

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on September 19

Being in relationship with God is more than just a once-a-week event. Just like any relationship, regular communication is needed. I challenge you to create a daily routine to prepare your hearts for God's word. This is something that can be done in less than 20 minutes per day. It just requires a time and place of quiet (before the day begins or after the day has ended or even on the train coming home from work).

Instructions: - Monday through Saturday follow each step. Don't forget that the Bible is not a newspaper – it is God's word. Reading the same psalm for six days gives God a chance to speak to you with the same words but in six different days (and, potentially, six different circumstances).

I. Invocation (Pray this each day):

God of presence, you remained fully with Joseph when he sat long years in a prison for a crime he did not commit. Help us to see that you are always with us, so that we might live faithfully in your world. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

II. Psalm 130 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

Monday	Genesis 37:1-11
Tuesday	Genesis 37:12-36
Wednesday	Genesis 39:1-23
Thursday	Genesis 40:1-23
Friday	Genesis 41:1-36
Saturday	Genesis 41:37-57

IV. Prayers

Monday	For those in need of healing from <i>Yellow Pages</i>
Tuesday	For those serving in military and vets
Wednesday	For our shut-ins and caregivers and families in grief
Thursday	For our leaders in government and church
Friday	For family members and neighbors
Saturday	For yourself

V. Reflection Silent and/or written

VI: Hymn: *How Long, O God* – ELW #698 (Sing each day): (For music, use this link.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cpEIuiKOz0

1 "How long, O God?" the psalmist cries,
a cry we make our own,
for we are lost, alone, afraid,
and far away from home.

2 The evil lurks within, without,
it threatens to destroy
the fragile cords that make us one,
that bind our hearts in joy.

3 Your grace, O God, seems far away;
will healing ever come?
Our broken lives lie broken still;
will night give way to dawn?

4 How can we hope? How can we sing?
O God, set free our voice
to name the sorrows, name the pain,
that we might yet rejoice.

5 "How long, O God?" the psalmist cries,
a cry we make our own.
Though we are lost, alone, afraid,
our God will lead us home.

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VII: Benediction (Spoken each day):

You have been in communion with your Lord. Go forth now in the strength and assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ goes with you. Amen.

The general idea and often the words of the benediction are taken from: *A Guide to Prayer* by Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, (The Upper Room: Nashville, 1983).