

MARCH 2026

5 + 2

FIVE AND TWO
DEVOTIONAL AND SABBATH



Hello!

Everyone Takes A Step

Welcome to yet another month of the 5+2 Devotional & Sabbath Guide!

We're so glad you're continuing this journey with us. This devotional isn't just a routine; it's an invitation to keep growing deeper with God as a church. What people see in our lives - our serving, giving, and loving begins in the quiet moments we spend with the Lord.

In those private spaces, His Word shapes us, and His Spirit strengthens us. So this month, take time each day to pause, open your Bible, and let God speak. When we bring Him our simple "five loaves and two fish," He multiplies them far beyond what we expect.

We're grateful to walk this journey with you. Let's keep going deeper with the Spirit, together.



How to use this guide

Daily Devotion

To get started, you can follow this format.

Be still (1 min): Become aware of God's presence.

Read (5-6 min): The day's passage. Read aloud if possible.

Listen (3-4 min): What is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice (whole day): Apply what God has spoken to you.

Saturday Review

Use the Examen prompts to reflect on your week.

Learn more about the practice of the Examen on page 40.

Sabbath Twice A Month

Pause from work to rest in God. *Deepen your understanding of the sabbath on page 42.*

Weekly Check-in

Find a buddy/LifeGroup and connect weekly via text or in-person. You can use the given prompts and pray brief blessings for each other.

Practice Discernment

Test impressions by Scripture, Christ-likeness, Community, and Fruit (Gal 5:22-23). When guidance is directional or sensitive (finance, relationships, major decisions), loop in an FGA leader.

Choose love over spectacle; humility over hype.

Sabbath



Sabbath Practice

Pick 2 days this month where you will stop, rest, delight and practice love. If a whole day isn't possible, carve out some consecutive hours.

Cease from striving

Pick a day or some hours this month for your Sabbath practice. Make a short list of what you'll lay down during that time. It could be turning off digital connections, not checking your phone, or pausing from chores and work.

In that time, pick up one or two things that turn your heart toward God: worship, take a walk in nature, re-listen to a sermon, read a good book, share a meal with a friend, or have an honest conversation with someone who gives you life.

Delight in creation

Spend some time outdoors this week. Go for a slow walk or simply sit where you can see the sky.

Notice the colours, sounds, and patterns around you. Let wonder rise. Whisper thanks for the beauty that reflects the Creator.

Deepen your understanding of the sabbath on page 42.

1 Mar

Sunday: Arrive Ready

Psalm 100:4-5

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Pray

Lord, thank You for Your goodness and faithfulness. As we come to Your house, fill our hearts with gratitude. Teach us to serve and worship with joy. Amen.

Posture

List three things you are thankful to God for before you step into church.

Thank someone who serves - by name, sincerely.

thankful
→ & →
grateful

2

Mar

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. As you begin the week, ask: *“Holy Spirit, grow Your fruit in me.”*

Choose one fruit to notice and nurture throughout the day.

3 Mar

John 5:8-11

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." ⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, ¹⁰ and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat."

¹¹ But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' "

Be still. Breathe. "*Come, Holy Spirit.*" Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Whenever you notice you feel stuck (hesitating, procrastinating, anxious, people-pleasing), pause for 10 seconds.

Then stand up (if you can), take one slow breath, and whisper: "Jesus, I trust You. Help me obey." And take steps towards that next thing.

4 Mar

Matthew 7:16-20

¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognise them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

¹⁷ Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Reflect: What fruit are others likely tasting from your life this week?

Ask God to replace one unhealthy reaction with the Spirit’s gentleness or patience.

5 Mar

Colossians 1:9-10

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Ask God to fill you with His wisdom before each key decision today.

Look for one good work you can do quietly for someone else.

6

Mar

Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of
water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Spend a few minutes slowly rereading a verse that touched you this week.

Let one word or phrase become your prayer throughout the day.

Weekly Check-in

Buddy/LifeGroup Check-In

Purpose

End the week by noticing God, naming reality, and taking one clear next step. You can do this over text or in-person.

Flow

Gratitude

Where did you notice the Spirit this week?

Word

What verse/insight stayed with you?

Obedience

What step did you take? What fruit did you see?

Barrier

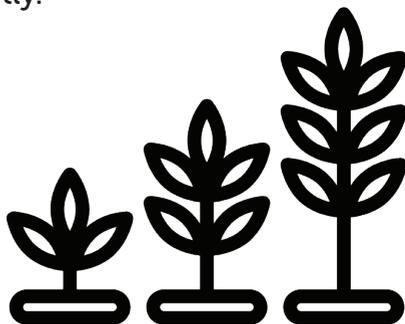
Where were you stuck, tempted, or tired?

Next Step

Name one small, specific step for the coming week.

End

Pray for each other, silently.



Examen: Saturday Review

Presence

Become aware of God's presence and ask the Spirit to bring clarity to your week.

Review

Review your week with gratitude, noticing God's gifts in people, work, and small pleasures.

Emotions

Pay attention to your emotions to discern God's movements, confess shortcomings, and consider His invitations.

Pray

Choose one moment from the week and pray from it - intercession, praise, repentance, or thanks - as the Spirit leads.

Ahead

Look toward the coming week. How are you feeling about what's ahead? Bring that to God.

Learn more about the practice of the Examen on page 40.



Sunday: Arrive Ready

1 Corinthians 12:12, 18

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ... ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

Pray

Jesus, thank You for placing us in Your body. Help us to value every person and every gift. Make us one as You are one, so that the world may see You in us. Amen.

Posture

Acknowledge someone serving in a different ministry and thank God for them.

Pray: *"Lord, use me to build up the body today."*



9

Mar

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Pray: *“Holy Spirit, empower me to be Your witness today.”*

Look for one opportunity to speak or act in a way that reflects Jesus’ love.

10 Mar

Acts 4:29-31

²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.

³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Begin your day with this prayer: *“Lord, fill me with boldness and compassion to represent You well.”*

Step out in faith to encourage or pray for someone who needs hope.

11

Mar

Luke 4:18-19

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the
prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Be still. Breathe. "*Come, Holy Spirit.*" Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Ask God to open your eyes to someone who feels forgotten or discouraged today.

Do one small act of mercy or generosity that reflects His heart.

12

Mar

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Ask the Spirit to make you alert to a prompting to speak, encourage, or pray for someone today.

When it comes, respond without delay or overthinking.

13

Mar

2 Timothy 1:6-7

⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Ask God to show you one spiritual gift He has placed in you to serve others.

Use it intentionally today, even in a small way.

Weekly Check-in

Buddy/LifeGroup Check-In

Purpose

End the week by noticing God, naming reality, and taking one clear next step. You can do this over text or in-person.

Flow

Gratitude

Where did you notice the Spirit this week?

Word

What verse/insight stayed with you?

Obedience

What step did you take? What fruit did you see?

Barrier

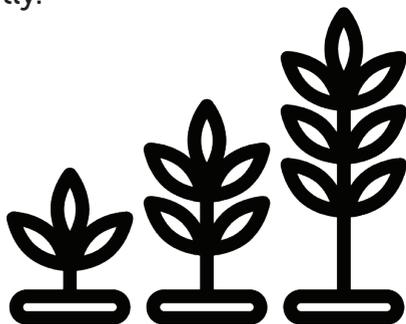
Where were you stuck, tempted, or tired?

Next Step

Name one small, specific step for the coming week.

End

Pray for each other, silently.



Examen: Saturday Review

Presence

Become aware of God's presence and ask the Spirit to bring clarity to your week.

Review

Review your week with gratitude, noticing God's gifts in people, work, and small pleasures.

Emotions

Pay attention to your emotions to discern God's movements, confess shortcomings, and consider His invitations.

Pray

Choose one moment from the week and pray from it - intercession, praise, repentance, or thanks - as the Spirit leads.

Ahead

Look toward the coming week. How are you feeling about what's ahead? Bring that to God.

Learn more about the practice of the Examen on page 40.



15
Mar

Sunday: Arrive Ready

Psalm 100:2

Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

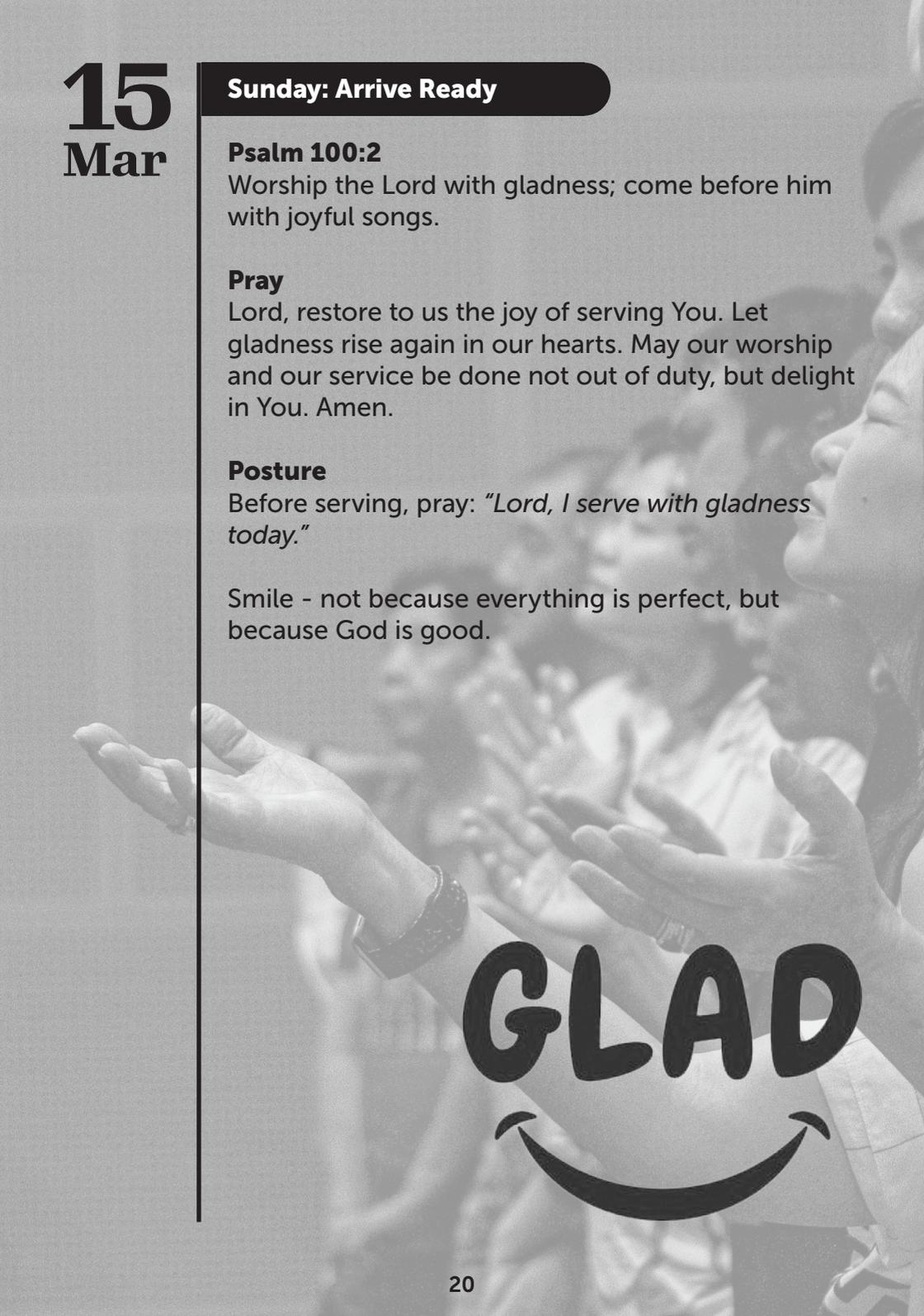
Pray

Lord, restore to us the joy of serving You. Let gladness rise again in our hearts. May our worship and our service be done not out of duty, but delight in You. Amen.

Posture

Before serving, pray: *"Lord, I serve with gladness today."*

Smile - not because everything is perfect, but because God is good.



GLAD
😊

16 Mar

John 10:3-4

³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Take five minutes in silence today and pray, *“Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.”*

Write down one word or impression that surfaces, and measure it against Scripture’s truth and love.

¹¹The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹²After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

Be still. Breathe. "*Come, Holy Spirit.*" Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Set aside five minutes today to sit in silence before God.

When distractions come, gently return to this prayer: "Here I am, Lord."

18

Mar

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Name one area where you feel weak today. Invite the Spirit to rest His power there.

Replace self-reliance with this prayer: *"Your grace is enough for me."*

19 Mar

Isaiah 30:20-21

²⁰ Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. ²¹ Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

Be still. Breathe. "*Come, Holy Spirit.*" Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. When faced with a decision, pray: "Spirit, show me the next right step."

Move forward only when peace and clarity align with Scripture.

20 Mar

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Pray: *"Lord, I choose to trust You more than my own reasoning."*

Release one worry or plan to His care today.

Weekly Check-in

Buddy/LifeGroup Check-In

Purpose

End the week by noticing God, naming reality, and taking one clear next step. You can do this over text or in-person.

Flow

Gratitude

Where did you notice the Spirit this week?

Word

What verse/insight stayed with you?

Obedience

What step did you take? What fruit did you see?

Barrier

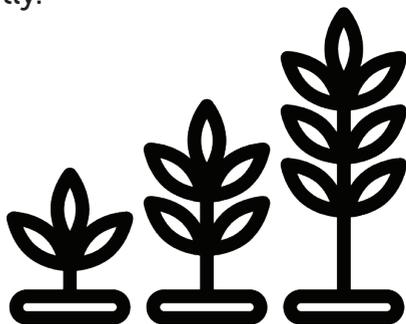
Where were you stuck, tempted, or tired?

Next Step

Name one small, specific step for the coming week.

End

Pray for each other, silently.



Examen: Saturday Review

Presence

Become aware of God's presence and ask the Spirit to bring clarity to your week.

Review

Review your week with gratitude, noticing God's gifts in people, work, and small pleasures.

Emotions

Pay attention to your emotions to discern God's movements, confess shortcomings, and consider His invitations.

Pray

Choose one moment from the week and pray from it - intercession, praise, repentance, or thanks - as the Spirit leads.

Ahead

Look toward the coming week. How are you feeling about what's ahead? Bring that to God.

Learn more about the practice of the Examen on page 40.



22
Mar

Sunday: Arrive Ready

Psalm 46:10

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

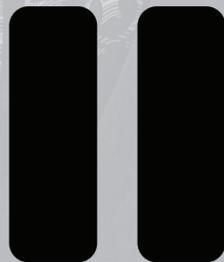
Pray

God, quiet our hearts. In our preparation and planning, let us not forget You. Teach us to be still before we serve, to rest before we lead, and to worship before we work. Amen.

Posture

Take 2-3 minutes of silence before entering the church or beginning to serve.

If you feel rushed, pause and whisper: "*You are God, and I am Yours.*"



23
Mar

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Begin your day with this prayer: *“Lord, give me wisdom for what I face today.”*

When decisions arise, pause and ask again before reacting.

¹³ Blessed are those who find wisdom,
those who gain understanding,

¹⁴ for she is more profitable than silver
and yields better returns than gold.

¹⁵ She is more precious than rubies;
nothing you desire can compare with her.

¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

¹⁷ Her ways are pleasant ways,
and all her paths are peace.

¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her;
those who hold her fast will be blessed.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. When tempted to chase quick rewards, pause and pray: *"Spirit, teach me Your better way."*

Ask yourself: Will this choice lead to peace or regret?

25
Mar

Ephesians 5:15-16

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Before starting each task, pause and ask: *“Lord, what are You doing here?”*

At day’s end, reflect on one moment where you sensed His leading.

26

Mar

James 3:17-18

¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Be still. Breathe. *“Come, Holy Spirit.”* Become aware of God’s Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. In a conversation, choose to listen longer than you speak.

Ask God to help you sow peace where tension exists.

27
Mar

Proverbs 16:3

Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and he will establish your plans.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Share a meal, a prayer, or a word of encouragement with someone this week.

Thank God for your church community by name.

Weekly Check-in

Buddy/LifeGroup Check-In

Purpose

End the week by noticing God, naming reality, and taking one clear next step. You can do this over text or in-person.

Flow

Gratitude

Where did you notice the Spirit this week?

Word

What verse/insight stayed with you?

Obedience

What step did you take? What fruit did you see?

Barrier

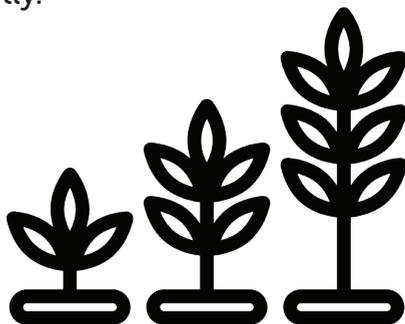
Where were you stuck, tempted, or tired?

Next Step

Name one small, specific step for the coming week.

End

Pray for each other, silently.



Presence

Become aware of God's presence and ask the Spirit to bring clarity to your week.

Review

Review your week with gratitude, noticing God's gifts in people, work, and small pleasures.

Emotions

Pay attention to your emotions to discern God's movements, confess shortcomings, and consider His invitations.

Pray

Choose one moment from the week and pray from it - intercession, praise, repentance, or thanks - as the Spirit leads.

Ahead

Look toward the coming week. How are you feeling about what's ahead? Bring that to God.

Learn more about the practice of the Examen on page 40.



Palm Sunday reminds us of what it really means to follow God's kingdom. Jesus didn't ride into Jerusalem like a conquering warrior; He chose a donkey instead (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:5). He is the kind of King who wins hearts through self-giving love, not strength or status. As the people lifted their palm branches, they were honouring Him as the true King who brings real peace, far deeper than any political solution (John 12:12-15).

Palm Sunday traditions also reminds us to lay down our own "cloaks" - our pride, worries, and desire to stay in control, at the feet of Jesus (Matt 16:24). And when we hear the word Hosanna, it's really the same cry in our own hearts: a call for God to save us, not just from life's problems but from the sin that weighs us down (Ps 118:25).

Palm Sunday is also a chance to pause and repent. It shows how easily our hearts can shift from praise to distance, and invites us to let the Holy Spirit grow in us a steady, faithful love for Christ (Gal 5:24-25). We also learn to practice discernment (Rom 12:1-2), celebrating with real faith rather than going through the motions. We let the story shape how we live: choosing humility (Phil 2:5-8), seeking peace, and reflecting Jesus's gentleness.

Palm Sunday also leads us into Holy Week. Through acts of love, hospitality, and prayer, we can show others what Jesus' upside-down kingdom looks like - serving, caring, and pointing people to the One who brings true peace. May our worship and our lives declare not just "Blessed is the King!" but the hope of the cross and the renewal He brings.

29
Mar

Sunday: Arrive Ready

John 4:23-24

²³ "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

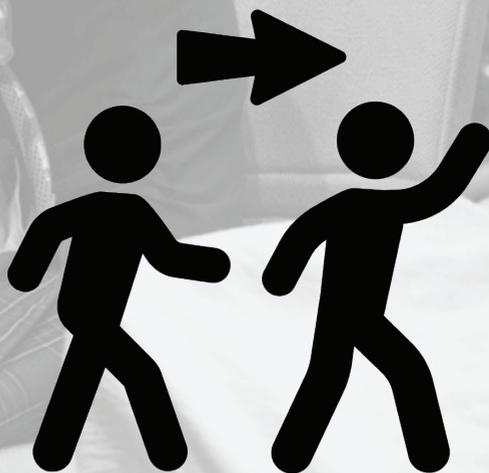
Pray

Father, make us true worshipers. Strip away performance and pretence. Fill us with Your Spirit and anchor us in truth. We want to worship You as You desire. Amen.

Posture

Before worship or serving, pray: *"Holy Spirit, lead me."*

Be honest with God - bring your true heart, not just your best behaviour.



30

Mar

1 Peter 4:10

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God.

If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Before serving, pause and pray, *"Holy Spirit, let me serve with Your strength, not mine."*

Notice how serving changes when it flows from joy rather than obligation.

31
Mar

Philippians 2:3-4

³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Be still. Breathe. *"Come, Holy Spirit."* Become aware of God's Spirit with you.

Read. Read the passage slowly.

Listen. What word/phrase stands out? What invitation is the Spirit highlighting?

Micro-practice. Do one quiet act of service for someone without announcing it.

Ask God to show you someone who needs encouragement.

The Examen

Key Aspects of The Examen

1. Become aware of God's presence. Look back on the events of the week in the company of the Holy Spirit. The week may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.

2. Review the week with gratitude. Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your week in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the week's gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive from these people? What did you give them? Pay attention to small things—the food you eat, the sights you see, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details.

3. Pay attention to your emotions. We detect the presence of the Spirit of God also in the movements of our emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the week. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings?

God will most likely show you some ways that you fell short. Make note of these sins and faults. But look deeply for other implications. Does a feeling of frustration perhaps mean that God wants you consider a new direction in some area of your work? Are you concerned about a friend? Perhaps you should reach out to her.

The Examen

Key Aspects of The Examen

4. Choose one feature of the week and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the week that God thinks is particularly important. It may involve a feeling, positive or negative. It may be a significant encounter with another person or a vivid moment of pleasure or peace. Or it may be something that seems rather insignificant. Look at it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

5. Look toward tomorrow. Ask God to give you light for the challenges of the coming week. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what's coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God's guidance. Ask him for help and understanding. Pray for hope.

Talk to Jesus like a friend. End the Examen with a conversation with Jesus. Ask forgiveness for your sins. Ask for his protection and help. Ask for his wisdom about the questions you have and the problems you face. Do all this in the spirit of gratitude. Your life is a gift, adorned with gifts from God.

(Modified from ignatianspirituality.com)

Sabbath

Theology of Rest, Freedom, and Foretaste

1. Sabbath begins in creation. Before there was Israel, the Temple, or Torah, there was Sabbath. God “finished his work... and rested” and then blessed the seventh day and made it holy (Gen 2:2-3). The first holy thing in Scripture is time—not a shrine humans build for God, but a day God sets apart for humans. Sabbath is therefore not a tribal custom but a creational gift: a weekly reminder that the world runs on God’s sufficiency, not our ceaseless effort.

Blessing: We receive time as a gift, not an enemy; we live by grace before we work by grit.

2. Sabbath forms a people liberated from Pharaoh. At Sinai, the fourth command roots Sabbath in creation (Exo 20:8-11): we mirror God’s rhythm—work that is good, rest that is holy. In Deuteronomy, the command is grounded in redemption (Deu 5:12-15): “remember that you were slaves in Egypt.” Sabbath is freedom enacted—no one may be worked to the bone again: not sons or daughters, servants or migrants, even animals and land (Exo 23:12; Lev 25).

Blessing: Rest becomes justice. Sabbath protects the small, slows exploitation, and trains our hearts to resist new Pharaohs—hurry, productivity idolatry, and consumerism.

3. Sabbath is delight, not deprivation. The prophets call Sabbath a delight (Isa 58:13-14)—a day to turn from “your own way” so that you might feast on God’s goodness. Psalm 92, labelled “A Psalm for

Sabbath

Theology of Rest, Freedom, and Foretaste

the Sabbath,” overflows with gratitude. Sabbath is not merely “not working”; it is enjoying God, creation, and one another without squeezing the world for output.

Blessing: Joy is rehabilitated. We practice gratitude, play, singing, and generous meals as acts of faith.

4. Jesus fulfils and re-teaches the Sabbath. Jesus does not scrap the Sabbath; he clarifies its purpose. “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath... the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27-28). He heals on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10-17; John 5), showing that the Sabbath aims at life made whole. His invitation, “Come to me... and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28-30), flows straight into Sabbath controversies (Matt 12:1-13). In Christ, Sabbath is not a legal burden but a messianic blessing—a sign that God’s new creation has begun.

Blessing: We rest in a Person. Sabbath becomes a weekly apprenticeship to Jesus’ unhurried yoke.

5. The church lives between “already” and “not yet”. The New Testament honours the day while guarding the gospel from legalism. Paul refuses to make days a test of belonging (Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17), because the substance is Christ—and yet Hebrews insists that “a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God” (Heb 4:9-11). We taste the future rest now, by ceasing and by trusting. The early church gathered on the “Lord’s Day” to celebrate resurrection (Rev 1:10), and Christians through the centuries have received a weekly rhythm of worship

Sabbath

Theology of Rest, Freedom, and Foretaste

and rest as a wise, life-giving practice.

Blessing: Sabbath is eschatology in miniature—a weekly foretaste of the Kingdom that strengthens hope.

6. What Sabbath practices do in us (and through us).

- **Re-centering worship:** We interrupt the liturgies of productivity with word, table, prayer, and song. We remember Whose we are before what we do (Exo 20; Psa 92).
- **Training trust:** By ceasing, we declare, “God provides when I do not produce” (cf. manna patterns in Exo 16). Rest is faith with a timetable.
- **Rehumanizing community:** Everyone rests—household, employees, migrants, even livestock (Deu 5:14). Sabbath democratizes dignity and refreshes relationships.
- **Mercy and healing:** If Sabbath aims at restoration, then doing good on Sabbath is most fitting (Matt 12:12). Hospitality, encouragement, and reconciliation belong to the day.
- **Creation care:** The land and animals share in rest (Exo 23:12; Lev 25). Sabbath forms ecological patience; we live as stewards, not extractors.

Sabbath

Theology of Rest, Freedom, and Foretaste

- **Witness:** In a culture that baptises busyness, a peaceful people is apologetics. Sabbath says, “Our God is not a taskmaster; He is a Father.”

7. Common questions, biblical guidance.

- **Isn’t Sabbath legalistic?**

Legalism weaponises gifts. Scripture answers not with abolition, but with orientation: “made for man,” “Lord of the Sabbath,” “delight.” Practice Sabbath to receive Christ, not to earn Christ (Mark 2:27; Isa 58:13-14).

- **Which day?**

The moral core is a 1-in-7 holy rhythm from creation. Many Christians keep Sunday in light of the resurrection; others choose another day due to vocation. Paul grants freedom of conscience while calling all to gratitude and honour toward the Lord (Rom 14:5-6).

- **What counts as work?**

Scripture’s centre is ceasing from toil for gain in order to turn toward worship, joy, mercy, and rest. Jesus’ healings show that love is never out of bounds. Ask: “Does this activity help me receive God’s rest and extend it to others?”

We'd love to hear about your journey this month. **Could you take a moment to share your progress?**



5+2 March 2026