

## **A MORNING WITH GOD**

### **January 11, 2020**

*All times are flexible. The schedule is for your benefit—to give you direction and variety. If the Lord is working on a particular area of your life, feel free to alter the schedule and use your time as you sense the Spirit's leading.*

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Welcome/Devotional
8:30 – 9:30 AM	Personal Prayer and Worship Time
9:30 – 10:00 AM	(Men) Small Group Prayer Time (Women) Prayer Walk – Prayer for the Church
10:00 – 10:30 AM	(Men) Prayer Walk – Prayer for the Church (Women) Small Group Prayer Time
10:30 – 11:20 AM	Prayer for the Lost, for our Nation, for the World
11:20 – 12:00noon	Group Prayer and Final Reflections

### **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Use different postures throughout the day—stand, walk, kneel, lay down (but don't fall asleep ☺).
2. Vary your activities—pray, read, meditate, listen, write, sing, etc.
3. Don't rush the time. Relax and allow yourself to enjoy unhurried time with God. If your life is too busy to enjoy four hours of quiet, joyful reflection with God, then your life is indeed too busy.
4. Use the suggestions as suggestions. Use the time as you are led.
5. Turn every interruption or distraction into prayer.

*I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk about, when I lie down and when I rise up.  
And the answers are always coming.* —George Mueller

## THE PRAYER LIFE OF JESUS

- Mark 1:35 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.
- Mark 6:45-46 Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup>After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.
- Luke 5:15-16 Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.
- Luke 6:12-13 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles...
- Luke 9:28ff About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup>As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning....
- Luke 11:1ff One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray..."
- Luke 22:39ff Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup>On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." <sup>41</sup>He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup>"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." <sup>43</sup>An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. <sup>44</sup>And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.
- John 11:41ff So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."
- Hebrews 5:7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.* —James 5:16b

## MEDITATE ON PSALM 139

Calm your heart. Ask God to help you focus on Him, to hear Him. Read through Psalm 139. Take your time and meditate on each verse. Stop and pray in response to what you have read. Converse with God. The New International Version is included below.

### **Psalm 139**

*For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.*

<sup>1</sup> O LORD , you have searched me  
and you know me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

<sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue  
you know it completely, O LORD.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in-behind and before;  
you have laid your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

<sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.

<sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"

<sup>12</sup> even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

<sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place.  
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,  
<sup>16</sup> your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me  
were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.

<sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
<sup>18</sup> Were I to count them,  
they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
When I awake, I am still with you.

<sup>19</sup> If only you would slay the wicked, O God!  
Away from me, you bloodthirsty men!  
<sup>20</sup> They speak of you with evil intent;  
your adversaries misuse your name.  
<sup>21</sup> Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD,  
and abhor those who rise up against you?  
<sup>22</sup> I have nothing but hatred for them;  
I count them my enemies.

<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
<sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Ask God to search your heart as per 139:23-24. *Our wisdom consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves* (John Calvin). Think through your thoughts and emotions right now. Be honest before God and take time to reflect on what He reveals to you.

What are you angry about?

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What are you sad about?

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What are you afraid of?

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## AN A-Z THANKSGIVING LIST TO GOD

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*  
—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

What things are you thankful for? Think of an attribute/name of God or a gift/blessing from God for each letter of the alphabet and thank God for each one.

A \_\_\_\_\_  
B \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_  
D \_\_\_\_\_  
E \_\_\_\_\_  
F \_\_\_\_\_  
G \_\_\_\_\_  
H \_\_\_\_\_  
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R \_\_\_\_\_  
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U \_\_\_\_\_  
V \_\_\_\_\_  
W \_\_\_\_\_  
X \_\_\_\_\_  
Y \_\_\_\_\_  
Z \_\_\_\_\_

## PRAYING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Read through Psalm 23 slowly, verse by verse. Meditate on each verse and respond back to God with a verbal or written prayer.

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

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<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

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<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

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<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

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<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

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<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

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Small Group Prayer Time  
9:30 – 10:00 AM (Men)  
10:00 – 10:30 AM (Women)

## THE SEVEN “MOST WANTED” LIST

In groups of 2-3, share and pray about each topic. Here is the suggested way to use this list:

- When you get together, spend a few moments looking over the list.
- Designate someone to begin the prayer time.
- Start praying. Pray in a circle (or spontaneously if you like) and simply go down the list.
- For example, Person 1 begins by praying, “God, I want to praise you for...” and praises God for something. When he is finished, Person 2 praises God for something. Person 3 does the same. Then Person 1 goes to the second item (“Lord, I want to thank you for...”) and the process continues. In this way, the whole time is spent in prayer while you get to know the needs and requests of the others in the group.

1. Lord, I **praise** you for \_\_\_\_\_ (attribute of God) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Lord, I want to **thank you** specifically for \_\_\_\_\_ (thanksgiving) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Lord, I want to **confess** \_\_\_\_\_ (weakness, struggle, sin) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Lord, in my **family**, I ask that you help \_\_\_\_\_ (family member) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Lord, in my **job and/or ministry**, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Lord, in my **church, neighborhood, and/or city**, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Lord, **use me in the life** of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of person) \_\_\_\_\_ this week.



## EVANGELISM PRAYER LIST

Write down the names of five people who, as far as you know, do not know Jesus Christ as Savior but who are in your “sphere of influence.” Spend time praying for each one.

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### PRAYING FOR THE LOST

*by Kaye Johns*

According to Scripture, Jesus Christ came to seek and to save those who are lost. As His disciples, we are to join Him in that dedication. But when we’ve told them about the saving power of Jesus, and they have turned a deaf ear, what are we to do?

Our only power is that which is granted us by the heavenly Father through His Holy Spirit. We can claim that power only through prayer. The Bible contains a full catalog of truth about our position in Christ, and the ways of God regarding those who need His saving grace. It is our guide as we intercede for the lost.

#### **Praying the Scriptures**

To pray effectively for the lost, we must first learn to pray with our mind [1 Cor. 14:15], deliberately thinking through and selecting specific verses. This truly is praying in the Spirit [Eph. 6:18] as we allow the Holy Spirit to bring His Word to mind as we pray.

Here are a few verses we might select in our prayers for the lost. We’ve noted and paraphrased the verses. Use these Scriptures as you pray specifically for your lost loved one or friend.

#### **Affirming God’s heart for the lost--**

He is not willing for anyone to perish [2 Pet. 3:19].

He wants all men to be saved [1 Tim. 2:13].

Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for all men [1 Tim. 2:5-6].

#### **Acknowledging what we know to be true of the lost--**

They will not seek after God on their own [Rom. 3:11].

They cannot discern spiritual things [1 Cor. 2:14].

God alone can draw them to Jesus [John 6:44].

They must be born again [John 1:13, 3:3, 5-8].

### **Seeking God's mercy to--**

Make them alive with Christ even when they are dead in their sins [Eph. 2:5].

Save them by His grace [Eph. 2:4-5].

Give them the gift of faith [Eph. 2:8-9].

### **Asking God to--**

Rescue them out of the kingdom of darkness and bring them into the kingdom of His Son [Col. 1:12-14].

Send someone to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light [Acts. 26:17-18].

Open their heart to respond to the truth of the Gospel [Acts 16:14].

### **Protecting them from evil--**

Come against the father of lies [John 8:44] with the Spirit of Truth [John 14:16-17].

Keep them safe from the thief who wants to steal the Word of God from their heart [Mark 4:14-15].

Let them remember every word of God's truth they have ever heard, for His Words are spirit and they are life [John 6:63].

### **Granting them receptive hearts that will--**

Believe in Jesus [John 3:16, 3:36 11:25-26].

Receive Christ and believe in His name [John 1:12].

Call on the name of the Lord and be saved [Rom. 10:13].

Confess with their mouths "Jesus is Lord" and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead [Rom. 10:9].

### **Giving them yielded spirits that will--**

Repent, lest they perish [Luke 13:3,5]

Hear the Holy Spirit as He convicts them of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment [John 14:7-8].

Allow the Spirit to give them godly sorrow that brings repentance [2 Cor. 7:10].

And in every prayer for the lost, no matter how far they seem from seeing and hearing the Truth, we acknowledge our confidence in the Lord, knowing what is impossible with men is possible with Him [Luke 18:22-27]!

<http://www.learntoprayer.org/articles/a16.htm>

## PRAYER FOR OUR NATION

*Therefore I encourage first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

—1 Timothy 2:1-4

Thank God for the nation that we live in and pray for our national, state, and local leaders...

- That they fear God and realize that they are accountable to Him (Proverbs 9:10).
- That they be granted wisdom (James 1:5).
- That they be presented with the gospel and trust in Christ as Savior (1 Timothy 2:1ff).
- That they seek God's will and not their own (Proverbs 3:5-8).
- That they heed their conscience, confess their sins, and repent (Proverbs 28:13).
- That they read and hear God's Word (Psalm 119:11).
- That they seek godly counsel and God-fearing advisors (Proverbs 24:6).
- That they desire honesty, integrity and loyalty (Psalm 26).
- That they do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God (Micah 6:8).
- That they endeavor to honor the sanctity of life, families, and morality (Eph 5:22-6:4).

## PRAYER FOR OUR WORLD

Pray for the various needs around the world that you are aware of. Pray also for the persecuted.

**"Against the persecution of a tyrant the godly have no remedy but prayer." - John Calvin**

- Pray for believers in the nations where Christianity is most persecuted. Pray that the leaders of these nations will be humbled, converted, or removed from power. Pray that the gospel will go forth despite persecution. Open Doors lists the top ten nations of persecution as North Korea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, and Eritrea. Pray that our brothers and sisters in persecuted nations will...
  - Sense God's presence (Hebrews 13:5).
  - Know that we are praying for them (2 Tim. 1:3).
  - Experience God's comfort (2 Thess. 2:16-17).
  - See God open doors to evangelism (Col. 4:3).
  - Boldly share the gospel (Acts 4:29).
  - Mature in their faith (Col. 1:28-29).
  - Be granted wisdom in covert ministry work (Acts 9:23-25).
  - Remain joyful amid suffering (Acts 5:41).
  - Forgive and love their persecutors (Matt. 5:44).
  - Be rooted in God's Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

—From Voice of the Martyrs

## PRAYER FOR PERSONAL DIRECTION

Spend some time in quiet reflection. Ask God what He would want you to do as a member of Christ's body. Read through Romans 12. Write down any thoughts that come to your mind.

### ROMANS 12 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. <sup>4</sup> Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. <sup>7</sup> If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

<sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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## READ THROUGH PHILIPPIANS

*Ask God to speak to your heart. Then read straight through Paul's letter to the Philippians. Underline or highlight passages which stand out. Write down your thoughts in a journal.*

<sup>1</sup> Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. <sup>8</sup> God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

<sup>12</sup> Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup> As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup> Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

<sup>15</sup> It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. <sup>16</sup> The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. <sup>17</sup> The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. <sup>18</sup> But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, <sup>19</sup> for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. <sup>20</sup> I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! <sup>23</sup> I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; <sup>24</sup> but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. <sup>25</sup> Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

<sup>27</sup> Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand

firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel <sup>28</sup> without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, <sup>30</sup> since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

## Philippians 2

<sup>1</sup> If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

<sup>5</sup> Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
<sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing,  
taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

<sup>14</sup> Do everything without complaining or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe <sup>16</sup> as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. <sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. <sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

<sup>19</sup> I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. <sup>20</sup> I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. <sup>21</sup> For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in

the work of the gospel. <sup>23</sup> I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. <sup>24</sup> And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

<sup>25</sup> But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. <sup>26</sup> For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. <sup>27</sup> Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. <sup>28</sup> Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. <sup>29</sup> Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, <sup>30</sup> because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

### **Philippians 3**

<sup>1</sup> Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.

<sup>2</sup> Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

<sup>7</sup> But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. <sup>10</sup> 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, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

<sup>17</sup> Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. <sup>18</sup> For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their destiny is destruction, their god is

their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.<sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>21</sup> who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

#### **Philippians 4**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!

<sup>2</sup> I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord.<sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!<sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.<sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.<sup>9</sup> Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>10</sup> I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.<sup>11</sup> I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.<sup>12</sup> I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.<sup>13</sup> I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;<sup>16</sup> for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.<sup>17</sup> Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.<sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.<sup>19</sup> And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>21</sup> Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings.<sup>22</sup> All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.