



Daily Devotionals – December 1, 2024
Wishful, Expectant, and Certain Hope

Day 1: The Call to Seek His Kingdom

Scripture: *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”* — Matthew 6:33

Reflection: Jesus invites us to place God’s kingdom and righteousness at the center of our lives. This isn’t a one-time decision but a daily choice to prioritize God’s will over our desires. Seeking His kingdom means surrendering control, trusting in His plan, and aligning our actions with His purpose.

Story: A young woman named Mia was overwhelmed by the demands of her life—her job, her family responsibilities, and her never-ending to-do list. She often felt like she was running on empty. One morning, as she read Matthew 6:33, she realized she had sought her solutions rather than God’s guidance. She decided to start each day by praying and dedicating her plans to God. Over time, she noticed a profound change. Even when life was hectic, she felt peace knowing God was leading her. The verse became her anchor: seeking first His kingdom.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You have called us to seek Your kingdom above all else, yet so often we let the cares of this world distract us from You. Forgive us for the times we have placed our desires above Your will. Teach us to trust You fully, to lay down our anxieties, and to surrender our plans to You. Lord, as we seek Your kingdom, shape our hearts to reflect Your love, mercy, and righteousness. Help us to walk in obedience to Your calling and to trust that You will provide for our every need. May Your kingdom come, and may Your will be done in our lives. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Day 2: Trusting in God’s Provision

Scripture: *“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”* — Matthew 6:26

Reflection: God’s provision is abundant and faithful. If He cares for the birds and the flowers, how much more will He care for us? Trusting God means believing He knows and provides for our needs, even when we cannot see how.

Story: Jacob had recently lost his job and was worried about how he would provide for his family. One day, during a walk in the park, he watched a flock of birds soaring effortlessly through the sky. He remembered Jesus' words in Matthew 6:26 and felt convicted. He prayed, "God, I trust You to provide." Days later, an unexpected opportunity arose, and Jacob found work. Looking back, he realized that his faith in God's provision was the turning point. The birds reminded him to trust in God's care.

Prayer:

Loving Father, You are the God who sees and provides. Thank You for the daily reminders of Your care through the beauty of creation. Help us to trust in Your provision and to remember that You value us far more than we can comprehend. Lord, when we are tempted to worry about tomorrow, draw our eyes back to You. Strengthen our faith to believe that You will meet our needs and guide us in every season. Teach us to rest in Your promises, knowing You are a good and faithful Father. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Day 3: Letting Go of Worry

Scripture: *"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"* — Matthew 6:27

Reflection: Worrying does not change our circumstances; it only steals our peace. God invites us to cast our cares on Him, trusting that He controls the details of our lives.

Story: Emily was known for her constant worrying. Her family often teased her about how she could find something to stress about in any situation. One Sunday, her pastor preached on Matthew 6:27, which struck her deeply. She realized she was carrying burdens that God never intended her to bear. She began a new habit: each time a worry crept into her mind, she wrote it on paper and placed it in a "God jar," symbolizing her surrender. Over time, her trust grew, and her joy returned as she learned to let God handle her anxieties.

Prayer:

Lord, You know how often our hearts are weighed down by worry and fear. We carry burdens that You never meant for us to bear. Forgive us, Father, for doubting Your provision and trying to control what is beyond our power. Teach us to cast our anxieties upon You, knowing You care for us. Help us trust in Your timing and plan, even when we cannot see the way forward. Fill our hearts with Your peace that surpasses all understanding and remind us daily that You are in control. In the name of Jesus, our Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen.

Day 4: A Heart Fixed on Heaven

Scripture: *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."* — Matthew 6:19-20

Reflection: Seeking God's kingdom means shifting our focus from earthly gains to eternal treasures. It's about valuing what matters most—our relationship with God and the lives we impact for His glory.

Story: Peter loved his collection of rare coins. He spent years building it, but he often felt empty despite his achievements. One day, a friend invited him to volunteer at a local shelter. At first, he hesitated but eventually agreed. As Peter spent time serving others, he experienced a joy he

had never felt before. He realized that the greatest treasures were not in his coin collection but in the relationships he built and the lives he touched.

Prayer:

Eternal God, teach us to value what is eternal over what is temporary. Forgive us for when we have placed our trust in material things or earthly achievements. Help us to invest in Your kingdom by loving others, serving with humility, and sharing Your gospel. Lord, give us hearts that seek Your glory above all else and hands willing to do Your work. May we find joy in living for eternity and storing up treasures in heaven. Shape our lives to reflect Your priorities and may our every action honor You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Day 5: Finding Peace in the Present

Scripture: *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* — Matthew 6:34

Reflection: God calls us to live fully in the present, trusting Him with both today and tomorrow. Dwelling on future fears only robs us of the peace He wants us to experience now.

Story: Sarah had always been a planner. She mapped out every detail of her future, but life rarely went according to her plans. She found herself constantly anxious about what might happen. One evening, she read Matthew 6:34 and decided to try something new. She asked God to help her focus on that day each morning. Over time, she discovered the joy of living in the moment and trusting God for the future.

Prayer:

Lord, You are the God of today, tomorrow, and eternity. Too often, we let worries about the future rob us of the peace You offer us in the present. Forgive us for doubting Your faithfulness and striving to control what only You can. Teach us to live fully in this moment, trusting that You are already in tomorrow. Open our eyes to see the blessings You have given us today, and help us to respond with gratitude and joy. May we find rest in Your promise that You will never leave or forsake us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Day 6: Aligning with God's Righteousness

Scripture: *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness..."* — Matthew 6:33

Reflection: Seeking God's righteousness means living in alignment with His will and reflecting His character in our actions. It's about striving for holiness and letting His Spirit transform us.

Story: Michael struggled with anger and harsh words. He knew it didn't reflect God's character, but he felt powerless to change. After a Bible study on seeking God's righteousness, he committed to daily prayer and Scripture reading, asking God to transform his heart. Over time, his words became gentler, and his relationships deepened. Michael discovered that pursuing God's righteousness was not about perfection but letting God work in him.

Prayer:

Holy God, You are righteous and perfect in all Your ways. We confess that our hearts often stray from Your path and fail to reflect Your holiness. Forgive us, Lord, and transform us by the power of Your Spirit. Help us to seek Your righteousness daily, aligning our thoughts, words, and

actions with Your will. Teach us to love as You love, to forgive as You forgive, and to walk humbly with You. Shape our lives to bring glory to Your name, and may Your righteousness shine through us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Day 7: Living in His Kingdom

Scripture: *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”* — Romans 14:17

Reflection: Living in God's kingdom means experiencing His peace and joy through the Holy Spirit. It's not about external circumstances but about an inward relationship with Him.

Story: Joy felt like a contradiction in Lisa's life. She had experienced hardship after hardship, yet she radiated peace and contentment. When others asked her how she managed, she said, “I live in God's kingdom.” Lisa explained that she found joy and peace through daily communion with God, even in the midst of trials. Her life was a testimony to the power of seeking His kingdom first.

Prayer:

Lord of heaven and earth, thank You for inviting us into Your kingdom. Teach us to live as citizens of Your kingdom, walking in Your righteousness, peace, and joy. Help us to seek Your presence daily and to rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Lord, when life feels overwhelming, remind us that Your kingdom is unshakable, and Your peace is everlasting. May we live in a way that reflects Your love and brings hope to the world around us. In the name of Jesus, our King, we pray. Amen.