index cards, consider putting their names around your house so you can remember to pray for them this month. Here are a few places you can put their names: bathroom mirror, refrigerator, desk or file cabinet, top of your chest of drawers, closet, on the dashboard of your car, on your computer screen or laptop, as a bookmark for where you are reading in your Bible (perfect place to put a name if it is someone in your household so it is more private).

Editor's Note: This Prayer and Scripture Guide is adapted from Motl Ministries' Be a Light: 25 Days of Sharing Jesus with Your World devotional series. Thank You Motl Ministries for sharing your guide with us!



Day 2

Be Ready

1 Peter 3:15 tells us to have a ready answer when someone asks us why we hope in Christ. Study, pray, and if God leads, fast for the opportunities God has prepared for you to share Him.

READ: 1 Peter 3:15; Proverbs 22:17-18; Matthew 24:44; 1 Timothy 6:18-19; Titus 3:1-2

PRAY: Pray that God will equip you with all the “readiness” you need to share His truth with others. Spend time thinking and praying through your own testimony – your personal story about how you came to know and love Jesus. Thank God today for your testimony and pray for an opportunity to share your story with someone this Christmas season.



Day 3

Thank God For Your Friends.

People don't care how much (or what) you know until they know how much you care. Ask the Lord to show you ways you can be His hands and feet to reflect His caring heart toward those who need Him this Christmas season (and always). When we care about people in tangible, practical ways it reflects the Lord's heart for them.

READ: Genesis 2:15; Psalm 95:7; Proverbs 12:10; Proverbs 29:7; Matthew 10:29-31; Psalm 103:13-14; Isaiah 30:18, Matthew 9:36; Colossians 3:12-13

PRAY: Pray again for the people you wrote down on day one. Pray today for God to reveal specific ways you can live out Christ's caring concern for those people during this Christmas season and into the New Year. Spend time thanking God for His care toward you.



Day 4

Obey

A life of obedience to Christ is the best witness! Too often Christians have used the name “Christ follower” without letting the reality of that statement into the depths of their daily living. As the saying goes, “Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words when necessary.” Our actions do indeed speak more loudly than our words!

READ: 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 5:18-19; John 13:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:3-4

PRAY: Pray about how the Lord might be prompting your heart toward deeper obedience. Ask God to forgive you for ways you haven’t been obedient in the past. Rejoice in His forgiveness and patience and spend the day thanking Him for His mercy toward you!



Day 5

Consider

Consider your Christmas traditions and how they might reflect Christ even more. Elves, Santa, and sugar plum fairies aren't necessarily bad; they also aren't necessarily good, even if they're fun. By fostering Christ honoring traditions, you are passing on a heritage that is eternal to your family. Your children and grandchildren are wired to learn from you in a special way.

READ: Deuteronomy 11:19-21; Deuteronomy 4:9-10; Psalm 34:11-14; Psalm 78:5-7, Isaiah 38:19

PRAY: Pray about how you can best honor the Lord in your celebrations and share Him with the children in your family this Christmas.



Day 6

Guard

Guard your heart from the worldliness of gifting and decorating that might steal away from Christ being your center. Guard against letting the pressures and stresses of the season rob you of love, joy, peace and patience. In the middle of the hustle and bustle (and often selfishness and rudeness accompanied with long lines, busy shoppers, traffic, etc.) ask that the Holy Spirit's love, joy, peace and patience in your life testify of Christ to those around you.

READ: [James 4:4](#); [Romans 8:7-9](#); [Matthew 6:24](#); [Proverbs 4:23](#)

PRAY: Pray for the Lord to reveal where you're letting the stresses and pressures of the season stumble you. Pray for forgiveness for any ways you've revealed covetousness, greed, or jealousy. Pray a repentant prayer for any idols you've made out of material or superficial things. Ask God to boldly come into your life and guard you against all temptation to selfishness. Ask God to give you a true Christmas spirit- one full of joy, peace and hope.



Day 7

Adopt

Pray about “adopting” a Compassion child or sponsoring a gift for a child through a charitable organization. If you and your children select a child together, begin praying over him or her and make sacrifices together to minister to that little one. It just might be the best Christmas gift (after salvation, of course) you could give or receive!

READ: Micah 6:8; James 1:27; Isaiah 1: 16-17; Matthew 23:23

PRAY: Pray for God to grow your heart for the most needy and vulnerable among us. Pray you would have eyes to see and ears to hear the neediness around you, and to have courage to respond to that neediness with love and compassion.



Day 8

Serve

Look for ways to serve your family above and beyond what's "expected." Especially if you visit family members who don't know Jesus, pray for God to show you opportunities to serve them.

READ: Matthew 20:28; Galatians 5:13-14, John 13:14-18

PRAY: Pray for God to reveal how you can serve others more cheerfully, wholeheartedly and compassionately this holiday season. Pray for eyes to see and ears to hear the need around you. Pray that God would open up opportunities where you can practice selflessness.



Day 9

Listen

If you read through the gospels, you'll notice how Jesus listened to people. Sometimes listening is a great act of service to someone. And as you listen, you will hear heart needs that are open doors to share the Answer to all our heart needs. Without listening we might miss those doors. Today, make a pledge to speak less and listen more.



READ: James 1:19; Proverbs 18:13; Proverbs 18:2; James 1:26

PRAY: Pray for God to remind you throughout the day of your need to listen. Pray that you can be slow to speak and slow to become angry. Pray to be abounding in love and have the words you say only be loving words today.

Day 10

Care

Take care packages to your local women's crisis center, a homeless center or to assist a sex-trafficking care center.

Some of us might have a personal relationship with someone who is a mom in need, a woman reeling from the unthinkable darkness of sex trafficking, or someone who is homeless or really struggling. Some of us might not currently know anyone in those kinds of circumstances, but we can come alongside the wonderful ministries and people who are serving them. If you know of a ministry that does great work - take the time to thank them, encourage them and if you can, bless them in some way. It's the least we can do!

READ: [Psalm 72:13-14](#) and spend a moment thinking about an organization you could support this Christmas. Then, spend time praying for that ministry and the lives it impacts.

PRAY: Pray for those who have dedicated their lives to helping the suffering and needy. Thank God for their witness and their compassionate hearts. Pray for God to grow your heart for those who are suffering. Pray for His hand to move in your life so that you have more and more opportunities to love on the people who need love most.



Day 11

Create

God is the Ultimate Creator who created us to be creative! So tap into that today- create something beautiful that points to the beauty of Christ. Here are just a few ideas: a paper snowflake with your favorite Bible verse, a batch of sugar cookies to decorate, a poem, a handwritten note to a friend. Think about what you love to do and do that thing today!

READ: Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 4:14-15; Colossians 3:23-24

PRAY: Thank God for his beautiful creativity – how He displays that throughout the world in nature, how He shows us that in the uniqueness of every face of every person. Thank Him for the gifts and talents He's given you to be a creative person in His image. Ask Him to reveal how you might display His beauty for the world to see.



Day 12

Invite

Invite a friend, coworker, neighbor to church - our church makes special invites for the Christmas season and also has email, Facebook and Twitter links to pass along church event info. You can't get much easier than just Facebook posting an invite to a church event! Statistics show it takes about 8 times for a person to be invited before they say "yes" to attending church. Keep inviting... without badgering, of course!

READ: Acts 14:37; Matthew 5:15-16; Mark 8:35; Matthew 28:19-20

PRAY: Pray for God to open up opportunities for you to invite others to church with you. You probably already have people in mind—pray that God would be readying them to hear your invitation and accept it.



Day 13

Prayer Walk

Walk through your neighborhood and pray for it. (Here's a link to a Prayers for the Harvest –guide comes with two sets of Scripture prayer cards so you can pray with a friend. I hole punched mine and put them on a key ring to take with me when I walk.).

After you walk and pray through your neighborhood pass out tracts-you might ask your neighbor if you can come back and discuss the tract with them at a later date. You can get tracts at Christian Book Distributors, Outreach and the American Tract Society. I have a couple of friends who are really good at this!

READ: [1 John 5:14-16](#); [2 Chronicles 7:14](#); [Ephesians 6:18](#)

PRAY: Here is a prayer you can use to begin your prayer walk: "Lord, thank you for the neighborhood you've placed me in, and the dear neighbors you've surrounded me with. I ask you to pour out your steadfast love on them. For those who don't know you, I pray you would give them a longing to know you and an opportunity for me to share your love with them."



Day 14

Gifts

Add a tract, sermon on cd, or note with a Bible verse. This year I made a little lighted mason jar craft to give to neighbors and a few ladies from church made some too. We attached a Bible verse with an invitation to Christmas services. You can download the labels we used here: [light labels](#). There's one blank side so you can put your church info on it.

READ: [Romans 10:17](#); [Matthew 5:14](#); [John 13:35](#)

PRAY: Ask God to let your gifts be received in a spirit of love and gratitude. Ask Him to let this be the beginning of deeper relationships within your community.



Day 15

Forgive

Let this Christmas season be the last season you hold onto any bitterness, hurt or unforgiveness toward a friend, family or community member who has wounded you. Some wounds run deeper than others—if you're struggling to forgive, prayerfully consider seeking counseling to help you work through your pain.

READ: [Matthew 6:14-15](#); [Isaiah 1:18](#); [Mark 11:25](#)

PRAY: Take a minute to thank God for his tender mercy and forgiveness for you.



Day 16

Write

Write a family Christmas letter, and instead of rattling off this year's promotions, accomplishments or troubles, give a testimony of God's faithfulness and grace over you and yours. Give Him the glory for every good thing and praise Him through each trial!

READ: 1 Chronicles 16:34; Romans 8:28; Psalm 63:3

PRAY: Thank God for all the ways he was faithful this year. Try going month by month, recalling his steadfast love and kindness and thanking him for all the ways he enabled you to persevere.



Day 17

Affirm

Spend today affirming the people around you—your spouse, children, extended family, neighbors, co-workers, and church community. Get creative about what this will mean- maybe handwritten notes tucked away as a surprise, an encouraging email to your pastor, even just complimenting your neighbor on her Christmas decorations—when we affirm others, we acknowledge that they are important and matter to God.

READ: Colossians 3:12-14; Isaiah 58:10-11; Mark 12:31; Romans 13:8-10

PRAY: Spend time thanking God for the all the beautiful things you see in the people you love. Affirm their worth by praying over their gifts and talents. Pray the affirmation you send out would be accepted with grace and that hearts would be encouraged because of it.



Day 18

Visit

Visit your local Children's hospital with carols, toys or something to brighten their spirits and fix their eyes on Jesus as their hope.

READ: [Matthew 21:15-16](#); [Psalm 8:2](#); [Matthew 18:2-6](#); [Matthew 18:10](#)

PRAY: Pray for the children in local hospitals around you- that God would be tender to them, comforting and strengthening them in body and spirit. Pray for their parents, that God would pour out all strength, comfort, peace and courage for the journey ahead. Pray for the nurses and doctors- that God would give them wisdom and kindness toward their patients.



Day 19



Peace

In a world filled with so much strife and hate, spread peace. Consider doing a random act of kindness today, like paying for a stranger's coffee, or even something as simple as taking your elderly neighbor's trash to the curb. Letting others know that there are people in the world who are for them and there to help them is a beautiful way to spread the message of God's love and peace.

READ: Colossians 3:15; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; James 3:18

PRAY: Spend time today thanking God for the peace he brings. Thank him for bringing the Prince of Peace into our world and for the hope of eternal peace and rest we have through Him. Then, spend time praying for peace in your community, city, and country. Ask God to show you ways that you can be a conduit of peace right where you are.

Day 20

Party With Purpose

Invite coworkers, neighbors and friends over for a party and also invite some Christian friends who have prayed and are ready to be sensitive to the Lord's leading and have a heart to share about Christ. Pray for God to move and see what doors He opens for you and your believing friends to warmly share His Good News with those who need Him. I've hosted parties like these and seen the Lord open conversation that was natural and uncontrived; seeds were planted and watered with gentleness. Often, a person doesn't want to come to church, so this is almost like bringing a tiny bit of church to them in a party package.

READ: Read the story of Esther to see how another woman "threw a party with a purpose!"

PRAY: Pray God would water the seeds He's given you to sow. Pray that God would guide the conversations at your gathering toward Him and His goodness.



Day 21

Say Thanks

Take the opportunity to thank service personnel and include a reminder of Christ's life and love. This might be your children's teacher, the local firefighters, or someone else who serves you or your community.

Thanking people who serve the community is a nice way to connect with them for the purpose of witnessing. If you don't feel like you can squeeze in one more service-act at Christmastime, spend a few moments together as a family praying for them.

READ: 2 Timothy 2:1-4; Colossians 3:17; Philippians 1:3-6

PRAY: Think through the service personnel that have an immediate impact on your life: the men and women in checking out your groceries, your children's school teachers, your garbage collectors, the police and fire personnel who keep your neighborhoods safe. Thank God for these people and ask him to reveal how you might bless them for their service.



Day 22

Consider

Consider how you might bless a handicapped or elderly person in your neighborhood by bringing some cheer into their world by offering to put up and take down Christmas lights/tree/decor. Leave them a little note to remind them God sees them and loves them.

READ: 1 Timothy 5:4-8; James 1:27; Psalm 71:9; Isaiah 46:4; Proverbs 16:31

PRAY: Pray for those people that God brought to mind to bless. Ask God to give them a measure of His peace, security and happiness. Pray for opportunities to love on these people and show them Christ's love. They are often forgotten this time of year—pray God would give you a heart to keep them in your mind.



Day 23

Be Mindful

Be mindful of those around you who have lost loved ones this year (and in years' past). Invite someone who might be alone this season to share in your celebrations. Pray for them to be comforted in Christ and be willing to help as God leads.

READ: 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2-3

PRAY: Ask God to comfort those facing their first Christmas without their loved one. Ask Him to fill them with peace, patience, hope and courage. Ask Him to help you remember these people throughout the year.



Day 24

Be Prepared To Be Hospitable

Get a few little nibbles ready in the fridge, freezer and pantry, and do whatever you might need to in order to feel at ease with the notion of opening your home. If you have carolers who visit - have a tract and cookies ready. If you have a friend who might need a place to wrap presents away from her toddler - dinner at your place with some extra space & time might be a huge blessing and open opportunity to share God with her. Do what you can to share hospitality - opening your doors can open the heart doors to many people!

READ: [Matthew 25:40-46](#); [1 Peter 4:9](#); [Hebrews 13:2](#)

PRAY: Ask God for the opportunity to welcome a sojourner. Ask Him to open your eyes to those who might need a warm meal or cozy place to lay their heads for a night.



Day 25

Keep It Simple



No matter how hard we try, we just can't do everything. We can't hear God's quiet leading to notice someone's need when our minds are a blur with crazy to-do lists and Paul McCartney's "Wonderful Christmas Time" interrupting any coherent string of thought. We have to cut-back, say "no," and choose to be sacrificially simple if we are going to be useful in God's Kingdom agenda.

READ: [Isaiah 9:6](#); [Micah 5:2](#); [Matthew 1:18-25](#); [Luke 2:1-21](#)

PRAY: Thank God today for the gift of His son, for the perfect, sinless life he lead, for his death on the cross and the hope we have through his atoning sacrifice and resurrection! Praise God today that though we have trouble, that we are never alone. Thank Him for the light he shines in the darkness—specifically through the kindness and goodness of his children. Ask God to keep working in your heart to give you a "Christmas spirit" all year—a spirit of generosity and selflessness that shines the light of Christ on all you interact with throughout the year.

Merry Christmas Dear Ones

I wonder how you shared Jesus with your world this Christmas? If you missed an opportunity this year, write it on your calendar to begin preparing for next September--it always amazes me how fast the time flies and how much time it can take to really be ready to do these kinds of outreach activities. But there ought not be any guilt over such matters--the Lord leads, provides and guides according to His will and we need not worry about doing one ounce more than just what He has called us to! The Lord's blessings over all your labors! May the Lord magnify His name through your life this Christmas season and always.

Amen.



April Motl is a pastor's wife who loves to laugh, loves her man, loves to talk on the phone entirely too long and most of all, loves her Lord. April is a graduate from Southern California Seminary (MRS) and has written for Just Between Us Magazine, Dayspring's (In)courage, and The Secret Place and also writes regularly for crosswalk.com. For more information, visit Motl Ministries at: www.MotlMinistries.com



December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Less of me, more of others
2 Be Ready	3 Thank God For Your Friends	4 Obey	5 Consider	6 Guard	7 Adopt	8 Serve
9 Listen	10 Care	11 Create	12 Invite	13 Prayer Walk	14 Gifts	15 Forgive
16 Write	17 Affirm	18 Visit	19 Peace	20 Party With Purpose	21 Say Thanks	22 Consider
23 Be Mindful	24 Be Prepared To Be Hospitable	25 Keep It Simple	26	27	28	29

