

Service Times

Sundays
Worship Services
8:00 am & 11:00 am

SPC Church School
9:45 am

Risen Generation Youth Church
11:00 am

Tuesdays
Bible Study
7:00 pm



SAINT PHILIP CHURCH
EXALTING CHRIST and EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Rev. William D. Watley, Ph.D., Senior Pastor
Facebook: @Saintphilipame ~ Instagram: spcatl

2018



"So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed"
John 8:36

SAINT PHILIP AME CHURCH

Rev. William D. Watley, Ph.D.
Senior Pastor

240 CANDLER ROAD, SE.,
ATLANTA, GA 30317
404-371-0749

WWW.SAINTPHILIP.ORG

Before you begin fast...

Helpful hints for a successful fast

- **Pray** – From the start include God in your fast. Pray privately but also try to pray with others.
- **Plan** – Create menus, along with your shopping lists each week. Decide what you will eat and will not during your individual fast. Write some things down in a journal and ask God to help you answer some of your questions. What is the purpose of your fast? When will it begin and end? Have I set up my daily calendar with set times to pray, study, and meditate on God's word? What study and devotional materials will I use to focus on God? How will I eat and also relate to friends and family during meals? Will I pack lunches and set aside certain times or days for meal preparation?

Pineapple Cucumber Lime Salad

Ingredients

1 pineapple, chopped
1 English cucumber, chopped
2 Limes, zested and juiced
1/3 cup cilantro, roughly chopped
Salt and pepper (optional)

Directions:

Combine all ingredients and toss lightly to distribute the lime juice and zest evenly. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Serve immediately or keep chilled until ready to serve.

Oven Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Butternut Squash and Apples

Ingredients

3 Cups Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed, outer, loose leaves removed
2 cups cubed butternut squash
2 Granny Smith apples, very cold and cut into cubes
2 tbsp. extra light olive oil
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp chili power

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400F.

Place the Brussels sprouts, squash, and apples on a large baking sheet.

Drizzle with olive oil.

Sprinkle chili power and cinnamon over the top.

Use your hands to toss everything together making sure to evenly coat the fruit and veggies.

Bake for about 20 to 25 minutes, or until vegetables are tender, turning once half way through.

Serve immediately.

Green Monster Salad

3-4 cups various farmers market lettuce
3-4 Persian Cucumbers, thinly sliced
2 Avocados, cut into wedges
2-3 radishes, thinly sliced
Kosher salt and pepper

Directions:

Arrange the lettuce on a large platter or bowl. Scatter the cucumbers, avocados and radishes on top and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle 1/4 cup of the Basil Vinaigrette on top and toss to combine. Add more vinaigrette if needed and serve immediately.

Basil Vinaigrette

1 shallot, roughly chopped
2 cups tightly packed fresh basil leaves, stems removed (about 4 ounces)
1 clove garlic
1/2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
1/2 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Combine all the ingredients for the basil vinaigrette in a high powered blender and blend for 60 seconds until very smooth. Taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed. Serve immediately. Or you can refrigerate the vinaigrette for up to 3 days.

2018 Fasting Contract

My Reason for Fasting:

Beginning Date of Fast:

Ending Date of Fast:

I commit myself to God's plan and this fast for my life.

Signed _____

Date _____

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 2, 2018 - Day 1

“Finance”

Luke 18:18-30 (NRSV)

“Luke 18: 18-30 tells about a question that a young man of position and possessions asked of the Lord Jesus Christ. He asked him about the path to eternal life. Specifically, he asked him what did he need to do to inherit eternal life. The Lord recited the Ten Commandments and told him to obey them. The young man replied that he had lived in obedience to them all of his life. When the Lord saw and felt the sincerity of this young seeker’s request, the Lord told him to sell all of his possessions, distribute the proceeds to the poor and then come and follow him as his true first love.”

“The Last Stronghold”

When the young man heard the Lord’s words, according to the scriptures, he became sad because he was very rich. He turned around and walked away and was never heard from in the scriptures and in the history of the Christian faith, again.

The young man was willing to be obedient to all of the laws of the Ten Commandments, and yet he was not willing to surrender his money, his financial resources. One really has to have a love for God. One really has to have a commitment to a righteous and holy life. To live in obedience to all of the Ten Commandments, one really has to be faithful. Yet, when he was asked to give up his financial resources as a condition of discipleship, he rejected the Lord’s invitation to follow him.

Finances were the last stronghold in the life of this young man. He was prepared to give up and sacrifice everything else, except finances or money. He had managed his finances well enough to have plenty of them. Sometimes the more we have, the greater the struggle to give what the word of God and the Lord of the word are asking. Like the rich young ruler, money is the last great stronghold in the life of many believers. The love of money, the love of things money can buy, the management of money and the giving of money---money matters in all of its dimensions, remain the last great stronghold in the lives, the hearts, and the discipleship, of many of the Lord’s followers and members of the church.

As we begin this year’s 21 Day Daniel Fast, my hope and prayer is that finance as a stronghold will become part of our past, rather than a characteristic of our present and a weight upon our future fulfillment.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I pray for victory over any dimension of finance that stands as an impediment and seeks to draw me away from a sacred nearness to you. In your name, Amen.

Hearty White Bean Vegetable Soup

1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
2 medium carrots, diced
2 celery ribs, diced
1 large leek, sliced into ½” rings, washed well to remove any sand and drained in a colander
2 cloves garlic, chopped
3 Tablespoons tomato paste
1½ cups cooked white beans, rinsed (one 15 ounce can or homemade from dry beans)
1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes
6-8 cups vegetable or water
2 sprigs fresh thyme
2 cups diced butternut squash
4-5 kale leaves, ribs removed, roughly chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Directions:

Heat oil in a large soup pot. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until the onions starts to soften. Add the carrots, celery, and leeks. Continue cooking, stirring often, for about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds, being careful not to let it burn. Next add the tomato paste and stir well. Let cook for 30 seconds then add beans, diced tomatoes, broth, thyme, and butternut squash. Add salt and fresh ground black pepper, to taste. (It might not need much salt if the broth is salted.) Bring to a simmer and let cook for about 15-20 minutes, or until the squash is tender. Add the chopped kale and let cook for another 5-10 minutes. Taste and add more salt and pepper, if needed. Ladle into bowls and serve hot with warm rolls or bread on the side.

Cabbage Dish

1/2 cup olive oil
4 carrots, thinly sliced
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
1/2 head cabbage, shredded
5 potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes

Directions:

Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Cook the carrots and onion in the hot oil about 5 minutes. Stir in the salt, pepper, cumin, turmeric, and cabbage and cook another 15 to 20 minutes. Add the potatoes; cover. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until potatoes are soft, 20 to 30 minutes.

Spinach and Mushroom Quinoa

1 pound mushrooms (white or cremini), sliced thinly
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
5 green onions, chopped
5 to 10 ounces fresh spinach (to taste)
2 cups cooked quinoa
1 tablespoon olive oil (optional)
Salt

Cucumber and Avocado Salad

1 Cucumber (large, sliced in quarters)
2 Avocado (chopped)
3/4 Cup Cilantro (Chopped)
3 Tablespoons Lemon Juice
2 Tablespoons Lime Juice
1/2 Teaspoon Sea Salt

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 3, 2018 - Day 2
“Family”
2 Timothy 1:5 (NIV)

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.”
2 Timothy 1:5 (NIV)

“Fasting for the Spiritual Physical Family”

It is Day 2 of the 21 Day Daniel Fast and You Got This! Energy is high and the finish line is clear, no need to complain, hesitate, or second guess your commitment to the fast. Now command your flesh into submission and remember the reason for the fast, to honor God and uplift the family of believers.

In Paul’s letter to Timothy, he illustrates the importance of the natural family by highlighting the spiritual influence of Timothy’s mother and grandmother. Jesus once said, “who is my mother and who are my brothers..., who ever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” (Matthew 12:48-50) This shows that family through Christ goes beyond the physical birth and includes all those who are born again by the Blood of the Lamb.

Welcome to your extended family!

Prayer: Father God, Thank you for the journey of the 2018 21 Day Daniel Fast. Thank you for the power of your blood that breaks every yoke which was shed on Calvary for me. Lord, please help me to stay focused and surrounded by my family in Christ. I believe that this fast, during this hour, will move mountains and give me unmeasurable clarity. I surrender my will unto you and I thank you for allowing me to be a part of your eternal family. This I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen!

21 Day Daniel Fast
VISION 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 4, 2018 - Day 3
“Familiar”
Exodus 16:1-5 (MSG)

“On the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left Egypt, the whole company of Israel moved on from Elim to the Wilderness of Sin which is between Eliam and Sinai. The whole company of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron there in the wilderness.” Exodus 16:1-2 (MSG)

Secure, comfortable, routine...Familiar. Fixed, Boxed In, Stuck...Familiar. Hindrance, stronghold, bondage...Familiar.

“Break Out the Box of Familiar”

When I gave birth to my first child, my sister-friend gave me some mommy advice. She told me while it is good to have some sort of routine for my infant, I should mix it up a bit and do some things differently sometimes. Otherwise, my infant will become so dependent on the routine, that if it must change in any way for life events, he may have a fit and be out of sorts. This was a little different advice from what I read on Baby Center, which told me the importance of sticking to a routine. This was real life experienced (with 3 kids) mommy advice and it works!

Just like my infant son, if we don't change things up in our lives and be intentional about trying new things, new experiences, new adventures; then when life's events shift our current reality, we become out of sorts and throw a fit of our own. While the familiar can be good and the routine helpful to the security we seek in our humanness, if not shifted from time to time, it can be a hindrance to our growth as a person mentally and spiritually. It is essential that we be intentional about breaking out the box of comfort, so we can experience the totality of what God has in store for us here on earth. This process begins in our thinking.

Although the Children of Israel were delivered from Egypt by an all-powerful God, they did not trust God enough to get them through the wilderness and into the promised land. Their bodies were free, but their minds were enslaved to the familiar. In Egypt, they knew where the next meal was coming from; they knew where to get a drink of water, and they knew they would have a place to stay. You might say, they didn't really have to depend on God for anything. Hmm. Now they must depend on God for everything and are having a fit. Their minds were enslaved to the familiar. Many of us get into our routines and get so comfortable in the familiar we become less dependent on God. So, when God tells us to leave Egypt (try something new, look at things differently, step out on faith), we want to remain or go back to Egypt where it's comfortable.

During this Daniel Fast, I encourage you to step away from the familiar and step out on faith to experience all God has in store for you. Trust that when you totally depend on God, God will provide, lead, and guide you. Change up the routine, step out the box, get comfortable with being uncomfortable, and let God transform your mind and life.

Prayer: Father Yahweh. Help me to trust you and step away from the familiar. I want all that you have for me and don't want to be in bondage to what is comfortable. It can be scary sometimes, but I ask you to calm my fears, renew my mind, and give me boldness to follow your instructions. I know that you are with me and will never leave me alone, even in the uncertainties that may come my way. I choose to trust you, because I know that you love me as your child. Thank you Lord for directing my footsteps out of my familiar territory into your territory. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Lunch/Dinner

Avocado Quesadillas

1/2 avocado, more if you prefer
1 small roma tomato, diced
1 green onion, sliced

Seasonings of choice (I love smoked paprika, cumin, garlic powder, etc.)
Salsa (optional)
1 large tortilla

Directions:

Smash avocado and spread out on one half of the tortilla. Sprinkle with any seasonings. Add tomato, green onions, and salsa. (Or save the salsa for dipping!)
Fold over the top half of the tortilla, and place on a skillet over medium heat.
Heat for a few minutes on each side until warmed through.

*Note: You can put salsa in the quesadilla, but it does make it a little messier. Oftentimes I leave it out and just dip it instead.

Garden Fresh Tomato, Cucumber & Avocado Salad

2 lbs. Fresh Tomatoes, chopped
2 English Cucumbers, chopped bite-size
1/2 medium Red Onion, sliced thin
3 Avocados, diced
2 Tbsp. extra virgin Olive oil or Avocado oil
Juice of 2 fresh Lemons
1/4 cup fresh Dill, chopped
1.5 tsp Sea Salt
Fresh ground Black Pepper to taste

Directions:

Place tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, avocado, and fresh dill into a large salad bowl.
Drizzle with oil and add lemon juice.
Toss very gently to combine.
Just before serving, sprinkle evenly with sea salt and pepper.

Recipes

Breakfast

Brown Rice and Apple Breakfast

1 cup cooked brown rice
fresh apple (cut up into bite size pieces – to taste)
raisins (to taste)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon 100% pure edible coconut oil

Directions:

Mix all the ingredients together in a microwave-safe bowl (except the oil), heat for 2 minutes. Add oil, stir and Eat! It is delicious!

*You could probably add almond or soy milk to this.

Blueberry Pancakes

1 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup almond or soy milk
1/4 cup apple sauce
grape seed or olive oil
pinch of salt
1/4 cup frozen blueberries

Directions:

Mix flour, milk, apple sauce, pinch of salt, and 1 tbs. of oil. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of blueberries and stir. Heat a tsp of oil on a non-stick pan or griddle on medium heat. Drop in about a 1/4 cup of the mixture and spread it evenly on the pan with the back of a ladle, forming a circle. Allow the top of the pancakes to get bubbly and almost dry before you flip them

21 Day Daniel Fast
VISION 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 5, 2018 - Day 4
“Fear”
Deuteronomy 3:21-22 (NRSV)

“And I charged Joshua as well at that time, saying: “Your own eyes have seen everything that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so, the LORD will do to all the kingdoms into which you are about to cross. Do not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.” Deuteronomy 3:21-22 (NRSV)

“You Are A Winner”

Fear will cause you to panic, live with anxiety and prevent you from moving forward. Don't allow fear to stand between you and your destiny. God had promised to give the Israelites victory over their enemies as well as the promised land. However, they still had wars to fight. They had to be reminded of how God had given them victories in the past. Moses reminded them not to fear but to be courageous.

The enemy cannot defeat you, because you are a winner. The enemy wants you to live in fear, and desires to hold you back, but you are a winner. God has chosen you because He loves you. He loves you and has a better future for you. If you live in fear, your blessings will elude you. You are a winner because the Lord is with you. If fear creeps in, remember how God handled your last enemy, problem, trial or uncertainty.

There will always be new challenges to confront, but a winner will embrace each challenge believing in himself or herself and in God. There will always be obstacles, but winners see them as opportunities. There will always be attacks from the enemy, but winners stay focused. You are a winner because God will fight for you. Face your fear with courage because you are a winner.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the victories of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Lord, you are greater than my fears, enemies, problems, trials, and uncertainties. Lord help me face my fears with courage and faith, in Jesus' Name I pray.

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 6, 2018 - Day 5
“Finance”
Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (NRSV)

“Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.”
Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (NRSV)

“A Legacy to Remember”

Many of us grew up in the age of Motown delighting in the soulful sounds and crafty choreography of groups like the Supremes and Temptations. These Motown legends built prosperous musical careers telling the stories of Black culture, including the struggles of social injustice, romance and finance. One of The Temptations’ greatest hits, *Papa was a Rolling Stone*, exclaimed the story of an absent father who used any form of trickery to get what he needed and “when he died, all he left us was alone.” This Papa rolled through life without respect for the God he tried to exploit, regard for the family he abandoned and realization of a legacy he left incomplete. Similarly, the children of Israel rolled through the wilderness not fully embracing the covenant or legacy of purpose, power and provision at their disposal as a chosen people. God had chosen them in yester years and, despite the wilderness and wastelands on their journey, God’s heart towards them was to mature a people who were humble, faithful AND prosperous.

Our chosen pericope serves as a multi-tiered reinforcement for today’s Christians. We are first reminded that being in covenant with God and following God’s commandments comes with a promise that we will live, increase and occupy the land God has for us. Secondly, we are admonished to recognize that same promise may be accompanied by its own unique set of problems we must learn to navigate on the journey. And, finally, we are encouraged to remember to give honor to God who gives us power to live victoriously with a wealth of health, love, peace, joy and certainly, financial prosperity.

As we enter into these early days of 2018, let us contemplate the legacies we desire to leave behind for our families. As a third generation preacher/teacher, I am the recipient of a phenomenal legacy of faith passed down by my maternal grandmother. As the head of a blended family, my father left a legacy of unconditional love which proclaimed, “if you feed them long enough, they begin to look like you”! Unlike Papa, the Rolling Stone, they didn’t leave us alone, but they did leave us with little, materially. We would be remiss as Christians to ignore the financial necessities of our world and the role wealth and finances play in furthering the Gospel AND funding the homes, cars, food, tuition, social movements, philanthropic ventures, etc., of our lives. Whether it’s dollars, bitcoins, real estate, stocks, clicks, or any other “currency” of our world, we must trust God is *actively* giving us the financial prowess we need to eradicate debt, build wealth and create families and communities with strong legacies of prosperity. Akin to the manna rejected in the wilderness, our challenge is to look at the *new* ways God may be seeking to sustain and propel us and move boldly into our financial prosperity, to the glory of God!!

Prayer: Great and Holy God, we honor you for the legacy of faith, hope and love in our lives. We acknowledge our heads, hearts and hands are useless without the power you give. On today, we seek your financial best for our lives and look forward to the download of visions and plans you will provide for our financial legacies of debt-free living, generational wealth and fiscally healthy churches, businesses and communities. Amen

Whole Foods Market

Ponce de Leon
650 Ponce de Leon Ave NE
Atlanta Georgia 30308
404.853.1681

Sunday - Saturday: 8AM - 10PM
***Also has a Cold/Hot Bar**

♦ **Whole Foods-** There are many locations in Atlanta. Please go to www.wholefoodmarket.com for more information.

RESTAURANTS

Soul Vegetarian

879 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd SW
Atlanta, GA 30310
Neighborhood: West End
(404) 752-5194
www.vegetariantimes.com

Sunday: 9:00AM- 1:30PM, 5PM - 10PM
Monday - Saturday: 11AM - 10PM

Soul Vegetarian 2

652 N Highland Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30306
Neighborhood: Ponce-Highland
(404) 875-4641
www.soulvegetarian2.com

Closed Monday
Tuesday-Thursday: 11AM-9PM
Friday-Saturday: 11AM-10PM
Sunday: 10AM-8PM

Moorish (juices, smoothies, salads) Medicine

2440 A Wesley Chapel Road
Decatur, GA 30035
678-615-2547

Monday - Saturday: 10AM - 8PM
Sunday: 12PM - 6PM

Specialty Grocery Stores

Arden's Garden

2005 Hosea Williams Drive
Atlanta, GA 30317
404-377-9393

Monday-Friday: 8AM - 7PM, Saturday: 9AM - 7PM

Sunday: 11AM - 6PM

www.ardensgarden.com

- ◆ Arden's Garden is Atlanta's premier fresh juice manufacturer. Please checkout their website for more information.

Dulce Vegan Bakery

1994 Hosea L. Williams Dr. NE
Atlanta, GA 30317
404-624-7417

www.dulcevegan.com

Closed Monday

Tuesday – Friday: 7:30AM – 6PM

Saturday: 8AM – 6PM

Sunday: 8AM– 2PM

- ◆ Ask about the Daniel Fast dessert.

Trader Joe's Atlanta

931 Monroe Dr.
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-815-9210

www.traderjoes.com

Monday -Saturday: 8AM - 10PM

Sunday: 12:30PM - 10PM

- ◆ Trader Joe's- There are many locations in Atlanta. Please go to their website for more information.

Sevananda Natural Food Market

467 Moreland Avenue NE
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-681-2831

www.sevananda.coop

Sunday—Saturday: 8AM-10PM

- ◆ Also has a Cold/Hot Bar

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 7, 2018 - Day 6
“Family”
John 8:36 (NRSV)

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:36 (NRSV)

“Dropping the Weight: Freedom from Family Baggage”

As the eldest child of a preacher, I was born into a world that I had no choice in. Whether I like it or not, even though I am grown with children of my own, I am a preacher's kid (PK). At times this legacy has been helpful; like when all of your friends have to wait to be served dinner but the preacher's family gets to go first or when starting seminary and you realize that you have learned more than you thought just by observing your parents. However, there are other times when being a PK is a monumental pain in the neck. Like when your friends assume you can't go out with them because you're a PK, so they leave you out of plans, or when you are held to a higher standard of behavior because of your parent's profession. This dynamic however, isn't just limited to PK's. All of us carry some type of family baggage, be it a generational curse, odd habits/behaviors or even physical illness.

Sometimes our family baggage is something obvious that everyone can see and sometimes it's a “secret shame” that only family members or close family friends know. Whatever the issue is, it can seem difficult at best or impossible at worst for us to be free of the family baggage that weighs us down. However, today's scripture reassures us that through Jesus Christ, we have the ability to be free from anything and everything that weighs us down. As believers we have heard this timeless truth, but often are unable to live this truth. Some choose to believe that they are oppressed by their baggage as their plight in life, but I believe that God wants us to be free of everything.

In order to be free we have to relinquish everything to the Son, Jesus. That means relinquishing family issues, family drama, family members and family secrets. Sometimes that means repenting for our part in passing on family baggage. Sometimes that means praying for instead of talking about those in our families who are struggling. Sometimes that means asking God to reveal truth and to send healing into broken, heavy places and sometimes it means asking God to take away our family baggage in Jesus' name. God calls us to complete freedom, even from family baggage.

Prayer: Dear Lord, You know the family baggage that we carry. We confess that we have not always done our part in alleviating it and we repent of our words, deeds and actions that have added to the weight. We ask that you forgive us, and give us a new revelation of how we should relate to one another. Free us from stubbornness, old wounds, unrepentant anger and meanness. We bind the enemy of dissension in the name of Jesus and ask you to thwart any attack against our families in this new year. Thank you in advance for healing, and restoring our relationships. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 8, 2018 - Day 7
“Familiar”
Matthew 13:52 (AMP)

“And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.” Matthew 13:52 (AMP)

“How to Overcome Purpose Paralysis”

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we must stretch beyond the comfortable, beyond that which is familiar to engage in God’s vision for our lives and the vision for His Church. We must plunge into the realm of uncertainty. We must recognize that uncertainty is not an enemy, but it is a natural part of engaging in the important and valuable work of kingdom building on earth.

This pursuit of kingdom living is constantly disrupted and often leaves us full of questions. We must push through our fears which include the fear of embarrassment, the fear of failure and the fear of getting it wrong. The fear of getting it wrong results in purpose paralysis. That is to say that the divine work is interrupted, sometimes halted, by our grasping too tightly onto that which is familiar. We often cling to the familiar because we are afraid of making mistakes. Clinging to the familiar often creates battlements of lust, pleasure, greed and the pinnacle of pride. God’s plan is to demolish such strongholds, not to rid us of all that is familiar, only that which disrupts the vision that he has for our lives and His Church.

Our Scripture reminds us that each disciple possesses treasures of great value. Some are found in the old and familiar. Others are discovered in the fresh and new. To unleash our full purpose, we must be willing to work in areas involving the old and familiar as well as that which is fresh and new. We’ve got to spend some time mapping, making and meshing to rid ourselves of the fear of getting it wrong. Mapping is more than a to-do-list. It involves identifying values and motives. Making is beyond doing the work at hand. It is also about creating guiding principles that help us to maintain focus on God’s vision. Meshing determines our long term success in kingdom living. It requires engaging in activities that stretch us and grow us.

Prayer: Gracious God, help us to find joy in the unfamiliar. We cast out all fear and cling to the hope that is found in Your precepts. May we recognize that Your precepts found in both the Old and New Testaments, contain truths to be treasured for a lifetime. Prepare us for and propel us to the next level of kingdom living even if it begins in the valley of uncertainty. It is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray with much love, thanksgiving, and expectation. Amen.

List of Farmer’s Markets, Restaurants and Stores

Farmer’s Market (opened year round)

Decatur Farmer’s Market

Saturday Hours:
9 AM – 1 PM
Open Year-Round

- ◆ **The Saturday location is across the street from the DeKalb Courthouse on N. McDonough in downtown Decatur.**

Wednesday

4 PM – 7 PM
(Nov. – Feb.)

- ◆ **At the corner of Commerce Dr. and Church St. in the Bank of America parking lot for the drive-through ATM.**

DeKalb Farmers Market

3000 E. Ponce De Leon Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030

Open Daily 9AM - 9PM
Business Services: 8AM - 5PM

- ◆ **Also has a Cold/Hot Bar**

Sprouts

Atlanta—Morningside

1845 Piedmont Drive

Atlanta, GA 30324

404-751-0605

Open daily 7:00am—10:00pm

www.sprouts.com

- ◆ **There are many locations in Atlanta. Please go to their website for more information.**

Earthfare

1578 Avenue Place, Suite 200

Atlanta, GA 30329

404-633-2025

Open: Monday—Sunday 8am—9pm

www.earthfare.com

The Daniel Fast Safe Places

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 9, 2018 - Day 8
“Fear”
Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.”
Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)*

“Fear of God”

Fear- what is fear? Where did fear originate? Fear – F.E.A.R. - forcefully engaging and restraining. Fear originated in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the Forbidden tree. That started the ball rolling into fear. Their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked. This declares that fear is the result of disobeying God. They didn't know what God would do and that's the fear of the unknown. Sometimes the unknown fear is very difficult. That fear is nothing more than a mental obstacle that affects an individual's ability to perform to the fullest in various walks of life. Every time an individual encounters an unknown situation the fear manifests itself and prevents an individual from making the right decisions in life.

There's another fear that most people won't admit. We fear what and who we see in the mirror every day. Paul said, “I do not do the good I want to do but the evil I do not want to do this I keep on doing.” We are human. We fear what we don't want to do. If a loved one cheats on us, if someone steals from us, if someone breaks into our home, if they discriminate against us on the job, for every action there is a reaction. We must be very careful as Christians that we don't react but respond. When we respond, we give God time to speak to us and give us guidance to do the right thing.

I submit to you there's only one fear that we should have and that's the **FEAR OF GOD**. The distinction between the **FEAR OF GOD** and fear is the basic meaning of fearing the Lord that we read about in Deuteronomy. We were told that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Our focus is on a sense of awe and respect for the majesty of God that's often lacking with contemporary Christianity. We become complacent. We fear man, we fear the unknown, and we fear the possibilities of what may happen. The only fear we should walk in is the **FEAR OF GOD**. When we fear man there's no faith. When we fear God, we walk under a covering of faith and protection and fear has no room to enter.

Prayer: Gracious and Merciful God, when fear comes upon us we shut down and we are forced into a state of mind that produces a reaction, we pray that fear helps us to seek you. You said, “Your strength is made perfect in our weakness.” Lord, help us to faithfully engage and walk in the redemption of your Love. Lord, we know that God is too wise to make a mistake and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to your purpose. Lord, give us a level of faith that will drive away fear. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 10, 2018 - Day 9
“Finance”
Proverbs 15:22 (MSG)

“Refuse good advice and watch your plans fail; take good counsel and watch them succeed.” Proverbs 15:22 (MSG)

“Seeking Godly Counsel in Financial Manners”

Sitting at the table, the agent made a pitch for the couple to purchase a resort timeshare. “We can purchase your present timeshare and apply the amount to this exciting new property. You have a magnificent view of the bay and all modern conveniences in the unit. We only have a few left. No more after this season. You have to decide now!” He made the pitch, outlining all the advantages. The agent continued, “You go on vacation anyway; this is the perfect opportunity. Sign on the dotted line!”

The couple listened carefully, asked questions, and then said, “We don’t make rash decisions regarding major purchases. We have to think about it, pray about it, and get some wise counsel regarding the matter.” The agent, unfazed, persisted saying this was the best deal that anyone could have, and he continued the hard press for the couple to sign. In the end, the couple thanked the agent and left without signing the contract.

What is the point? Financial matters require thought, prayer and godly advice. We are often barraged with offers to buy items. *This is the best deal you will find. You cannot buy this car at any lower price, anywhere. You cannot find a better service in the industry, and the deal we are making now will never be offered again.* The truth of the matter, however, is that these are ploys to get us to make important financial decisions in a rash and misguided manner. The people of God have an obligation to think about financial matters seriously, to pray about them, and to seek godly advice. It should raise a red flag if anyone will not acknowledge the need to pray about and seek godly counsel in financial matters. When we pray about and seek godly counsel about these matters, we move closer to financial success.

Prayer: Gracious and wonderful God, Help us to destroy every stronghold and demolish every yoke concerning our finances. Help us to make prayerful and wise decisions when confronted with fast-talking and predatory adversaries as we seek godly wisdom and direction in financial matters. Amen.

How to Conclude Your Daniel Fast

Just as you prepared to start your Daniel Fast, you will want to plan for the conclusion of your fast.

Changing the way you eat

If you have been on an extended fast of 10 or more days, your physical body has enjoyed healthy and easily digestible foods. Most people realize increased energy and better health during their fast. Reintroduce caffeine, sugar, dairy products, deep fried foods and meat slowly to keep your body from rebelling and bring you discomfort. Small portions are better and adding no more than one type of food each day will give your body a chance to get used to the change.

Keep the gems of the fast

Most likely, you have gained many powerful lessons about your health and spiritual life. Carry these positive changes into your everyday life. If you have created a habit of meeting with the Lord each morning, continue that practice. If you have gained understanding about healthy eating habits or broken addictions to specific foods, continue with those good practices.

Let the lessons you learned during your Daniel Fast continue to bring more health to your body, soul and spirit all year long.

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 22, 2018 - Day 21

“Finance”

Matthew 6:31-33 (NRSV)

“Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:31-33 (NRSV)

“God Will Supply”

Praise the Lord! You made it! The last day of the Daniel Fast is upon us and we give thanks to our God for sustaining us through this journey. Just as He helped us pass on some of our favorite foods, we must trust Him when we are financially burdened. We cannot be so focused on what we need at the current time and not remember all that we have already been given. In these 21 days alone when we felt like giving up, it was God who reminded us that all we are getting less of now will be given to us in abundance when we need it the most.

With every vicissitude of life, we often feel that our expenses just simply outweigh our income. It is not necessarily that we have mismanaged our funds but instead we have let our funds manage our lives. We must remain cognizant of the fact that if we keep our mind stayed on Jesus, no matter what may come our way, He will always supply our every need.

Prayer: Oh Lord, Our Lord. How excellent is your name in all the Earth! We come thanking you not just for this day but for all of the days of our lives. You have sustained us and given us everything we have ever needed. Help us to keep our mind focused on you in all that we do. For if we can do this one thing then we know that you will provide us with many things above anything that we can ask, think or dream. We are trusting you to destroy any financial strongholds that may come our way this year. In Jesus’ Name, Amen!

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 11, 2018 - Day 10

“Family”

2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV)

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV)

“How Can Strongholds Be Overcome?”

How can strongholds be overcome? Before strongholds can be overcome, we should venture to understand exactly what they are. The word *stronghold* appears only once in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 10:4), and the Greek word translated “stronghold” means “a fortification such as a castle.”

In this passage, the Apostle Paul is instructing the church at Corinth on how to fight against and “destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God” (2 Corinthians 10:5). They do this, not by using the weapons of the world, but by “divine power.” Our weapons are not physical, for our warfare is spiritual in nature. Rather than guns and tanks, our weapons are those of the “full armor of God” and consists of “the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:14-17).

One habit every believer needs to develop is focusing on “getting dressed” spiritually every day. Take time to have a morning devotion before you start your day. Consider involving your spouse and your children as well! No stronghold can withstand a praying Christian wearing the full armor of God, battling with the Word of God, and empowered by His Spirit. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:36)

Prayer: Almighty God, you are a stronghold in the day of trouble. Be a wall of fire around us and bind the strongman in our lives. Clothe us with Your power to resist evil and give us victory over every besetting sin. In the name of Jesus and the power of His resurrection we pray. Amen

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 12, 2018 - Day 11
“Familiar!”
Genesis 12:1-4 (NIV)

“The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.” Genesis 12:1 (NIV)

“Faith to Move Beyond the Familiar!”

It was a real stretch of faith for Abram to leave his country, his relatives, and his father’s house. God addressed everything that had become familiar to Abram and it was difficult for him to leave that which he had become accustomed. He, much like us, had a difficult time letting go of some familiar things and the comfort that they seem to bring. In this text, Abram learned some faith lessons that were necessary for leaving the familiar.

Abram first learned that God will test you to see if He has your whole heart. God was teaching Abram that in order to move into a new dimension of faith and trust in Him, strongholds had to be destroyed for Abram to move from the familiar to the unfamiliar. This meant he had to be willing to let go of idols, fear, familiar faces, and trusting others rather than God. Secondly, Abram learned that when he moved out in obedience to God’s Word, God always keeps His promises. Abram did not stagger at the promises of God and realized that real blessings and real growth are beyond the familiar and comfortable. Lastly, Abram learned that he had to exit in order to enter in. He understood that the familiar is where you are and the unfamiliar is where God promises and wants to take you. He had to have faith to move beyond the familiar, and the text says, “Abram went as the Lord had told him.”

Like Abram, we must learn that remaining in the familiar stunts our growth. It keeps us from believing that God has something new and amazing waiting for us. The familiar limits our obedience by keeping us in a stagnated place, and the familiar keeps us from exiting the familiar and moving into the unfamiliar – the place that God has planned for us to prosper and have a hope and a future.

Prayer: Lord, help me to journey beyond the familiar and into the unknown. Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with You. Christ, I trust You to be stronger than each storm within me. I will trust in the darkness and know that my times, even now, are in Your hand. Tune my spirit to the music of heaven, and make my obedience count for You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 21, 2018 - Day 20
“Fear”
Psalms 23:4 (NRSV)

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4 (NRSV)

“Next Stop—The Valley”

I was looking up plane tickets to travel home for the holidays. Because of my fear of flying, my vertigo, and not wanting to be in new spaces by myself, I prefer direct flights. I try to avoid non-direct flights at all costs. Unfortunately for me, none of the flights were direct and would cause a layover in some city that was foreign to me. My anxiety flared as I thought about the hours I would be alone and how I would have to go up and down a few times, activating my vertigo. The thought of the layover terrified me, but if I wanted to go home, I had no other choice but to go through it.

And, this is where David was in the 23rd Psalm. David was on a journey that required him to travel through this unknown territory filled with images of death and shadows of darkness. There was no way around it for he was in too deep. He couldn’t go over it, and he couldn’t go around it. His only option was to go *through* it. That meant the valley was *not* his final destination! It was just a stop on his way to the other side. He was simply moving in one side and out the other, continuing toward the other side.

I want to encourage someone today that you may be IN a valley right now afraid of all the images of death and darkness. But FEAR NOT! Where you are is just a part of your longer journey. It's the passageway to your endpoint, the place where you catch your connector. Don't let fear keep you from where God is trying to take you. You may be in the valley now, BUT IT IS NOT YOUR FINAL DESTINATION!

Prayer: God, I thank you that where I am is not where I will always be. I ask that you continue to be my comforter and my protector as I travel the unknown. Allow your presence to calm my fears as I travel through knowing that this is just a layover in your larger plan. In Jesus’ name. AMEN.

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 20, 2018 - Day 19

“Familiar”

Matthew 6:25 (NKJV)

*“Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”
Matthew 6:25 (NKJV)*

“Do Not Worry!!!!”

Have you ever received confirmation? Sometimes confirmation comes in forms that are unfamiliar to us. When things don't come when we want it, we become worried. During my last Daniel fast, I worried about the nourishment I would physically receive. Not realizing, I was receiving the physical and spiritual nourishment through studying and praying. Praying brings about total satisfaction! Looking to the hills from which our help comes from brings satisfaction!

Therefore, do not worry about the unknown. God promised provision, therefore, trust that God will provide. Remember as we get closer to God, the enemy tries to get closer to us. The enemy tries to get closer to our weaknesses. Do not worry. Simply pray and be satisfied with the provisions God promised.

If the Lord knows every bird of the air and their needs are met each passing day, believe the Lord knows you also. Know that your needs will be met through the provision of the Lord.

Prayer: Lord God, thank you for being a provider. Continue to be the provider that you are in each of our lives. You are the familiar in the time of uncertainty and we praise your name for never leaving us. Lord, we pass all of our worries and cares over to you, lead us and guide us along the way. Amen

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 13, 2018 - Day 12

“Fear”

Matthew 14:22-33 (NRSV)

“But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Matthew 14:30 (NRSV)

“Step Out of the Boat and Don't Look Back”

Peter did what so many of us have been known to do. Peter tested God. Peter wanted a sign from God before he embarked on a mission/task that seemed impossible. Jesus responded to Peter's request and gave him the authority to do what seemed impossible...walk on the water. Like many of us, Peter took the first steps towards living a life of achieving limitless impossibilities. And then something happened.

Peter began to notice what was around him. He noticed the strong winds. Peter took his focus off the One who called him out of the boat and placed it instead on his limitations and his fear of his surroundings. The winds that had battered him in the past were making an appearance in his present. His mind wasn't on the One who stopped the wind while he was in the boat. No, his mind was on his own weaknesses. How often do we make the first step towards God's calling for our lives, only to allow the disappointments and anxieties of our past to dictate both our present and future?

If Peter had been focused, he would have remembered it was Jesus who calmed the sea for the boat. It was Jesus who called him out of the boat. It was Jesus who gave him the authority to walk on the water. And it would be Jesus who would be with him every step of the way in his limitless future. When we step out of the boat trusting Jesus, keep stepping and keep trusting, otherwise we may find ourselves like Peter...sinking.

Prayer: Lord, as I step toward the limitless future you have for me, I pray for the courage to trust you. I pray for the strength to step into the vision. Lastly, I pray for the humility to praise you as the vision comes to fruition. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen!”

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 14, 2018 - Day 13
“Finance”
Malachi 3:8-11 (NIV)

*“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.” But you ask, “How are we robbing you?”
“In tithes and offerings.” Malachi 3:8 (NIV)*

“Lay an Ax to the Root!”

Every time we turn on the news or read the news lately, we hear about a robbery that has taken place in a near vicinity. However, there is an unpublished robbery that take place every Sunday morning in God’s churches when the offering plates and baskets are passed. It happens when people simply don’t give the Lord’s tithe.

This is what happened in Malachi’s day. The people were robbing God. Their worship had become ritual and not relational. They were not keeping the commandment of giving; the priests had become unfaithful (2:1-9); the people wearied the Lord with their words and professed a counterfeit faith (2:17); they were unkind to widows and the fatherless and cheated those who worked for them (3:5). They did not acknowledge that the primary purpose of the tithe was to **put God first** in their lives. *“Be sure to set aside a tenth of all your fields produce each year...so that you and your family can then feast in the Presence of God. (Deuteronomy 14:22-23).* They were giving God leftovers and as a result robbing God. Therefore, God was admonishing them to *lay the ax to the root of their giving*; He challenged them to return to Him, to give the first tenth as commanded, and as the result, He would assuredly bless them.

God presents the same challenges to us today: *Lay an ax to the root of our giving.* Reverse the process: if anything is left, give it to God. Don’t get hung up on the amount and miss the promise; put Him first in our giving, and He will do far more for us than we could ever think, desire, or imagine. There is a story of a little boy who went to the store with his mother. The store owner handed a large jar of candy to the little boy and told him to get a handful. Surprisingly the little boy held back. The store owner then put his hand in the jar and gave a handful of candy to the little boy. Outside, the mother asked the little boy why he did not take the candy when first given the opportunity, and the little boy responded, “Because his hand is much bigger than mine.” We lay an ax to the roots of poverty, poor health, and financial lack in our lives when we give in obedience to God and see how much bigger His hand is than ours.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we desire all that you have and have planned for us. We agree that the stronghold and yoke against our giving must be destroyed and demolished. Help us to do that which you require of us that our relationship with You will not be hindered. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 19, 2018 - Day 18
“Family”
Matthew 14:14 (NRSV)

“When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.” Matthew 14:14 (NRSV)

“Helping the Hurting”

How surprised I was when I walked into the small drug store in my home town of Madison, Georgia to pick up a prescription for my mom! A very large phrase was etched on the wall right above the pharmacy counter: “when he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.” It was written in big red letters to remind us how much Jesus cares for the sick and for families. I couldn’t help but think of my family as I waited to pick up her prescription. I also thought of other family members who needed healing of mind and body, help from strongholds of addictions and depression, crises and life storms.

I have read this passage before, but this time it was different. This time it hit home even harder. What should our response be as we look at Jesus in this passage? We all need help. Mother Teresa, once said that “we can become so busy taking care of others that we can overlook the ones who are closest to us, our family.” Some of our family members need more care and encouragement.

When Jesus looks at the crowd, he sees those he dearly loves. He cares about human suffering. Jesus sees a need and he helps those in the crowd. He is present, he has compassion, he strengthens and heals, and he has deep concern for the sick and how they should be treated. We believe and stand on the promises of God that he will never leave or forget us. Let us look at our families as we fast and pray, asking God to use us as his vessels to help each other.

Prayer: Loving and Compassionate God, Thank you that you know all of us in the crowd. Thank you for your great love and concern. Thank you that you are able to break every chain in our family, pull down strongholds, set free and deliver, and bless our families for generations to come. Reveal to us who we can help and provide encouragement that comes from you. In the miracle working name of Jesus. AMEN!

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 18, 2018 - Day 17

“Finance”

Matthew 25:14-30 (NIV)

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.” Matthew 25: 14-15 (NIV)

“Obtain, Manage, and Circulate”

The definition of the word finances has three components that caught my attention: obtain, manage and circulate. In this particular passage of scripture there is a man who is wealthy and is going on a long trip. The scripture does not say how this man obtained the finances, but says that he has money— and by managing it he puts it in circulation by entrusting it to three of his servants—according to their ability. Well, two servants managed the finances that they have obtained by circulating it in investments which doubles the profits, while the third servant managed the money by burying it in a safe; making no investments—turning no profit. Needless to say, the two servants that turn a profit were praised for their great management abilities while the third servant was chastised for making poor management choices.

Jesus recognized that money was necessary for life in the world and wanted us to understand that it is what we do with our money, how we treat each other concerning the use of money, and the intentions of the heart regarding money that determines whether we are acceptable in the sight of God. God has given each of us the opportunity to be good financial stewards to obtain, manage and circulate money. So I ask, which servant are you? When you obtain money, are you managing it well? Are you circulating it in appropriate businesses or investment funds **or** are you burying it?

Prayer: Gracious and eternal God, your word says that “to those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away”. So I thank you for giving me the opportunity to obtain money and wealth based on my abilities to manage and circulate. Help me to be a wise and knowledgeable steward over those things that you have entrusted in my care. It is in your name I pray. Asa and Amen!

21 Day Daniel Fast

Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”

January 15, 2018 - Day 14

“Family”

I Peter 4:8 (NIV)

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins.” I Peter 4:8 (NIV)

“God’s Unfathomable Love”

A little over ten years ago our family began having family reunions. We look forward to the reunions because we have an opportunity to see family we have not seen in a while. It is sheer joy seeing my mom and her only living sister reminisce about the good ole days. It is also a little tearful as we think about our grandmother who is no longer with us. Our grandmother was a God-fearing woman who helped raise us. We think of her fondly and remember her witty sayings and somewhat sassy ways.

As a family we can most assuredly agree that we would not be who we are were it not for the love of our grandmother. Along with her humor and wit, she would also yield forth a rod of correction. Looking back now, her discipline of us sprang out of her pure love for us. Because my mother was a single parent, there were many opportunities that the enemy could have used to destroy our destiny and lead us along a tragic path of destruction, but our grandmother was there to fill that void.

I know not everyone experiences this type of love in their formidable years as my siblings and I did. However, I do know that God in God’s infinite wisdom will allow us to meet people who love us just as much, if not more, than our biological families. That is why our church family and friends play such pivotal roles in our lives. The enemy would like nothing better than to keep us sullen, lonely and outcast because we did not experience appropriate love and affection in our youth, but God finds ways to circumvent the enemy’s plans. God even goes so far as to annihilate the enemy’s actions and gives us chances to experience love that supersedes any destructive forces the enemy would try to send our way. This teaches us to never underestimate the power of God’s unfathomable love.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank You for our families, whether by blood or by love. Thank You for putting people in our lives who genuinely care for us although they are not even related to us. Thank You for giving us friends who have become our families. Thank You for giving us an opportunity to love one another as You have loved us. Thank You for showing us that You can indeed break every chain that the enemy thought would ensnare us. Thank You for your unfathomable love. Amen

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018 “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 16, 2018 - Day 15
“Familiar”
John 8:34-36 (NIV)

“Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:34-36 (NIV)

“Get Out”

What is that smell? What is that stench? Don’t you smell that? I think its coming from behind you. It’s that bad habit that you picked up so long ago. You did not mean for it to last this long, but for some reason you can’t shake it. You noticed that it had an odor, but sooner or later the foul scent became familiar. It’s ok. It happens to all of us. We all allow the temporary to take on pseudo-permanent positions in our lives all the time. The story goes like this...we see a thing. It looks cute, so we take it home. We designate a special place and time for it. We don’t mean to keep it, but we don’t put it out the house. Eventually that cute thing starts to develop needs and while its purpose was for our pleasure we are doing more to please it. We have become its slave.

In John 8:34-36, Jesus is having a conversation with some Jews and he tells them that “everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.” And that “the slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever.” It’s time to tell our cute smelly sin to “Get Out!” “Get Out” because it has occupied too much of our lives. “Get Out” because for once we are thinking about ourselves. “Get Out” because we are the landlords and they are being evicted. “You’ve abandoned me, but I never left your side. There’s a vacancy and you don’t live here anymore. Get Out!” “Get Out” because you are not jeopardizing my room in my Father’s house.”

The question must be asked, “How can I tell my sin to “Get Out?”” Well, the answer is found in verse thirty-six. We are no longer bound to our sin because the Son has set us free! Today, as we go through life and temptation comes knocking at the door let us recite these words, “I am free. Praise the Lord, I’m free. No longer bound. No more chains holding me. My soul is resting. And it’s just another blessing. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah, I’m free.”

Prayer: Dear God, today I come surrendering my life to you. I can’t make it on my own. Sin is crouching at my door and temptation is constantly staring me in the face. I know that you have set me free, but sometimes I relapse. I need you. I need your love. I need your power. Help me to hold out. It’s in Jesus’ name I pray. AMEN

21 Day Daniel Fast
Vision 2018: “Destroy Every Stronghold and Demolish Every Yoke”
January 17, 2018 - Day 16
“Fear”
2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

“ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that set itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

“Taken Captive to be Set Free ”

Every day, events occur in our world that would have us living in fear such as wars and rumors of war, political leadership that demonstrates that it does not care about people they are supposed to serve, and sexual misconduct allegations that multiply by the day. In our own personal lives, God will specifically call us into situations where not every step of the plan is clear, and all we can do is “Trust and Obey.” Not knowing what is next, having to answer a call or walk a path of uncertainty, and the enemy continually frustrating your efforts to succeed requires dependence on divine power. Trusting God means moving ahead despite our fears, in spite of feeling like failure is assured.

As the above text indicates, we do not engage in war “in the flesh”, but we have access to weapons that have divine power. Despite all that is going on around us, we are to use these divine weapons to destroy strongholds and knock down everything that stands against the Word of God. Paradoxically, the only way to be set free is take our thoughts captive and submit them to Jesus Christ. We bind negative, self-defeating, fearful, and discouraging thoughts that deter us from our God given purposes. By the power of Jesus’ name, “arguments and every proud obstacle” are destroyed.

Prayer: Gracious and Almighty God, you have given us weapons of divine power to demolish strongholds and abolish our fears. Despite the work of the enemy in our world, we have power through Jesus Christ to confront anything that comes up against your Word. Strengthen us, O Lord, and remind us that the battle is not ours, but Yours. In the name of Jesus Christ who sets us free, Amen.