

RAISE THE MARK

FEBRUARY 2008

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

Praise God because "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow."

JAMES 1:17

Humbly acknowledge that all that we have that is good is because of God's kindness toward us. "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." **1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18**

Ask the Lord for the ability to rejoice even in difficult circumstance and for the grace to be thankful even in the midst of discouraging situations. **JAMES 1:2-3**

Praise God for His sovereign and loving care toward you. Ask for the grace to believe Him when He says that He knows the plans that He has for you, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope." **JEREMIAH 29:11**

Be specific in your thanksgiving. Name people, events, times, situations and circumstances this past year that God has used to encourage, sustain, sharpen, comfort, teach, rebuke, and love you.

HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE GOD'S HOLINESS

"Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." **JAMES 4:7-8**

Pray that the Lord would expose the sin in our lives and pray that we would be quick to cleanse our hands, repent and purify our hearts. **PSALM 51:1-2**

Pray that we would not be double minded in any way. Ask God to expose any impurities, deceitfulness or hard-heartedness in you. Pray, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way." **PSALM 139:23-24**

SEEK GOD'S WISDOM FOR YOUR FUTURE

"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that.' But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin." **JAMES 4:13-17**

Pray that we would not live presumptuously, assuming that we know what tomorrow holds for us. Instead ask that God would give us His mind regarding today and pray that our plans for 2008 would be His plans. Pray that we would be ever increasing in our faith and that we would live each day with an eternal perspective. Pray that we would seize the opportunities God has given us right now to serve Him.

LOVE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST AS HE DOES

Pray that we as a church would live, love and lead as we ought. Pray that we who have been given much in the way of teaching, resources and opportunity would be found faithful. Pray that we would apply all that we know. Pray that we would not become arrogant in our knowledge but rather that God would use what He has made available to us to spur us onto love and good deeds.

Pray that all members of Watermark would pursue involvement in authentic community with others. Pray this year, more than ever, that we as individuals and as a body would draw near to God. Pray that we would submit to Him and honor Him by "proving ourselves to be doers of the Word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." **JAMES 1:22**

BE CHRIST'S HANDS AND FEET TO THOSE FAR FROM GOD

"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." **JAMES 1:27**

Pray that our body, compelled by Christ's love, would be renowned for the way we serve those around us, especially the oppressed and downtrodden. Pray that we would unleash the gifts, talents, resources the Lord has entrusted us with in 2008 as never before. Pray for the "dream groups" that will be meeting on February 23.

Pray that we would discover what God wants to do with us and for clear action steps and follow-through to come from our dreams.

Pray that every one of us would look for every opportunity to proclaim Christ to those in our path. Pray that we would "not be ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

ROMANS 1:16

Pray for specific individuals in your life right now (your Top 10 List) that you want to see come to know and trust in Jesus Christ this year. Pray for favor with them. Pray that you will have boldness, wisdom, and gentleness in sharing with them. Pray for time alone with them and for God to grant them a hunger for righteousness and a need for Christ in their life.

SHOW FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE TOWARD ALL PEOPLE

Pray that we would all be “quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger, for the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God.” **JAMES 1:19-20**

Pray that we would put “aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.” **JAMES 1:21**

Pray that we would “Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” **JAMES 5:7-8**

Pray that we would “not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.” **JAMES 5:9-10**

FINALLY . . .

- Remember, “You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive because you ask with wrong motives” **JAMES 4:2C-3A**
- Pray that we would be intentional about growing as fully devoted followers of Christ and not just assume it would happen in time. **1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8**
- Pray that we would believe that full devotion is normal for all believers and that we would not be duped into believing that our maturity is impossible or doesn't really matter. **2 TIMOTHY 2:15**
- Pray that we would not look for the “magic” event in our spiritual lives to transform us but that we would work hard at growing in Christ-likeness. **1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27**
- Pray that we would not say we want to grow while we remain unwilling to do anything to grow. **JAMES 1:23-V25**
- Pray that we would not confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual maturity.
- Share ways the Lord is allowing His grace to be evident in your life or ways you need prayers to help you experience His grace in this time of need.