



**increase** *your hope in  
the new year*

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15-Day Prayer & Scripture Guide for 2018



## Here's to a hope-filled New Year!

As I look back on 2017, in my little sphere of the world, it was a tough year. Death, rejection, sickness, relational discord, and violence ravaged the lives of many people I know, including myself. It was painful to watch. Painful to experience and endure. But love, joy, hope, faith, and the promise of a new year remain.

I've been praying a lot for 2018—for God to make beauty out of the ashes—and in those prayers I feel nothing but hope for the year ahead. Regardless of what happens this year, I'm expecting God to do some pretty amazing things. And I'm hopeful that with this fresh start, my faith will only continue to strengthen and grow. I'm hoping this for you, too.

Today, I want to invite you to feed your faith in 2018 by joining me in this 15-day Prayer and Scripture Guide that will help you hit the reset button on your walk with Jesus. Each day's prayer challenge revolves around one area of focus, but you can feel free to add to it as you feel led by the Spirit. Ready to have an incredible year? Let's get started!

# Day 1

Pray that God would awaken the passion inside of you to live for Him and Him alone.

Ask God to set a fire within you – a hunger for more of Him and His Word. Pray that your desire to be close to God would only continue to increase. Spend a few minutes remembering and journaling about how you felt when you first came to know Jesus. Ask God to make you feel that way again.

*Read:* Ephesians 3:14-21; Romans 15:5-6



# Day 2



## Pray for steadfastness.

The world is full of many distractions, and each new year brings the opportunity for more disorder. Pray for steadfastness. Ask God to steady your heart, direct your steps and help you keep your eyes fixed on Him. Thank Him for giving you the strength you need to stand firm on His promises when the rest of the world is wavering.

*Read:* [1 Peter 5:7-10](#)

*Read:* [How to Stand Strong in Steadfast Authority in Prayer](#) by Debbie Przybylski



# Day 3



## Pray for spiritual growth.

Ask God to give you the grace to know Him more, in spirit and in truth. Thank Him for His commitment to complete the good work He began in you, as Philippians 1:6 promises. During your quiet time, make a list of areas where you'd like to grow specifically this year. For example, maybe you'd like to serve in the community more, get involved at your church, tell more people about Jesus, keep a God gratitude journal or just spend more time in God's presence.

*Read:* [Philippians 1:6](#)

# Day 4

Thank God for His never-ending love.

Ask that He would cultivate within you a deeper understanding of His love. Ask Him to fill you with His love until you are overflowing. Pray that your life could be a reflection of His love to everyone you meet. Think about tangible ways that you can show God's love to others.

*Read:* Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:9-11





# Day 5

Today, pray for God to fill you with His great joy.

In these days following Christmas, joy is still fresh on all of our minds. Emmanuel has come. God is with us. Joy has entered the world, and that joy is the very presence of God. Today, pray for God to fill you with His great joy. Ask God to help you learn to receive and live out of this great gift. Thank Him for sending His son to be born in a manger and bring joy to the world.

*Read:* [1 Peter 1:8-9](#); [Isaiah 35:10](#)

*Read:* [Don't Let the Enemy Steal Your Joy](#) by Debbie McDaniel

# Day 6

## Pray for peace.

Pray for peace – on Earth, and in your workplace, home and heart. Pray that the Prince of Peace would come and unite His people. Pray for harmony among the nations. Lastly, pray for peace within your very own soul. Lay your stress, anxiety and fear at God's feet and ask Him to speak peace and calm over your situations. Spend a few moments breathing in God's peace and breathing out your stress.

*Read:* [Colossians 3:15](#); [Psalm 29:11](#)



# Day 7

## Pray for patience.

We live in a culture that wants everything, and wants it yesterday. Pray for patience. Pray for strength to be counterculture and break free from the world of instant gratification. Ask God to replace your restlessness with patience, contentment and peace. Release whatever you're feeling impatient about into His hands and trust that His timing is perfect.

*Read:* Romans 8:24-30

*Read:* How to Cultivate Patience in a World of Instant Gratification by Kate Motaung





# Day 8

Pray for a heart of kindness.

Pray for a heart that is tender, meek and mild like Jesus. Ask God to show you how to be kind and compassionate in everything that you do. Ask Him to help you be tenderhearted and forgive others, just as in Christ God forgave you.

*Read:* [Isaiah 54:8](#); [Colossians 3:12](#)

# Day 9

Today, spend a few minutes reflecting on God's goodness.

Today, spend a few minutes reflecting on God's goodness. Thank Him for his goodness, sovereignty, compassion and mercy. Thank Him for every good and perfect gift He has blessed you with. Thank Him for being so gracious, loving and patient with mankind. Ask Him to help you remember to give thanks for all He has done and will continue to do.

*Read:* Psalm 107; Psalm 145



# Day 10



## Pray for faithfulness.

Pray that God would keep you faithful in serving Him all the days of your life. Pray that when you wake up your first desire would be to feast on God's Word and drink in His presence, so that you can serve Him in faith and love. Ask God to help you put all selfishness aside so that you can do His will.

*Read:* Deuteronomy 10:12-13; Hebrews 10:23





# Day 11

## Choose what kind of attitude you want to have.

Our attitude influences every part of our lives. And here's the wonderful thing: We have the power to choose what kind of attitude we want to have. That means we get to choose what kind of life we lead. Pray for a Christ-like attitude. Pray that even when things go horribly, you will have the courage to stay positive and pure. Ask God to renew your mind to see trials as an opportunity for great good.

*Read:* [Philippians 4:8-9](#)





# Day 12

## Pray for courage.

Ask God to help you trust in Him completely, even when fear threatens to weaken your faith. Pray that when the time comes for you to be brave, you will remember that God is with you. Pray for a courageous heart – a heart that does the right thing even if it's afraid. A heart that walks boldly into whatever God calls you to do.

*Read:* Joshua's courageous story in [Deuteronomy 31](#).

# Day 13

## Have confidence in God.

If there was one thing we all could use a healthy dose of, it would be holy confidence – confidence that comes from knowing we are deeply loved, rescued and set free. Today, pray that God would remind you of the simple truth that confidence can only be found in chasing after Him. Ask God to help you become comfortable with sharing your story, and ask Him to provide opportunities to be a witness to the world.

*Read:* 1 John 5:14, Hebrews 4:16

*Read:* A Prayer for Confidence by Lauren Gaskill



# Day 14



## Pray for wisdom.

We know that the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere (James 3:17). Pray that God would fill you with heavenly wisdom, so that you can increase in knowledge and understanding of Him. Spend a few minutes reflecting on the wise people in your life. What makes them wise? What do you admire about them?

*Read:* Proverbs 1:7; James 3:17

# Day 15

## Pray for balance.

For many of us, life feels like it's always busy, always teetering on the edge of spinning out of control. Pray that God would help you establish more balance in your daily life. Ask Him to help you remember that there is a time for every event under heaven (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8), and that the life He has called you to is not one of chaos but of holiness. Make a list of everything that is on your plate right now and ask God to show you how to best manage your time.



*Read:* [Ecclesiastes 3:1-8](#)

*Read:* [3 Sure Signs You're Living Outside Your Limits](#) by Kelly Givens

# About the Author



Lauren Gaskill is an author, blogger, and speaker who is passionate about inspiring others to lead joyful, healthy, redeemed lives. She believes life should be sweet—rich in stories, and full of good food, love, encouragement, and inspiration. Lauren is the creator of [MakingLifeSweet.com](http://MakingLifeSweet.com) and the Finding Joy podcast, and she is in the process of publishing her first inspirational book. When she's not writing, Lauren is creating new recipes in the kitchen or spending time outdoors with her husband and Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.