

A Word For Today

29 Dailey Devotionals for Ministers

Adapted from Power Through Prayer by E.M. Bounds
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"A Word for Today" was birthed out of my own desire for continual growth regarding personal holiness and prayer. It is my sincere hope and prayer that by God's grace, the power of the WORD, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives that together we will continue to grow spiritually and be productive for the Kingdom of God.

Eugene Peterson's paraphrase says it so well; "For as long as it's still God's Today, keep each other on your toes so sin doesn't slow down your reflexes." Hebrews 3:13 (TMNT)

Day 1

Preachers who are great thinkers, great students must be the greatest of prayers, or else they will be the greatest of backsliders, heartless professionals, rationalistic, less than the least of preachers in God's estimate.

May God grant that we, being prompted by the Holy Spirit, may be found in prayer!

Day 2

Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, the third thing necessary to a minister. Pray, then, my dear brother: pray, pray, pray—Edward Payson

Matthew 26:41(NIV) "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Matthew 26:41(TMNT) Stay alert; be in prayer so you don't wander into temptation without even knowing you're in danger. There is a part of you that is eager, ready for anything in God. But there's another part that's as lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire."

Father God, grant that I may be awakened, prompted by the Holy Spirit, to be alert in all things ever watching always in prayer. Amen

Day 3

There are preachers innumerable who can deliver masterful sermons after their order; but the effects are short-lived and do not enter as a factor at all into the regions of the spirit where the fearful war between God and Satan, heaven and hell, is being waged because they are not made powerfully militant and spiritually victorious by prayer.

1 Corinthians 2:4 (YLT) and my word and my preaching was not in persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Galatians 2:8 (NLT) For the same God who worked through Peter for the benefit of the Jews worked through me for the benefit of the Gentiles.

Heavenly Father, empower us by the Holy Spirit that we may be enabled as your servants to speak your word with authority for the benefit of the hearer and the praise of Your name. Amen

Day 4

. . . in every truly successful ministry prayer is an evident and controlling force—evident and controlling in the life of the preacher, evident and controlling in the deep spirituality of his work. A ministry may be a very thoughtful ministry without prayer; the preacher may secure fame and popularity without prayer; the whole machinery of the preacher's life and work may be run without the oil of prayer or with scarcely enough to grease one cog; but no ministry can be a spiritual one, securing holiness in the preacher and in his people, without prayer being made an evident and controlling force.

James 5:16b (AMP) . . . The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].

James 5:16b (TMNT) . . . The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.

Father God, help me to put on earnest prayer that I may live in the power of your spirit. Let my life be transformed by its dynamic working. Amen

Day 5

No ministry can succeed without much praying, and this praying must be fundamental, ever-abiding, ever increasing. The text, the sermon, should be the result of prayer. The study should be bathed in prayer, all its duties so impregnated with prayer, its whole spirit the spirit of prayer. "I am sorry that I have prayed so little," was the deathbed regret of one of God's chosen ones, a sad and remorseful regret for a preacher. "I want a life of greater, deeper, truer prayer," said the late Archbishop Tait. So may we all say, and this may we all secure.

Colossians 4:12 (NASB) Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

Ephesians 6:18 (NLT) Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.

Heavenly Father, draw me consistently, deeper into this earnest labor of love. Grant that it may be the distinguishing, ever-increasing foundation in my life and ministry. Amen

Day 6



Much time spent with God is the secret of all successful praying. Prayer which is felt as a mighty force is the mediate or immediate product of much time spent with God. Our short prayers owe their point and efficiency to the long ones that have preceded them.

Luke 6:12 (NIV) One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.

Matthew 26:40 - 41b (NLT) Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour?"⁴¹Keep alert and pray . . .

Heavenly Father, clear my mind of all that would distract and rob me of my time with you. Enable me to be alert, actively watching as you draw me into extended times of prayer. Amen

Day 7



I ought to pray before seeing any one. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural.

Mark 1:35 (NIV) Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Psalms 63:2 (NKJV) O God, You *are* my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.

Father God, help me to be intentional in prayer, rising early to meet with You. Holy Spirit please work this discipline into me that I would start each day humbly acknowledging Your lordship in my life. To often is the day spent when finally I yield to prayer. Amen

Day 8



He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, he will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

Matthew 6:33 (NASB) "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Emphasis added)

Matt 6:33 (AMP) But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.

Father God, you know how easily I am drawn to give my first thoughts to other things. Help me yield myself to that which is excellent (time with You in prayer, worship and praise) vs. that which is good (the concerns of the day). May Your kingdom and righteousness be my primary concern, may my full attention be given to You FIRST as I move into each new day. Amen

Day 9

Holiness energizing the soul, the whole man aflame with love, with desire for more faith, more prayer, more zeal, more consecration—this is the secret of power. These we need and must have, and men must be the incarnation of this God-inflamed devotedness. God's advance has been stayed, his cause crippled: his name dishonored for their lack.

2 Corinthians 1:12 (NASB) For our proud confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you.

Romans 12:1 (NIV) Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Father God, continue to teach me the fear of the Lord and enable me to walk in holiness before You. May my thoughts, words and deeds never hinder the advance of Your kingdom or bring reproach to Your name. Grant that I may minister in the power of Your Spirit as faith, prayer and zeal increase in my life. Amen

Day 10

The preacher must be surrendered to God in the holiest devotion. He is not a professional man, his ministry is not a profession; it is a divine institution, a divine devotion. He is devoted to God. His aim, aspirations, ambition are for God and to God, and to such prayer is as essential as food is to life.

Mark 12:30 (NIV) Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

Hebrews 5:4 (NASB) And no one takes the honor to himself, but *receives it* when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege of knowing You and the high calling of service to Your people. I love You my God and my King with all of my heart, with all of my soul, with all of my mind and with all of my strength. Help me to discharge my responsibilities faithfully as I continue to serve You in holy devotion. Amen

Day 11

The preacher, above everything else, must be devoted to God. The preacher's relations to God are the insignia and credentials of his ministry. These must be clear, conclusive, unmistakable.

Ephesians 1:18 (NIV) I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

Philippians 3:7 - 11 (NASB) But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God

on the basis of faith,¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Heavenly Father, open my eyes that I may see You more clearly. Open my ears that I may hear what the Spirit is saying. Open my heart that I may discern what You are doing. Grant that I may know experientially the depths of the power of Your resurrection and the fellowship of Your suffering that I may be conformed more completely into Your Image. Amen

Day 12

Prayer, with its manifold and many-sided forces, helps the mouth to utter the truth in its fullness and freedom.

Matthew 12:34b - 35 (NASB) . . . For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.³⁵ “The good man brings out of *his* good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of *his* evil treasure what is evil.

Ephesians 6:19 - 20 (NIV) Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Father God, let my heart be filled with Your words, thoughts, values, wisdom, purpose and vision as I continue in prayer. When I speak let that which has been sealed in my heart by prayer come forth, a life giving fount. May I be fearless as I represent You and the power of the gospel. Amen

Day 13

We have emphasized sermon-preparation until we have lost sight of the important thing to be prepared—the heart. A prepared heart is much better than a prepared sermon. A prepared heart will make a prepared sermon.

Hebrews 10:22 - 24 (NIV) let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

2 Timothy 2:21 (NLT) If you keep yourself pure, you will be a utensil God can use for his purpose. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.

Oh mighty God and Savior, how I need you! Draw me by Your Spirit, cleanse me by Your word, purify my heart and strengthen me for Your service. Amen

Day 14

Praying gives sense, brings wisdom, broadens and strengthens the mind. The closet is a perfect school-teacher and schoolhouse for the preacher. Thought is not only brightened and clarified in prayer, but thought is born in prayer.

James 1:5 (NLT) If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.

Matthew 7:7 (NIV) “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

1 Kings 3:9 (NASB) “So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”

Heavenly Father, give me wisdom, clarity and strength of mind. Enable me through prayer and by Your Spirit to discern good from evil and to represent You accurately to others. Amen

Day 15

I felt real pleasure last Sunday. I can bear witness that the preacher did at once speak the words of truth and soberness. There was no eloquence—the honest man never dreamed of such a thing—but there was far better: a cordial communication of vitalized truth. I say vitalized because what he declared to others it was impossible not to feel he lived on himself.”

John 13:15 (NLT) have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NIV) Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

Philippians 3:10 (NIV) I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

Lord Jesus, I want to follow Your example, grow in knowledge of You, that I may become more like You. Help me to communicate from this experiential knowledge with passion and grant that the congregation may bear witness to this vitalized truth. Amen

Day 16

Our great need is heart-preparation. Luther held it as an axiom: “He who has prayed well has studied well.” We do not say that men are not to think and use their intellects; but he will use his intellect best who cultivates his heart most.

1 Corinthians 15:10 - 11 (NASB) But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. ¹¹Whether then *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

1 Corinthians 2:4 - 5 (NIV) My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.

Father God, In my desire is to preach the word with results, help me to remember that before I preach I must study and pray the message. Only then will it be effectual and empowered by Your Spirit. Grant that my labor in prayer may exceed my delivery in the pulpit. Amen

Day 17

Above all things, cultivate your own spirit. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear and your heart full of God's Spirit is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin.

1 Peter 4:11 (NIV) If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:19 (NLT) Cling tightly to your faith in Christ, and always keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.

Hebrews 13:18 (NASB) Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

Heavenly Father, Thank you for the privileged call of ministry. Enable me by the Holy Spirit to speak Your words with complete assurance and help me to live my with a clear conscience, conducting myself honorably in all things that Your Name may be praised. Amen

Day 18

What of unction? It is the indefinable in preaching which makes it preaching. It is that which distinguishes and separates preaching from all mere human addresses. It is the divine in preaching. It makes the preaching sharp to those who need sharpness. It distills as the dew to those who need to be refreshed.

Greek 5545 **chrisma**; *an anointing, unction*:—anointing (NAS Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries)

Matthew 7:28 - 29 (NIV) When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

John 3:34 (NLT) For he is sent by God. He speaks God's words, for God's Spirit is upon him without measure or limit.

Heavenly Father, I pray for increased unction as I preach Your word. Let the anointing rest upon your servant and upon Your word that it may go forth in power and accomplish all that is in Your heart in the live of the hearer. Amen

Day 19

In the Christian system unction is the anointing of the Holy Ghost, separating unto God's work and qualifying for it. This unction is the one divine enablement by which the preacher accomplishes the peculiar and saving ends of preaching. Without this unction there are no true spiritual results accomplished; the results and forces in preaching do not rise above the results of unsanctified speech.

Acts 2:36 - 37 (NIV) “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”³⁷When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Heavenly Father, enable me by the power of the Holy Spirit to speak with unction so that Your will may be accomplished in the heart of the hearer. Amen

Day 20

Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. God does nothing but in answer to prayer.—John Wesley

Matthew 7:7 - Matthew 7:8 (NASB) “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”⁸“For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Acts 17:6 - Acts 17:7 (NIV) ⁵But the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason’s house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.⁶But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here,⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.”

Heavenly Father, I ask that the fear of the Lord would increase in my life and that by the working of your Holy Spirit, you would keep me from willful sin. Grant that my desires may be centered on your word in keeping with your will and purpose for my life. Father God, enable me to extend your Kingdom and to shake the very gates of hell. Amen

Day 21

The preacher is to lay himself out in prayer for his people; not that they might be saved, simply, but that they be mightily saved. The apostles laid themselves out in prayer that their saints might be perfect; not that they should have a little relish for the things of God, but that they “might be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Acts 6:2 & Acts 6:4 (NASB) ²So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. . . .”⁴“But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Ephesians 3:14 - 19 (NASB) ¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

Father God, deliver me from waiting on tables! Free me from that which is good so that I may pursue that which is excellent. Burden my heart for the people that I might be more diligent in prayer. Draw me increasingly to Your word. Amen

Day 22

The Church of God makes, or is made by, its leaders. Whether it makes them or is made by them, it will be what its leaders are; spiritual if they are so, secular if they are, conglomerate if its leaders are.

Hosea 4:9(NLT) ‘Like priests, like people’—since the priests are wicked, the people are wicked, too. So now I will punish both priests and people for all their wicked deeds.

1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV) Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

Titus 2:7 - 8 (NASB) in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified,⁸ sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Heavenly Father, guard my soul against the ravages of this world and purify me from my own sins. Enable me by the power of the Holy Spirit to be a worthy example in my speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. Help me to represent You honestly before the world. Amen

Day 23

It is absolutely necessary for the preacher to pray. It is an absolute necessity that the preacher be prayed for. These two propositions are wedded into a union, which ought never to know any divorce: the preacher must pray; the preacher must be prayed for.

Romans 15:30 (TMNT) I have one request, dear friends: Pray for me. Pray strenuously with and for me—to God the Father, through the power of our Master Jesus, through the love of the Spirit.

Acts 12:5 (NASB) So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

Father God, I ask that you would impress upon the hearts and minds of each congregation to earnestly pray for their pastor and his family that you would raise up fervent intercession for those who care for your people. Amen

Day 24

The more the preacher’s eyes are opened to the nature, responsibility, and difficulties in his work, the more will he see, and if he be a true preacher the more will he feel, the necessity of prayer; not only the increasing demand to pray himself, but to call on others to help him by their prayers.

Romans 12:11-12 (TMNT) Don’t burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the master,¹² cheerfully expectant. Don’t quit in hard times; pray all the harder.

2 Corinthians 1:10-11 (NIV) He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

Father God, strengthen me for the work that lies ahead. Impress upon the hearts of many to pray on my behalf that I would be enabled by the Holy Spirit to do all that is in keeping with your will and purpose for my life. Amen

Day 25 †

He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, he will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

Mark 1:35 (NASB) In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left *the house*, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.

Psalms 5:3 (NIV) In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Continue to draw me by your spirit Father, help me to humbly seek you first, to wait in your presence with expectation. Forgive me for the days when I persist in my own strength. Amen

Day 26 †

We need a generation of preachers who seek God and seek him early, who give the freshness and dew of effort to God, and secure in return the freshness and fullness of his power that he may be as the dew to them, full of gladness and strength, through all the heat and labor of the day.

Psalms 88:13 (NASB) But I, O LORD, have cried out to You for help, And in the morning my prayer comes before You.

Psalms 119:147 (TMNT) I was up before sunrise, crying for help, hoping for a word from you.

Father God, early will I seek You, before the rising of the sun I will lift my voice in praise and adoration to You. I will acknowledge my continual need of You. Surely Lord You renew my strength and in Your presence there refreshing and fullness of joy. Amen

Day 27 †

Surely the experience of all good men confirms the proposition that without a due measure of private devotions the soul will grow lean. —William Wilberforce

How true this has been in my own life! When I have been negligent in prayer, reading and study my spiritual strength was diminished, my state of mind weakened and my emotions worn thin. How desperate I am for the Lord, how I need to be continually filled with His Spirit.

Heavenly Father, thank you for drawing me to Yourself. Thank you for the spiritual refreshing that comes from Your word. Thank you for the joy that comes in prayer. Thank you for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and renewed spiritual vigor. Thank you for loving me so much, never content to leave me where I am, always drawing me upward. Oh how I love You my dear and precious Father. How grateful I am for the relationship that we share. Amen

Day 28

Spiritual work is taxing work, and men are loath to do it. Praying, true praying, costs an outlay of serious attention and of time, which flesh and blood do not relish. Few persons are made of such strong fiber that they will make a costly outlay when surface work will pass as well in the market.

Mark 14:38 (NIV) Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.

James 5:17 (NASB) Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

Heavenly Father, I want to be a man like Elijah. Help me Father, cause my spirit to rise above the weakness of my flesh that I may pray longer and more frequently with increased earnest. Elijah disciplined his nature help me to discipline mine. Help me to be one of the few! Amen

Day 29

More time and early hours for prayer would act like magic to revive and invigorate many a decayed spiritual life. More time and early hours for prayer would be manifest in holy living. A holy life would not be so rare or so difficult a thing if our devotions were not so short and hurried.

Romans 12:2 (NLT) Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.

Ephesians 5:25 - 27 (NIV) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Father God, cause Your word to wash over my mind and renew my thinking. Convict me of sin and lead me to repentance and change. Enable me to walk in resurrection life cleansed from the stain of sin. While in prayer invigorate my spiritual life with renewed strength for holy living. Help me Father to spend adequate time with You each day that Your will and purpose for my life may be accomplished. Amen