



31 Day Challenge[©]

A JOURNEY TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

- By Pastor Greg Hooker

People spend billions of dollars each year endeavoring to improve the appearance of their physical bodies. From diet fads, cosmetic surgery, liposuction, chemical injections and exercise equipment, people struggle to find that ‘magical formula’ that will help them lose weight, slim down and give them bragging rights among their friends and peers. Even though God wants us to maintain our physical bodies in good shape (after all, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit) the Lord is less concerned about the ‘outward’ person as He is of the ‘inward’, or spiritual person.

With that in mind, let me ask you a pointed question. If there was something within your grasp that would guarantee you unspeakable joy, peace and contentment – regardless of what you are going through – would you be willing to reach out and take hold of it, or at least give it a try? How much do you want to enjoy your life and have a profound sense of freedom to face uncertainty with peace, freedom and confidence? Would you be willing to give up your automobile, house, job, or most prized possession? How about your health, wealth, or fame? What would you forfeit to ensure unparalleled joy,

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Fanny Crosby was probably the most prolific hymnist in history. Though blinded by an incompetent doctor at six weeks of age, she wrote over 8,000 hymns. About her blindness, she said:

“It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me.”

In her life-time, Fanny Crosby was one of the best known women in the United States. To this day, the vast majority of American hymnals contain her work.

When Fanny died, her tombstone carried the words, “Aunt Fanny” and “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine.”

Even under extreme hardship and disabilities, Fanny Crosby was able to live the abundant life – a life filled with joy, peace and contentment.

peace and contentment – to flush every worry, anxiety and fear completely from your life?

My friends, I have some great news for you – you don't have to give up any of these things! There is a way to experience this amazing, abundant and victorious life absolutely free of charge and unrestricted from the cares of this world. Have I seized your attention yet? Are you ready for the 'secret' that could possibly be the start of a new and exciting life? Okay, brace yourself; here's the secret: You can possess unlimited joy, infinite peace and immeasurable contentment through implementing one simple concept – a viable, consistent, daily relationship with God the Father. Sounds too simple? Listen carefully to the words of our Savior, *"I [Jesus] am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10).

'You can possess unlimited joy, infinite peace and immeasurable contentment through implementing one simple concept – a viable, consistent, daily relationship with God the Father.'

You see, Jesus doesn't want you to live just an 'ordinary' life; He wants you to live an *"abundant"* life through an unwavering relationship with Him – a bond that can and will transform you from a *caterpillar* to a *butterfly* Christian, but only if you will determine to take the time to establish and cultivate it! Jesus stands waiting and inviting you to come to Him! Will you respond to His invitation? He says, "Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest"!

If you are a Christian living apart from joy, peace and contentment; your relationship with the Lord has become stale, stagnated, or hasn't even started. Furthermore, you are out of the will of God if you are living less than abundantly – ouch, that smarts! It is the desire, no, 'commandment' of our Heavenly Father for all of His children to live an abundant, victorious life through His Son, Jesus Christ, even in the midst of raging storms and howling winds. God's precious Son was sacrificed in order that you could enjoy freedom and victory right now in your life. Notice these passages of Scripture:

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory [not defeat] through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Did you get the implication of those verses? Maybe we need to go back and read them once more and let them soak deep into our soul. God is basically telling us, that if we have been born into His family through faith in His Son, we have the awesome ability to live in victory – victory over the predicaments of the world, the physical suffering of the flesh, the poisons of sin, the plights of death, the pains of misfortune and the partings of loved ones.

Although God has declared this incredible victory and made it possible for each of His children; there are many who do not enjoy it simply because they refuse to *claim* and *appropriate* it. They go about their daily lives running to and fro with no purpose, no focus and no sense of satisfaction. Every day is filled with complaining and defeat when they could be enjoying a wondrously abundant life, even though the raging storms threaten to capsize and drown them in a sea of uncertainty. Remember, Jesus Christ is the Master of all storms, both small and great! If He calls you to go through it, He will provide a way to rise above it! Even when He calls you to walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, He will walk side-by-side with you! Should He beckon you to step out on the raging seas from the confines and safety of the boat, He will take your hand and keep you safe from the crashing waves.

‘Remember, Jesus Christ is the Master of all storms, both small and great! If He calls you to go through it, He will provide a way to rise above it!’

It has been my experience over the years, that the majority of people claiming the name of Christ are unhappy, depressed, and basically dread each day of their existence – how sad and pitiful! I hate to confess, but I have had a saving relationship with the Lord for about 35 years and up until recently, I was among those who lacked victory in my life! Don’t misunderstand me, I was born again, but I failed to live in the freedom of Christ and the victory He wanted me to enjoy. Be that as it were; I stumbled upon the secret (really it’s no secret at all – it’s always been present in the Scriptures) to living above my heartaches, trials and troubles. I learned that even in the midst of the most trying circumstances I could still maintain a profound sense of joy, peace and contentment.

So, are you ready to take my 31 DAY CHALLENGE to a ‘Spiritual Transformation’? If God can do it for me, I know He can do it for you! Okay then, let’s get started. Be sure to read the entire program before you begin.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *This daily spiritual exercise will take a total of approximately one hour of your time, but I guarantee it will be the best and most rewarding hour you’ll ever spend each day! **It will change your life!***

1

THE FIRST PART OF THE 31 DAY CHALLENGE IS TO READ THE BOOK OF PSALMS AND PROVERBS IN ONE MONTH

When we read God's Word we allow the Lord to speak to our hearts and the power and presence of His Spirit will illuminate our minds with the truth of His Word. Reading and meditating on the Scriptures will "renew" our minds, *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the 'renewing' of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Romans 12:1-2).

Over the course of our earthly lives – especially during the years in which we did not know Christ as Savior – we accumulated hours upon hours of waste, toxins and garbage in our minds. This amassed amount of pollutants was derived from sources like ungodly TV programs, sleazy books, profane magazines, filthy jokes and other less than holy paraphernalia. Like a hot iron left pressed against a cotton shirt, these turpitudes 'branded' our minds and, left untreated, callouses began to form on our consciences. When that occurs, we lose a part of our ability to reason right from wrong (incidentally, a major part of our nation has become susceptible to this 'branding').

Later, after we are saved and filled with the Spirit of God, we begin to read the Bible and pray. When we do this on a consistent basis, a miraculous transformation begins to take place – the Lord begins "renewing", or repairing that calloused area of our minds destroyed by sin. The cancerous tumors created by years of wickedness are healed and swept from our minds as good, wholesome and godly material replaces it. "Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to thy Word."

My friends, we cannot expect to have a close, intimate relationship with God if we neglect to listen to His voice and apply His Word, wisdom and knowledge to our hearts and minds. Filling our brains with 'garbage' will only produce a breeding ground for fear, dread and uncertainty in our lives, but replacing our thoughts with knowledge that is just, holy and righteous will begin a process of 'washing' our brains of impurities and rid us of spiritual toxins (incidentally, nightmares can be eliminated through this 'washing', as well).

"Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way?"

By taking heed according to thy Word."

Moreover, when we read and meditate on the Scriptures, in essence the Lord is communicating to our hearts – He is the *“living Word”*. You see, the Bible is no ordinary book – it is a living, breathing, manifestation of God Himself, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**”* (John 1:1). The Bible has the awesome ability to purify our thoughts and sweep the cobwebs of impurities from our minds. Because we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit will take that Word, apply it to the areas of our lives that need it and begin transforming and establishing a relationship with God the Father.

So, are you up to the 31 DAY CHALLENGE to Spiritual Transformation? Okay then, let’s get started, but before we do, finish reading the ‘rest of the story’ as Paul Harvey used to say, because this program works together in unity.

31 DAY CHALLENGE PART 1

IMPORTANT NOTE: Challenge Part 1 is to be done together with Challenge Part 2. Bible Study and Prayer go hand-in-hand! Remember: God speaks to you through His Word – you speak to God through prayer! That forms a strong relationship!

- ✓ *Read 5 Psalms and 1 Proverb for the next 31 days and let the Lord speak to your heart, 'renewing' your mind and filling it with the wholesome goodness of His Word. You may wish to take notes as you read.*
- ✓ *Next, meditate (or think) on what you have read and write down how the Lord spoke to you and how you can apply its truth to your life.*
- ✓ *Then share your findings with a friend, loved-one, or prayer group.*

DAILY READING SCHEDULE



- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ DAY 1 – Read Psalms 1-5, Proverbs 1○ DAY 2 – Read Psalms 6-10, Proverbs 2○ DAY 3 – Read Psalms 11-15, Proverbs 3○ DAY 4 – Read Psalms 16-20, Proverbs 4○ DAY 5 – Read Psalms 21-25, Proverbs 5○ DAY 6 – Read Psalms 26-30, Proverbs 6○ DAY 7 – Read Psalms 31-35, Proverbs 7○ DAY 8 – Read Psalms 36-40, Proverbs 8○ DAY 9 – Read Psalms 41-45, Proverbs 9○ DAY 10 – Read Psalms 46-50, Proverbs 10○ DAY 11 – Read Psalms 51-55, Proverbs 11○ DAY 12 – Read Psalms 56-60, Proverbs 12○ DAY 13 – Read Psalms 61-65, Proverbs 13○ DAY 14 – Read Psalms 66-70, Proverbs 14○ DAY 15 – Read Psalms 71-75, Proverbs 15○ DAY 16 – Read Psalms 76-80, Proverbs 16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ DAY 17 – Read Psalms 81-85, Proverbs 17○ DAY 18 – Read Psalms 86-90, Proverbs 18○ DAY 19 – Read Psalms 91-95, Proverbs 19○ DAY 20 – Read Psalms 96-100, Proverbs 20○ DAY 21 – Read Psalms 101-105, Proverbs 21○ DAY 22 – Read Psalms 106-110, Proverbs 22○ DAY 23 – Read Psalms 111-115, Proverbs 23○ DAY 24 – Read Psalms 116-118, Proverbs 24○ DAY 25 – Read Psalms 119, Proverbs 25○ DAY 26 – Read Psalms 120-125, Proverbs 26○ DAY 27 – Read Psalms 126-130, Proverbs 27○ DAY 28 – Read Psalms 131-135, Proverbs 28○ DAY 29 – Read Psalms 136-140, Proverbs 29○ DAY 30 – Read Psalms 141-145, Proverbs 30○ DAY 31 – Read Psalms 145-150, Proverbs 31 |
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2 THE SECOND PART OF THE 31 DAY CHALLENGE IS TO PRAY CONSISTENTLY EVERY DAY FOR THE NEXT MONTH

While reading God's Word is in essence God speaking to our hearts; praying is our hearts speaking to God. Why should a Christian pray anyway?

1) Prayer develops a relationship between our Heavenly Father and His children. Think of it this way, how would our relationship be with our spouse, parents, or our earthly children if we never took time to talk with them? I dare say it would be very weak and shallow!

God said to His people, "...I will hear them: **I will say**, It is my people: and **they shall say**, The LORD is my God" (Zechariah 13:9). That is a good example of prayer, a meaningful dialog between God and His people. Our Heavenly Father created us to commune, worship, and fellowship with Him. Remember Adam and Even in the Garden of Eden? The Bible says God would come during the cool of the day, talk

with and fellowship with His creation. Wouldn't you like to have heard some of those conversations?

Thus, our primary objectives when we pray is to fellowship, worship and forge a strong relationship with our Heavenly Father.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The main objective in prayer is not asking and receiving; it's worship, praise and fellowship with our Heavenly Father. He is our Creator, Savior and Everlasting Lord; thus it behooves all of His children to direct their prayers primarily as sweet incense aroma of worship and praise.

Sadly, many Christians use God as a 'Spiritual Santa Claus' only when they are in need or wanting something. While the Lord certainly provides for His children those things that are according to His will; God is much more interested in our worship and praise.

2) Prayer was expressly instructed by the Lord.

Part of being a good disciple of Christ is to follow His teachings – one of many happens to be a viable prayer life. "**Watch**

and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41). Again, in Luke 18:1 Jesus said, "And he spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought **always to pray**, and not to faint." God's children should pray because it develops a firm relationship with God and because He has expressly instructed us to do so.

31 DAY CHALLENGE PART 2

- ✓ **Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer just praising, worshipping and thanking the Lord (make a written list of things to thank Him for).**
- ✓ **Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer for others (spiritual & physical needs).**
- ✓ **Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer for your own necessities.**

31 DAY CHALLENGE IN A 'NUTSHELL'

- ✓ *Read 5 Psalms and 1 Proverb for the next 31 days and let the Lord speak to your heart, 'renewing' your mind and filling it with the wholesome goodness of His Word. (You may wish to take notes as you read. Record your progress in the chart above.)*
- ✓ *Next, meditate (or think) on what you have read and write down how the Lord spoke to you and how you can apply its truth to your life.*
- ✓ *Then share your findings with a friend, loved-one, or prayer group.*
- ✓ *Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer just praising, worshipping and thanking the Lord (You may wish to make a written list of things to thank Him for).*
- ✓ *Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer for others (spiritual & physical needs).*
- ✓ *Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer for your own necessities.*



BEFORE WE BEGIN ...

I know you are excited to get started on your 'Journey To Spiritual Transformation', but let's first take a brief 'Spiritual Assessment' of our lives. This assessment will help us discover our weaknesses and strengths. We will take it before we begin the 31 DAY CHALLENGE and also afterwards.

Read over and rate each question on a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being the 'Worst' and 10 being the 'Best').

~~✍~~ How would you rate your overall Spiritual Life? BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

~~✍~~ Do you spend time in God's Word daily? BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

~~✍~~ Is your prayer life consistently exercised daily? BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

~~✍~~ Do you spend time praying for others frequently? BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

 How much desire do you have to live 'abundantly' with joy, peace and contentment?

BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

 Do you feel you are living a victorious, abundant Christian life?

BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

 Are there things in your life (sins, habits, people, etc.) hindering your relationship with the Lord?

BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

 Would you be willing to commit to this 31 DAY CHALLENGE?

BEFORE _____ AFTER _____

HOW DID YOU DO? ...

Add & Record Totals Here

AFTER = _____

BEFORE = _____ (subtract BEFORE from the AFTER for your 'Spiritual Improvement Score')

SPIRITUAL IMPROVEMENT = _____ **Congratulations!** You are well on your way to a life of Spiritual Transformation!

Okay now, let's get down to business! If you are up to this 31 DAY CHALLENGE that will change your life, then read and sign the pledge below. Keep in mind, however; this is a promise made to God, yourself and to your witness. In other words, this is a very serious commitment and should not be taken lightly!

31 DAY CHALLENGE PLEDGE

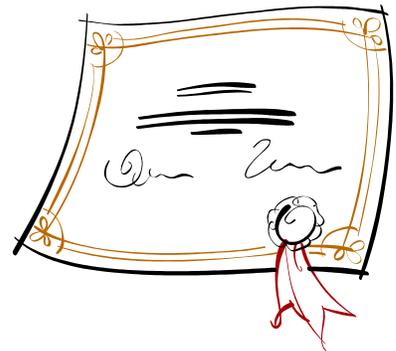
I _____ hereby pledge to take this 31 DAY CHALLENGE. I will read each day from the book of Psalms and Proverbs and spend at least 30 minutes in prayer worshipping God, praying for others and for my own needs. I believe and trust that God will transform my Spiritual Life and establish a strong, lasting relationship with Him.

Signed _____ Starting Date _____

WHATS NEXT? ...

After your successful completion of your 31 DAY CHALLENGE, it's time to go back and take the 'Spiritual Assessment' again. Record your score in the AFTER space and subtract the BEFORE from the AFTER to find out how much you have improved your spiritual life.

When you complete this 31 DAY CHALLENGE, I will send you an electronic Certificate of Completion with your name printed on it, suitable for printing and framing if you like.



BUT WAIT

YOU CAN'T STOP THERE! ...

Just because you have finished the 31 DAY CHALLENGE, reading from God's Word and praying for an entire month, it doesn't mean you should return to your old habits again – absolutely not! As the old saying goes, 'This is only the tip of the iceberg'. The completion of this challenge is simply a starting point on a life-long journey of Spiritual transformation culminating with our ultimate and final, eternal transformation.

I am working on another, even greater challenge to follow! My friends, we are well underway to transforming our lives from a simple, plain, cocoon, to a beautiful and graceful butterfly in the Lord's service. I'll see you at the end of your 31 DAY CHALLENGE!

'Keep on praising, praying and proclaiming the Word of Truth!'

– Pastor Greg

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