



Pathways Weekly Reading & Prayer Guide

Week 3: Depending on God

Feb. 26-March 4 • Pastor Zac McGowen

Introduction:

One of the underlying reasons we don't pray with the frequency and passion we know we should is because of a deep-seeded derision for dependence. We do not want to rely on anyone or anything, and often we are taught that to do so is a sign of weakness. Though we may give lip-service to our dependence on God, we orient our lives toward an attitude of independence and self-sufficiency.

What are the primary methods of declaring our independence? Acquisition of wealth, promotion of health, securing personal influence in the civic, family, vocational, and/or religious arenas to name a few.

Over the next week we are going to explore five biblical passages that unpack our spiritual need for dependence and the obstacles to realizing it.

Day 1

Explore: Mark 10:13-16

- What is your main struggle with this passage?
- What is your main encouragement?
- In what ways are we to approach God like a little child?

Pray:

- Thank God for calling His children and for being a good Father.
- Admit the areas you struggle with being a child before Him.
- Ask God to develop a spirit of child-like dependence in you.

Day 2

Explore: Mark 10:17-25

- What do you notice about the rich young man's question and responses to Jesus?
- Notice how Jesus address His disciples and this narrative's context with the previous passage. What is Jesus saying about the desire to acquire "security" on our own?
- In what ways do you try to create security for yourself?

Pray:

- Express your gratitude that God truly provides for all your needs. Be specific about those things.
- Confess ways that you have tried to create security on your own without acknowledging God.
- Ask God to help you put those trappings of security in their proper place... ask God for opportunities to be generous to others, ask for opportunities to be a service to someone.

Day 3

Explore: James 5:1-11

- What two groups is James addressing here? What does he say to them?
- Why is the contrast between the rich and the poor so important in the Bible?
- No one is immune to the temptation of wealth. How does it affect you?

Pray:

Meditate on Matthew 6:16-34 by writing your prayers that:

- 1) turn mentions of God's provision into specific prayers thanking Him for what He has given you, and
- 2) turn the allusions of greed or financial anxiety into specific confessions for your life.

Day 4

Explore: 2 Chronicles 14

- What temptation would King Asa have faced in his position? What would his options have been when facing an enemy?
- What do King Asa's actions at the beginning of the chapter reveal about his character?
- How does his character translate into a prayer given during a moment of crisis?

Pray: Use King Asa's prayer to:

- talk to God about the ways He has helped you in the past...
- honestly ask God for help now... what battles are you facing that God can fight for you?

Day 5

Explore: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

- What do you notice about the scene set around King Jehoshaphat's public prayer? Who is mentioned as surrounding him?
- How would you describe the content of his prayer?
- What are the people of Judah told to do to gain victory?

Pray:

- Thank God for being the ultimate ruler and determiner of history and our individual stories.
- If you or someone you love is facing an undecipherable problem, pray through all its details and conclude with Jehoshaphat's words from 2 Chronicles 20:12.
- Spend some time praying through the push and pull between your desire for independence and your spiritual need to depend on God.

Wisdom from Others

Book Suggested Readings

Too Busy Not To Pray (Hybels) - Chapters 3-4

A Praying Life (Miller) - Chapters 6-8

Prayer (Yancey) - Chapters 5-6