

in the choices I make. Please teach me more of your truth as I pledge to live today in obedience to your word and your will.

Through Jesus the living Word I pray. Amen.

### **Sunday**

*Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*  
*Galatians 5:16*

I want you to think about an orange rhinoceros flying with blue wings. Now quit, I don't want you to think about it anymore. You know there is no such thing as an orange rhino that flies, much less one that flies on blue wings. Oh course the point is simple: the more we try to not do something, the more we focus on it and ensure we do what we are not supposed to do. That's why the gift of the Holy Spirit is so important. He enables and empowers us to move beyond our sin -- not by focusing on it and refusing it, but by enriching us and "distracting" us with the important things of God.

Abba Father, I thank you so much for your Holy Spirit that lives in me and is now interceding with you for me. Please fill me with your Spirit so that my life more nearly reflects your will and focuses on your concerns. Through Jesus, who poured out your Spirit upon me at my baptism, I pray. Amen.

*Adapted from Heartlight Daily Verse by Phil Ware*

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# **One Minute in the Morning**

## **Monday**

*Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*  
*1 Peter 1:15-16*

"Holy" is one of those words we generally associate with the "stained glass ghetto" -- a word only "church folks" use. That may be true, but it's still a great concept. Every kid knows that you don't eat hot dogs and potato chips on china. Mom's china is reserved for "special company" or "special occasions." Hot dogs are for paper plates and every day, china is for special events. When God is calling us to be holy, he's calling us to be china -- something special just for him, and as Peter emphasizes, just like him.

Holy Lord, God Almighty, I come before you knowing how great the distance is between your holiness and my commonness. I thank you for making me holy through the sacrifice of Jesus and by sending your Holy Spirit to live inside of me. Please receive my life today as a holy offering to you! Through Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith I pray. Amen.

## **Tuesday**

*In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and he answered by setting me free. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*  
*Psalms 118:5-6*

The beginning of the year has been a trying time for people I care about. Maybe it's been that way for you or those you love. My prayer for you, and for them, is that they may know the comfort of God's presence. Whether it's the popular little poem "Footprints" or the familiar "Yea though I walk through the shadow of death, thou art with me," the presence of the Lord is absolutely vital to standing up against our anguish! The Lord does long to be with us, especially at those moments when we feel most alone. He told us that by experiencing it himself at the cross.

I am thankful, O God, that you refused to be God from a safe distance. Because you came and felt what it was like to be abandoned, forsaken, and alone, I know I can trust that I will never

be forsaken by you. Please give me a clearer sense of your presence with me in my life today, I pray through Jesus. Amen.

### **Wednesday**

*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* Galatians 3:26-29

One. Basic, simple, and easy to understand. When we become Christians through faith and baptism into Christ, we are made one with all other Christians around the world. Race, gender, and social status are gone. All that's left is One, the One, Jesus. Our lives are his and thus are connected to each other. Our destination is the same, heaven. Our family is the church. No barriers. No closed doors. We are one.

Abba Father, thank you for adopting me into your family. May we be one earth now, as we will be when we are all together around your throne in heaven. I pray for unity among all those who call upon your name and share your Spirit so the world may know there is a solution to conflict, strife and division. Through Jesus our Saviour, I pray. Amen.

### **Thursday**

*God has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.* 2 Corinthians 5:19-20

The price has been paid. The ransom is provided. God's judgment was averted, not because of anything we did to appease him, but by his own sacrifice of Jesus for our sins. If God has gone to such great lengths to reconcile us to himself and adopt us into his family, how can we refuse? We must not! Father God, we offer you our hearts!

O Gracious God, I know my sin has broken your heart and offended your holiness. Words, therefore, cannot communicate my thankfulness to you. You were hurt by my sin and yet provided a sacrifice to redeem me from it and reconcile me to you. I praise

you for your grace, thank you for your love, and promise to share your mercy. Through Jesus my sacrifice I pray. Amen.

### **Friday**

*If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."*

1 John 4:20-21

Love! The word can mean anything. Many in the Christian community have tried to define it by a dictionary or lexicon, not realizing the key word for love, agape, is defined by action. Before Christians got a hold of agape, it meant the same thing our word today does: just about anything! But if you read 1 John, you see what love is by what God does. God demonstrates his love. He asks us to do the same for our brothers and sisters. Love must be more than talk; it must be genuinely demonstrated in action!

Precious Father, you have so graciously shared your love with me. I must confess, in my heart I intend to love others as you do, but my intentions often get washed away with "busy-ness" or timidity. Father, through your Spirit, prompt me to show my love to others in actions rather than just thought and talk. Through Jesus, your greatest demonstration of love I pray. Amen.

### **Saturday**

*Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* John 8:31-32

There are few things more coveted than freedom. People die for it. People pray for it. People strive for it. True freedom comes from knowing truth. Knowing truth only comes by living in obedience to Jesus. Truth is not something you merely think about or believe. Truth is something you do, you live. Jesus' teaching always ends with the exclamation: Blessed are you who do these things! Only by doing will we ever know the truth that liberates us.

To the only true God be glory, honour, power, and praise. Father, I seek not only your presence in my daily life, but also your pleasure