

# Preparing the Soil

## For week beginning on January 23

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):

Holy God of compassion, you invite us into your way of forgiveness and peace. Lead us to love our enemies and transform our words and deeds to be like those of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### II. Psalm 119:33-40 (Read this each day):

### III. Daily Scripture Readings

<b>Monday</b>	Matthew 5:1-12
<b>Tuesday</b>	Matthew 5:13-20
<b>Wednesday</b>	Matthew 5:21-26
<b>Thursday</b>	Matthew 5:27-32
<b>Friday</b>	Matthew 5:33-37
<b>Saturday</b>	Matthew 5:38-48

### IV. Prayers

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

**V. Reflection**      Silent and/or written

**VI: Hymn: *Be Thou My Vision* – ELW 793 (Sing each day):** (For music, type “Be Thou My Vision” in your search engine.) One example is:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Optrm7lF16s>

1. Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best Thought, by day and by night,  
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower,  
Raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r .
3. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
Thou, and thou only, first in my heart,  
Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
4. Light of my soul, after victory won,  
May I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

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### VII: Benediction (Spoken each day):

Go forth now as God's servant. Remember God's presence often and draw strength from the knowledge that the One who calls and sends also sustains. 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).