



OPEN MY EYES TO YOUR PROTECTION OVER MY LIFE

Day 15 – Sunday, January 23rd - GOD'S PROTECTIVE CARE

Verses to Read: Psalm 91:1-2; John 17:15

We must never forget that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are not removed from the presence of wickedness. In fact, remember the prayer of Jesus.

"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one." (John 17:15)

While it's difficult to understand the reason, God has planned that we continue to live in a hostile, wicked, non-Christian world. He deliberately did not remove us from an atmosphere of hostility. Instead, He has promised to preserve us through the conflict. He has made possible a plan of insulation, not isolation. God isn't interested in our isolating ourselves, hidden away like hermits in a cave, but rather in our living courageously on the front lines, claiming His insulation amid an evil environment.

In order for us to enjoy the benefits of insulation, we must live in the light of Psalm 91, which uses analogy and metaphor to convey spiritual truths. The secret to survival is to "dwell in the shelter of the Most High," to "abide in the shadow of the Almighty."

The word "dwell" is translated from the Hebrew *yashav*, meaning "to remain, sit, abide." It literally means to "live in conscious fellowship with, draw daily strength from." In the same way someone might "live off the land," we are encouraged to draw our needs from God.

Psalm 91 is written to dwellers. It promises deliverance and protection not to everyone, but to dwellers—those who draw daily, habitual strength from their Lord as they sustain an intimacy of fellowship and nearness with Him. Don't forget that!

So what is verse 1 actually saying? Simply this: If we who know the Lord Jesus Christ will dwell in conscious fellowship with Him (keeping our sins confessed and forsaken, and walking in moment-by-moment dependence upon Him), we shall enjoy the benefits of living under His protective care on those occasions when rest and lodging are needed. If we maintain our walk with Him, we can count on Him and His deliverance at periodic times when the going gets rough.

This calls for total trust. A construction laborer working forty stories above the city street depends upon a lanyard to keep him from falling should he lose his balance. He trusts that the cable and harness will support him in an emergency. He must put complete trust in his safety equipment. That is the kind of trust our Lord wants from us. And if we'll trust him in this way, then we'll see the continued evidence of His protective care over and again.

REFLECT:

- In what ways or in what areas of your life have you seen God's hand of protection in the past?



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Day 16 – Monday, January 24th - CHOOSING GOD'S PROTECTION

Verses to Read: Psalm 5:11-12; Psalm 25:12-13; Psalm 3:3

While the Bible is filled with supernatural accounts of God's protection, it's not automatic. In order for God to be our refuge, there are actions that we must take. The protection of God only comes to the obedient. So here are a few steps of obedience that we must take as children of God if we are going to experience the protection of God.

1. We must speak faith.

The verse we looked at yesterday in Psalm 91 says, "I will say of the Lord..." Faith has to be in two places: In your heart and on your mouth. You must agree in your head with what the word of God says, but you also have it in your heart. Without faith in your heart, your mouth cannot speak faith.

Making God the One on whom you depend for your security has to get into your heart to come out of your mouth with power. You have to be able to say in faith, "He is my refuge and my fortress!" You have to trust God for your protection and say so!

2. We must research God.

These are serious days. It's no time to be sitting on the fence being double-minded. You must decide where you are going to dwell—where you are going to put your trust and dependence.

Your dependence is not going to be on God without spending time with Him and His Word, because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. By spending time in the Word, you will become fully persuaded that God is faithful. Assurance comes in your heart that gives peace instead of fear.

Our responsibility in life is to seek God—always. The Hebrew word for seek comes from a root word that means "to tread or frequent." In Hebrew *seek* means "to ask, diligently inquire, require or search."

Remember what was necessary to write a term paper? Research! The more the research, the better the paper! I believe if we desire to experience the best in life, then we must spend time researching God.

3. We must trust God's protection.

In Psalm 3:3, David says, "But thou, O Lord, are a shield around me." When you look at David's history in battle, he did not find security in armor or shields, but only in God's protection.

One of the reasons that David's star has 6 points is that it represents the "Shield of David." David saw himself "enveloped, invulnerable from every side"—north, south, east, west, above and below—all six directions. This is good news. The circle of God's protection envelopes you from every side. So trust it!

REFLECT:

- In what ways do you need to trust God's protection for your life currently?



OPEN MY EYES TO YOUR DIVINE VISITATION

Day 17 – Tuesday, January 25th - WHAT IS A DIVINE VISITATION?

Verses to Read: Genesis 3:8

In this 21-day period, we are asking God to bring revelation in four different areas:

- *Provision* for our children
- *Direction* for our future
- *Protection* over our lives
- *Visitation* in our spirits

Over the next 5 days, we will be focusing our devotional thoughts and prayers on divine visitations.

Maybe you're not familiar with the term or the idea of a "divine visitation." What exactly is a divine visitation? How does God visit us? In truth, it's not hard to understand if we remember how we visit people naturally. When was the last time that you visited someone? How did that occur? Maybe you set up a date that worked and you spent time with them in their home. Well, that's all a divine visitation is. It is God coming and spending time with you. How does he do that?

There are several ways, but one of those ways is through a practical encounter with his presence. He visits us by allowing us to experience His supernatural presence. Some have experienced this. They didn't see anything, but they felt the presence of God near to them. Others have seen him physically in a vision or a dream. Others have seen a bright light or heard an inward voice.

The earliest recorded divine visitation was in the Garden of Eden when the Lord visited Adam in the cool of the day. It states that Adam and Eve heard the sound of the LORD walking in the Garden. It was a definite encounter, meaning, God was not in the Garden in that way before that time. There was a definite time when He met them in that manner. This is divine visitation.

Divine visitations are always for a purpose. God visits His people for a reason. He visited Israel in Egypt to deliver them from bondage. He visited the Jews in Babylon to end the captivity. He has visited and will visit some of us to give us instructions about His plans and purposes for our lives and the ministries He has called us into. But, The Lord visited Adam and Eve in the Garden not to tell them about their ministries, etc. He came to talk with them, know what exciting thing they had discovered during the day, found out(though He knows) how their day has been, or where Adam took Eve to in the Garden for a love walk etc. In other words, He came to have fellowship with them. Remember, the Father's greatest desire is not to use you, but to be in FELLOWSHIP with you. Never fall into the snare of putting working for God above your intimacy with Him.

REFLECT:

- Are you hungry for a divine visitation with God in your own life? How have you experienced a divine visitation of God's presence in your life?



OPEN MY EYES TO YOUR DIVINE VISITATION

Day 18 – Wednesday, January 26th - OVERFLOW

Verses to Read: John 7:37-39 ESV

When the word “overflow” is used, it’s often not in reference to a positive experience. Maybe you have been in the unenviable position of having to frantically fix an overflowing toilet. If something has overflowed, it’s typically bad news. But, God’s desire is for us to experience the overflow of His goodness. In fact, Jesus made a significant promise in the middle of John’s gospel, and it is really good news!

“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” John 7:37-39

What’s interesting about the time and location of this teaching is that it’s on the last day of the Festival of Shelters/Tabernacles. This was a celebration that, in part, memorialized God’s holy dwelling place in both the Tabernacle built by Moses and the Temple built by Solomon. At the height of this celebration, Jesus announced something amazing – a day is coming when God’s presence will no longer reside in the temple, but the Holy Spirit is coming and will live in anyone who desires His presence.

The result of this event will be rivers of living water flowing from our lives. And notice, Jesus says rivers of living water, not lakes of living water. This is intentional because rivers are always moving. What God is doing in you will eventually be something He uses to impact others. The Holy Spirit is designed to flow through you, where it transforms you and it blesses those around you!

Rivers have a big impact on the areas they flow through. They remove dead debris, water the areas around them, and leave their surroundings changed. This is a picture of what the Holy Spirit wants to do through us. By His power, He wants our surroundings to look different as a result of His presence flowing through our lives. Our homes, neighborhoods, and workplaces will be different because of what is happening in us.

Today let’s ask God’s presence to flow through us that we might leave places, people, and circumstances looking different as a result of the Holy Spirit’s power flowing through us.

REFLECT:

- Are you hungry for a divine visitation with God in your own life? How have you experienced a divine visitation of God’s presence in your life?



OPEN MY EYES TO YOUR DIVINE VISITATION

Day 19 – Thursday, January 27th - THE PILLAR OF GOD'S PRESENCE

Verses to Read: Exodus 13:21-22

One of the greatest realities of God's presence is the way it guides us. Exodus 13:21-22 provides an illustration for an important truth God would have us know today: when we need guidance we can run to his presence and discover his leadership in abundance.

Even in the Israelites' sin, God faithfully led them. Even in their lack of faith, he still provided miraculous leadership. And now, through believing in the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have been filled with the presence of God himself. We've been given the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit who is always present with us and in us. As amazing as it is that God led his people with pillars of cloud and fire, how much more incredible is it that we have been filled with the very presence of God by the work of Christ? Jesus made a way for us to know the will of God with every moment as we fellowship with the Spirit of God himself.

So, how can we follow the Spirit as the Israelites followed the pillars of fire and cloud? How can we discover the abundance of leadership available to us through the presence of God?

First, we must acknowledge our need of his leadership and seek out his counsel.

He can only guide those who choose to follow. If you choose to go your own way in life you will step outside the guidance of his presence. It's in seeking his will that we discover the vast reservoir of the Spirit's perfect leadership. Acknowledge him. Acknowledge the reality of his presence in your life in all your ways.

Second, you have to believe that God can and will guide you when you ask for his leadership.

This world is suffering from a lack of God's guidance. We live in a world continuously searching, striving, and yearning for some sort of message of leadership. All around us the blind lead the blind into greater depths of darkness, continually searching for what we have already found in God. God longs to satisfy your desire for leadership. All you have to do is ask him. God will guide you when you seek him for wisdom.

Last, you must follow his leadership to experience the fruit of his guiding presence.

The prize of a winning lottery ticket remains worthless until it is cashed in. The contents of a gift remain useless until it is opened. You have been given the most incredible gift of all: God's guiding presence in your life. But until you choose to follow the wisdom of God in your life, you won't experience an ounce of its value. Until you follow the wise guidance of the Holy Spirit, you won't experience the incredible, abundant life he has in store for you.

Persevere today in God's presence. Seek out his wisdom and counsel during guided prayer. Lay the burden of leading your own life on his mighty and loving shoulders, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into the abundant life he has prepared for you.

REFLECT:

- What is the primary situation in your life right now that you are seeking wisdom and counsel? Ask God for wisdom right now and then listen and write what you sense He's saying.



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Day 20 – Friday, January 28th - ABIDING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Verses to Read: John 15:7-8; Jeremiah 33:3; 2 Corinthians 3:18

Jesus makes us an almost unbelievable promise in John 15:7-8. Scripture says, “*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*” Jesus promises that if we abide in him and allow his words to abide in us, then we can ask anything we desire of God and it will happen. Clearly this is a vital passage for us to understand today. I believe that the Lord has fresh revelation in store for us if we will take him at his word and allow him to transform our understanding of what it is to petition our heavenly Father.

I have spent a large part of my Christian life praying without understanding how to pray. I used to view prayer as time for me to ask God for what I thought would be good and then wait to see if my circumstances lined up with my prayer. Then only through my circumstances would I know if God’s answer to my prayer was yes or no. Then I read John 15:7-8. Jesus clearly teaches a very different model of prayer than I had been experiencing.

Jesus’ model for prayer is abiding in his presence, abiding in his words, and then asking God for our heart’s desires. God desires that we would be so in tune with his heartbeat and so saturated with his word that our desires would be transformed into his desires. His plan is to fill us with the knowledge of his perfect will for our lives in the secret place so that we can pray and live wholeheartedly with full expectation that our heavenly Father will bring to fruition the desires he has placed within us.

Does this model of prayer line up with your life? Is your prayer life marked by abiding in him and his word first? Have you discovered the heartbeat of your heavenly Father? Do you feel as if you know how he feels about situations going on in your life? Are you so saturated with his word that it is transforming your actions, beliefs, emotions, and prayers?

Scripture says in Jeremiah 33:3, “Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.” 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” God longs for you to search out his heartbeat. He longs to reveal to you how he feels about you and every aspect of your life. He longs to transform your desires into his that you might desire and ask him for what is really best for you.

Asking God for something is meant to be as simple as abiding in his presence and word and praying in line with the desires he’s birthed in you. Discover today the wealth of desires he longs to share with you. Ask him to show you how he feels and thinks. Saturate yourself in his word. Allow the teachings of Jesus to transform your perspectives. And ask your heavenly Father to bring to fruition the desires he’s placed within you. May your desires be one with God’s today as you spend time abiding in the true vine of Jesus.

REFLECT:

- After reading this, what do you think the phrase “abide with God” means? How are you practicing this in your life?



OPEN MY EYES TO YOUR DIVINE VISITATION

Day 21 – Saturday, January 29th - LORD SEND REVIVAL

Verses to Read: Joel 2:28-30a

Over these past 21 days of Prayer and Fasting, we have set aside some things in order to fill our lives with something better. It is not possible to spend time seeking the Lord, asking Him to send revival, and something not happen, because God is faithful, and His Word promises that He responds to the prayers of His people.

The prophet Joel records a promise of what was to come for God's people:

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will cause wonders in the heavens and on the earth." Joel 2:28-30a

He goes on to say in verse 32, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

The book of Acts records what happened in the upper room as people were fervently calling on God. In Acts 2, Peter addresses a crowd and quotes the prophetic words of Joel declaring its fulfillment as the Spirit was being poured out on people.

This powerful promise from Scripture is available to every believer today. How encouraging to know that the God of the universe want to use us in such a dynamic way! His desire is to speak through us that His presence might be displayed to those around us.

Notice this happens as the Spirit is poured out. One of the most powerful prayers we can pray is for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our lives, in our cities, on our nation, and throughout the world. God's desire is always to answer that prayer, but it begins with His people crying out for more!

Charles Finney says this about revival:

"A revival may be expected when Christians have a spirit of prayer for a revival. That is, when they pray as if their hearts were set upon it. When Christians have the spirit of prayer for a revival. When they go about groaning out their hearts desire. When they have real travail of soul."

Finney says a revival may be expected as we desperately call on God. As we have committed ourselves to prayer and fasting these past 21 days, God has moved and is moving and responding to our prayers, and we can believe with all of our hearts that revival is upon us!

REFLECT:

- Write or declare an area of your life that you are hungry for revival to occur!