

W **H** ~~**A**~~ **T** **I** **F**

20 DAY
PRAYER GUIDE

20-DAY PRAYER GUIDE

Port City Church **Vision** Campaign 2019

Every great movement of God starts with prayer, and every great movement of God involves regular people. We have provided this 20-day prayer guide for you to use as we position ourselves to hear from God so we can move in God's direction, and experience God's best. **What if we step out together in faith and see God make the impossible possible?**

Follow this daily routine for the next 20 days of prayer:

1 // Read

Read the text provided in your Bible or on your media device. Read more than one translation. Copy the verse down in a journal or on an index card.

2 // Think

Consider what the text meant to the first people who heard/read it and how it applies to your life right now. Rewrite it in your own words.

3 // Pray

As you position yourself to hear from God, ask God for clarity, direction, and boldness to pursue God's best. Thank God for making the impossible possible.

4 // Act

As you discover and gain clarity about God's direction for you, leverage the boldness God gives you to pursue God's best in every area of your life.

20 scripture references:

Oct 21 // Ephesians 3:20-21

Oct 22 // Hebrews 11:1-3

Oct 23 // Hebrews 11:4

Oct 24 // Hebrews 11:5-6

Oct 25 // Hebrews 11:7

Oct 28 // Hebrews 11:8-9

Oct 29 // Hebrews 11:11-12

Oct 30 // Hebrews 11:13-16

Oct 31 // Hebrews 11:17-19

Nov 1 // Hebrews 11:20

Nov 4 // Hebrews 11:21

Nov 5 // Hebrews 11:22

Nov 6 // Hebrews 11:23

Nov 7 // Hebrews 11:24-26

Nov 8 // Hebrews 11:27-28

Nov 11 // Hebrews 11:29-30

Nov 12 // Hebrews 11:31

Nov 13 // Hebrews 11:32-38

Nov 14 // Hebrews 11:39-40

Nov 15 // Matthew 17:20 & Mark 11:23-24

Note, anyone can download this 20-day prayer guide at weareportcity.com/what-if.

Before you scroll down or turn the page, ask God to adjust your vision over the next four weeks so the "what" in "what if" comes into focus.

October 21 //

—
Read Ephesians 3:20-21

1 // Read

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

2 // Think

In ancient Greek the word glory in verse 21 is *doxa*. These verses are part of a larger prayer. This prayer is a doxology or “glory saying”. The apostle Paul wanted Christians in Ephesus (and us) to know that often our imaginations are not big enough when we pray, when we plan, and when we take matters into our own hands. God is able (Say this to yourself_ “God is able”) and God enables us to think and do beyond our capacity. The apostle Paul wanted his audience to get it: what is to come is greater than what has been done. When we get it, we walk in this truth, and God gets the glory.

3 // Pray

God, thank you for being able far more abundantly than all I ask for or think about. You are the God of the impossible. Nothing is impossible for you, therefore your people can work wonders, even me! Help me to get it: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Make my life a doxology_a glory speak of your greatness and goodness_in Jesus name, amen.

(What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

How will you walk in the truth that God is able, this week? We don't have to change the world just yet! What low-risk action can you take today to glorify God?

October 22 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:1-3

1 // Read

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the people of old received their commendation. 3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

2 // Think

So, we do not exactly know who wrote the book or letter known to us as Hebrews. Nevertheless, it has challenged and encouraged Christians for generations. In verses 1-3, we learn faith is living life in light of the reality of God and in the assurance that God fulfills God's promises. Generations of people throughout human history are interconnected by this faith in the God who started it all and who began a good work in each of us. We may not know everything about one another, but God certainly knows each of us_God imagined us and made us! If we need a jolt of faith, let us consider the fact that God was faithful for countless people before us. Therefore, we can trust God to come through for us and others when it matters most. Often what God is up to in and around us is not visible to us until God makes it clear.

3 // Pray

God, you are the author and perfecter of faith. It is a fact you have been faithful throughout human history. You have come through for countless people, and all of humanity, time and again. Throughout this vision campaign, will you increase my faith. Give me a supernatural confidence in your faithfulness, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

What has God given you a conviction about or burden for but you have yet to see a resolution or received an answer? Now, surrender the outcomes God. (Trust that God will make it clear, over the next several weeks, what is your part and what is God's part.)

October 23 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:4

1 // Read

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

2 // Think

God rewards people who seek him. The prize is relationship and intimacy. Intimacy is familiarity. Familiarity results in knowing what God wants or what God would do in a particular situation_what is pleasing to God. Abel is a biblical example of a person who demonstrated faith in expectation that his life would be a sermon about God's faithfulness, and even after his death, a legacy for future generations. Faith is living life depending on the fact that those things which God has promised, and for which we hope, are actually real. People without faith live for rewards of this world that they can see and "own". People of faith pursue intimacy with God because they know it is the truly real and lasting reward.

3 // Pray

God, help me to understand out of all the things I have sought in this life the real prize is a relationship with you, and intimate knowledge of your purposes and plans. Let my life be a sacrifice of praise, a sermon about your faithfulness. Help me to do the work now that will make a lasting impact for generations to come, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

What gifts has God given you to steward (be responsible for, manage)? Start by considering your experience, your education, your expertise, and even your natural gifts. On a scale of 1-10, how willing are you to return these gifts to God to be used to make an impact that will reverberate for future generations? What one step will you take this week to lean into greater intimacy with God, so you move to a 10 on that scale?

October 24 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:5-6

1 // Read

5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

2 // Think

People of faith believe that God exists. This reminds us of the earlier phrase, “things not seen” (11:1). We do not see God with our eyes, but we know that God is a living God. The phrase that God rewards those who seek God reminds us of the earlier words “things hoped for” (11:1). God comes through for us, in the end, but that end is not death! Enoch’s story is a witness to the reality that God’s promises go far beyond death. Faithfulness is living as if the God of the Bible who can be depended on is the basic reality of existence. We do not know a lot about Enoch, although he apparently depended on God’s power for the present and trusted in God’s promises for the future, and this pleased God. In other words, he walked with God (see Gen 5:22 for reference).

3 // Pray

God, help me to live my life according to the unseen realities of heaven rather than the visible and temporal things of the dominant culture. Even though I cannot see you with my eyes; as I walk, help me to experience your power in the present and trust your promises for my future, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

As you walk by faith, not by sight, (2 Cor 5:7) what one step can you take this week to position yourself to draw nearer to God?

October 25 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:7

1 // Read

7 By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

2 // Think

The example of Noah illustrates the clear connection between faith and obedience. The phrase reverent fear could also be read as “moved with godly fear” or “holy fear”. Simply put, Noah obeyed the warning God gave him. Godly fear is conviction of the reality of God; of God’s power, of God’s grace, of the gift of God’s promises, and the seriousness of God’s judgment. Godly fear is a way of describing faith. Noah realized that God’s warnings were just as sure as God’s promises. The judgement that came in a flood is a type of final judgement that is still future. People may not always agree or like it when we pursue the things of God. Do not let opposition be the cause of our own disobedience. When we hear from God, we have a responsibility to act, and to be an example of faithfulness for others. Although we cannot determine their individual responses to God, we can do our part, and trust God for the rest.

3 // Pray

God, help me to be obedient to your commands even when I face opposition from others, or my own apathy. Put a holy fear within me to respond to and to share the message of salvation with others with a sense of urgency, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Who in your social network (family, friends, co-workers, neighbors) are you most burdened for? Claim this truth over their life: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1). What one thing can you do this week with a sense of urgency to be a saving grace in their life?

October 28 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:8-9

1 // Read

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.

2 // Think

Abraham was called to “go out” from the place where he lived to an indefinite place where only later he would get God’s best. He was to leave the security of home for “someplace” which he would inherit “sometime.” God was like, “You’ll know when you get there.” Verse 9 makes it clear that, when he got to the Promised Land, he lived there as a stranger. When we hear from God and go in God’s direction, it can feel strange because it requires us to make a definitive break from the old patterns of belief and behavior that we agreed with and were possibly content with for so long. God’s blueprint for us is intended to transform us so we can do our part in breaking the cycles of dysfunction in our family, our community, and the world. Abraham’s son and grandson became “heirs with him of the same promise.” Now read verse 10. God is described as designer and builder. God is the author and perfecter of faith and God doesn’t leave projects unfinished. God will complete the work God is beginning in you!

3 // Pray

God, help me to make a clean break from the old patterns of belief and behavior I used to agree with and be okay with. Help me to do my part in breaking the cycles of dysfunction in my family and my community. Thank you for not leaving me unfinished, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Go for a walk, drive, or sit in a public space (coffee shop, library, etc) and see if you can spot God’s activity around you.

October 29 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:11-12

1 // Read

11 By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

2 // Think

Let's not forget Sarah! Sarah's birth story is an example of impossible pregnancies and impossible faith. She was too old to become pregnant. She had a home birth at 90 years old! When she heard from God that she would become pregnant she laughed to herself (Abraham, her husband, fell down laughing by the way). The story in Genesis reads: She tells God she didn't laugh and God responds, "No, but you did laugh." Being on mission with God, being faithful to God's call upon your life, requires a sense of humor sometimes. We know this couple had a sense of humor because they named their son "Laughter," Isaac. The life God plans for us isn't just difficult. It can be fun, joyous, and so much unexpected good can come from giving in to God's purposes and plans for our lives.

3 // Pray

God, I welcome in your power to do the impossible. Help me to also welcome the unexpected good that comes from pursuing your purposes and plans for my life and family, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

As you're going about your day today, choose to smile at someone else_ your spouse, your child, a co-worker, a neighbor, a stranger.

October 30 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:13-16

1 // Read

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

2 // Think

Consider this question: Am I going to live by faith even if it doesn't result in greater security, comfort, wealth, recognition, fewer problems, or success here and now? When we set out to walk by faith, we may hit a wall or we may not get everything we want when we ask for it, and we may be tempted to turn around and go back to what was familiar and comfortable, even if it wasn't good. Abraham and Sarah, and their descendants, are a biblical example of pushing through fears and doubts and setbacks to go after God's best. They may have had to wait in line in the rain, but when they got to the door, God had made sure they were on the guest list. They entered into God's party, and God's rest.

3 // Pray

God, help me to trust you even when I don't get my way, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

If your health will allow, skip one meal today. During the time you'd normally eat, read your bible and pray instead.

October 31 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:17-19

1 // Read

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18 of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." 19 He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

2 // Think

You can read this story in Genesis 22. To preface, please don't try this at home! Unfortunately, at this time in human history, sacrificing your own children to show dedication and gratitude to your god was not out of the question. Isaac was likely older than you might expect upon a surface reading of the text. Even though he was old enough to have pushed his old man around a bit, it surely must have been a traumatic experience. In the end, God is like, "C'mon man, don't actually do it! If you think that's what I want, then you don't know me yet!" Consider this question: How often do we sacrifice our children, or youth in general, going after what we want, or even doing what we think is good and necessary but ultimately isn't God's best? Children and youth are vulnerable, and when we don't meet their legitimate needs our relationships suffer.

3 // Pray

God, give me a sense of heaviness for the children in my own city who have and who are experiencing trauma. Help my church and me to become part of the solution, and not to perpetuate or be ignorant of the problem, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Did you know in Muskegon County, our children and youth are twice as likely to have 4 or more traumatic experiences than in other communities around the nation. View the [ACES Muskegon Community Report](#).

Link for reference: <https://bit.ly/2VVlvEH>

November 1 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:20

1 // Read

20 By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.

2 // Think

It was in regard to their future that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, his sons. Isaac did not merely bless them for the future (“I hope it works out.”), but his blessing pertained to what God was going to do in the future with and through them because of their heritage. He did what he could to develop a burden, passion and vision for the things of God within his children. Imagine being part of a local church that is bold enough to dream God-sized dreams for future generations, preparing them to go out into their world as difference makers, who also have chosen to join God in the reconciliation of all things (see Colossians 1:20).

3 // Pray

God, give me desire to encourage and inspire the next generation to go all in with Jesus, in His name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Speak a word of blessing over a child today such as: “You are good at that,” “God has something special planned for you,” or “You are loved.” Be as specific as possible. Hold your child, call your grandchildren, or if these are not options, just speak to God about it.

November 4 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:21

1 // Read

21 By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.

2 // Think

Jacob was estranged from his son Joseph for a large portion of his life. At the end of his life, Jacob passed on the blessing his father gave him to each of Joseph's sons, his grandsons. Are you starting to see how this works? Being faithful is not about getting what I want. Faithfulness is concerned about what God wants. God always wants to reach the next person, or we might say generation, for relationship. Imagine being part of a local church that exists to reach the next person and the next generation for Jesus. A staff, in this culture, was/is a sign of a person on a journey. We have a responsibility to not only start well but finish well. Finishing well involves helping others start well.

3 // Pray

God, grant me concern and a sense of urgency for reaching the next person for Jesus. Help me to be less concerned about my own preferences and getting my way if it helps me better connect with the next generation, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Let someone else have their way today or this week, without complaining or becoming resentful. Try it. You might like it.

November 5 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:22

1 // Read

22 By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

2 // Think

Joseph believed so strongly that God would deliver Israel from Egypt and bring them into Canaan that he commanded them to take his bones with them and bury him there (see Genesis 50:24–26). His faith was strong enough that it led him to take action: he commanded his children to take his remains with them. Faith isn't just belief. Maybe you've heard the phrases "leap of faith," "step of faith," and "faith in action." God activates faith in us, and therefore we act on faith. Christians are encouraged to "be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). If our "Christian" beliefs do not result in Christlike behaviors, then we must go back to the source, God's word. Imagine being part of a local church that doesn't just talk about being Christians, but demonstrates our faith in action. If when we pray and plan there does not feel like there is a degree of risk involved, as if God is going to have to come through, then we may not be doing it right.

3 // Pray

God, develop in me the mind and attitude of Jesus, who was humble, who took risks, even risked his life for the sake of others, in his Name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Go ahead and decide right now, the next time God is obviously prompting you to do or say something (and not something rude or insensitive by the way), no matter how nervous you are, you're going to do it.

November 6 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:23

1 // Read

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

2 // Think

The God who enabled Abraham and Sarah to have Isaac although they were old and Sarah had been barren, preserved the life of Moses through the faith of his parents. His parents hid him, in other words, protected his innocence no matter the cost. "They saw that the child was beautiful" could be translated "no ordinary child". Truth is, no child is ordinary. Moses' parents saw that God had a special purpose for him. Thus they acted contrary to the standards of this world in order to position him for his destiny. Muskegon needs more families and church families who are willing to do whatever takes, no matter the cost, to position children in this community for their God-given destiny. There are Moseses in every neighborhood in Muskegon County who may not reach their potential in life if not for trustworthy, exceptional adults who protect it and cultivate it.

3 // Pray

God, I pray for the children in Muskegon County who do not have trustworthy, exceptional adults in their life to protect them and cultivate their potential in life. Help me to learn about and respond to opportunities to position children in my community for their God-given destiny, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

The next time you notice a parent, guardian, or trustworthy adult doing an exceptional job with a child, let them know they are doing the Lord's work, and you appreciate them.

November 7 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:24-26

1 // Read

24 By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

2 // Think

By identifying with the terrible suffering the Israelites experienced in Egypt, Moses chose solidarity with the vulnerable and oppressed in his society. His decision to do so was a foreshadowing of Christ's decision to identify with the total human experience through what is often referred to as the Incarnation. The Message version of the Bible says it like this, "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood" (John 1:14). Even if some of Egypt's pleasures were not immoral in themselves, it would have been a distraction for Moses to have chosen them instead of his destiny. Even good things are wrong when they keep us from getting God's best for ourselves and others. Being "grown up" or mature is understanding God's best for you and involves you helping others get God's best for them. Imagine being part of a local church that meets others where they are at (and then helps them get where they need to be) instead of just expecting others to meet us where we are at so we can remain comfortable.

3 // Pray

God, move me out of my comfort zone so I can meet others where they are at, realizing you are already with and among people, especially the vulnerable, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

View the [Muskegon Livability Framework](#) from the Muskegon CHIR to learn more about community conditions and the root causes in the way of Muskegon County being a just and equitable or livable place for all people.

Link for reference: <https://livabilitylab.com> (scroll to "Download the Livability Lab Framework")

November 8 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:27-28

1 // Read

27 By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

2 // Think

Moses endured suffering, but he was not any more intimidated than his parents had been. When Moses returned to Egypt to deliver the Hebrew people from oppression, he was not asking them to do anything he had not already done himself. He had already abandoned Egypt, faced hardship in the wilderness, and overcome fear. His story was an inspiration to others, a testimony of God's faithfulness to turn our mess into ministry. Moses overcame his fears about his past by placing his faith in God. Once God matured him in the wilderness before he returned to Egypt decades later. God often calls us to return to the very contexts and subcultures that used to be toxic for us so we can transform them. We effectively become a *changed* agents who can affect godly change. Biblically, Egypt as an oppressive system for God's people, represents the very things God's people needed to be set free from.

3 // Pray

God, help me to overcome my fears about my past and present. Make my life a testimony of your faithfulness to turn any person's mess into ministry, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

What hurt, habitual sin, or character defect do you need to be set free from? Cry out right now to the God who delivers.

November 11 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:29-30

1 // Read

29 By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

2 // Think

God opened the sea so that deliverance was available to them, but they had to receive that deliverance by faith: They had to obey God by literally walking through where the water used to be, trusting God to keep the water held back. The text informs us it was “as on dry land,” which means they did not have to wade in the mud. God thought of everything! Now between the walls of Jericho falling down and that Red Sea experience, there was a whole generation of people who wandered around in the wilderness for years (understand it should have only taken months to go in God’s direction and get God’s best). We should not want to be part of a “wilderness” generation that gets skipped over because we did not demonstrate faith when it mattered most (see Hebrews 3:7–4:11). We should not want to be the cause of delay for God’s plan unfolding. In contrast, those who crossed the sea and surrounded Jericho demonstrated faith together with others who were faithful. They overcame the obstacles because they were not alone in their demonstration of faith. Each person and family were surrounded by other positive people of faith.

3 // Pray

God, help me to see and participate in your plan unfolding for Muskegon County. May we be a generation that moves the timeline of heaven forward, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

There is a difference in trying (on our own) and training (with others). There are several small groups offered through our church. If you are not already part of a group for support and encouragement, consider showing interest in a small group.

Link for reference: <https://www.weareportcity.com/connect/small-groups/>

November 12 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:31

1 // Read

31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

2 // Think

Okay, first of all, a prostitute is mentioned here as a godly example. (By the way, what were the spies doing visiting her in the first place? Nevermind.) Before you get upset, remember, this is the Bible and we are not making this up_must be there for a reason. Second, Rahab is mentioned in Jesus' genealogy (See Matthew 1:5). She was a Canaanite, and one example of Jesus' bloodline including Arabs whose modern-day descendants live in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. Rahab was the one person in Jericho, along with her family and her friends, who experienced God's power of deliverance. She was an indigenous leader before we knew what that was. She was not the kind of person we might expect to be included in a Hall of Fame of faith, nevertheless she is. Consider how many people we might disqualify, but in faith, God has very specific purposes and plans for. The gospel is for every person, no matter their current situation in life. Rahab became a great great great grandmother of Jesus the Messiah. Surely no one saw that in her future. Imagine being part of a local church that does not just view marginalized people through the lens of their problems but helps them see and achieve the potentials and possibilities of their life with God.

3 // Pray

God, I am amazed you can utilize anyone anywhere. Help me to not write others off, to not view others as too far gone, and to even be a lifeline for those who seem far off from God, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Make the decision right now, the next time your prejudices and assumptions are triggered by a person, you will not write them off or curse them. Instead, you will ask God who inspired the sermon "everyone who (whosoever) calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21) to bless them because they are a "whosoever".

November 13 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:32-38

1 // Read

32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. 36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two,[a] they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— 38 of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

2 // Think

This section reads like a catalog of blockbuster films doesn't it? The rapid fire list of names mentioned covers the eras of the judges, kings, prophets, and beyond. There is contrast between victory and suffering here. There is political success and political disenfranchisement. There is escape from death and suffering of death. There are military victories and torture and imprisonment. The supernatural was normal for these heroes of faith, but so was sacrifice and suffering. We must manage our expectations if we are going to live faithfully. If we do not expect supernatural results we surely will not get them, and even when we do expect them, we may not. We should expect to be treated poorly by those whose power structures threaten our borderless love and forgiveness.

3 // Pray

God, manage my expectations so I not only expect supernatural results, but get them, and even when I do not, help me to trust you still, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

The very next time you are about to make an important decision, pause and ask yourself, "Am I making this decision based on my feelings and fears or faith (in God, myself and others) and facts?"

November 14 //

—
Read Hebrews 11:39-40

1 // Read

39 And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

2 // Think

Through Christ, Christians have greater privileges than the Old Testament faithful had. Therefore we have a greater responsibility to live in faith and obedience. Many of the heroes of faith from the Old Testament received various things God had promised them, but none of them saw the fulfillment of the Promise (with a capital P), direct access to God and God's power and presence activated in us to do good works which God prepared for us in advance (see Ephesians 2:10). It is as if the author or authors of Hebrews want Christians to not just reminisce about and celebrate the past, but to think of it as a warm-up act to what God is about to do in and through us here and now. The Bible continually encourages people of faith to remember and continually realize that what is to come is greater than what has been done.

3 // Pray

God, give me a God-sized vision for my life and enable me to fulfill my responsibility as a follower of Jesus to carry this message of hope to others, in His name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Write one sentence mission and vision statements for your life. A mission statement answers the question, "Why do I exist or what is my purpose?" A vision statement answers the question, "What will it look like if I accomplish my mission or purpose?"

November 15 //

—
Read Matthew 17:20 & Mark 11:23-24

1 // Read

20 He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”

23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

2 // Think

You might be thinking, “Nope, not me. That’s for someone else.” Stop it. These are the words of Jesus for you. Reread the text and insert your name everywhere the word “you” or “whoever” or “his” or “he” or “him” (you get the point) is used. Scientists now agree: “Our bodies are made of remnants of stars and massive explosions in the galaxies” ([National Geographic](#)). That means you are an actual rock-star! Check this out: In 2014, the fourth most powerful supercomputer on the planet took a total of forty minutes to map only one second of human brain activity ([Independent](#)). That mind of yours, there is a lot going on inside there isn’t there. At least one human being on the planet can push 1,800 lbs of weights two-and-a-half yards ([CBS Sports](#)). You’ve got the power! Jesus said, “you [can] say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.” 1,800 lbs ain’t got nothing on a mountain! The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to Christians saying, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2, NIV) A change of behavior starts with a change in one’s thinking. A change in the physical is initiated in the invisible. *Trans* means “move” and *form* is “structure.” To “transform” is to move something.

3 // Pray

God, help me to access your power within me, help me to give it away, use it for a higher purpose, and grow it in relationships, without hoarding it, and without using it for selfish ends, in Jesus name, amen. (What else do you want to say to God? What is God saying to you?)

4 // Act

Find a sand dune and try to command it to jump into Lake Michigan_just kidding! In all seriousness, what “mountain” in your life are you ready to speak to, and transform?