

Twenty-One Days Of Consecration

Ecclesia Oct. 6th-Oct. 26th, 2025

Ecclesia, my hope is that we can set aside a time of sustained attention, intercession, and a settling in quiet simplicity for three weeks. The point is not to add more and more into our lives, or take on so many disciplines at once that we are sure to fail. We don't earn God's favor by our merit or our discipline, we simply respond to an invitation that is ever-present, to turn to the face of the King, to see his hand of care and provision, to return to the well of our first love, and to deepen our lives with God. My prayer is that we will find freedom in limits, answered prayers, new prayers worthy of our Lord, and a deeper awareness and love for neighbor and self.

Grace+peace to you, Ian

1 Peter 4

7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Things to limit:

-Social media/online media. We're trying to subtract what amounts to a huge time-spend for many of us not because those things are inherently bad, but so that we can turn our attention to something greater and embrace a measure of boredom that is so often crowded out by the ever-presence of "these glittering devices." Steinbeck was referring to the human soul with this phrase but so easily we can see how our phones take prominence in this image.

-A Sinful Habit- This may seem like so obvious it doesn't even require stating. But the way sin works is that it is habitual, and we make our homes in it, even though there is a whole in the roof and the walls are collapsing. Change can feel daunting, but change happens by grace and trust. God wants to change you and he is able to change you. What if for the next 21 days you entrusted yourself to him? You confessed and repented when you fall and you sought strength from the Lord to do his will and live for his glory?

Daily Habits:

Scripture- Our church is collectively reading the Gospel of Mark. We have created a wonderful resource here where you can find both a daily reading schedule and a detailed overlook of the contents of the week's reading.

Silence- Our phones so easily fill the void of silence. Our minds were meant to wander and often in their wandering they find the face of God. We have crowded out wandering with cheap dopamine hits and entertainment. Even if you're not a "social media influencer" many of us check email, news, stocks, sports habitually. What if we paused for three weeks?

Self-Inventory- John Wesley would have his small groups reflect on these questions regularly:

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give the Bible time to speak to me everyday?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone about my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I that God I am not as other people, like the Pharisee who despised the tax collector?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
22. Is Christ real to me?

Some of these may feel like leading questions, but they aren't. They are invitations to be honest before Christ and self. These would be great prompts for daily journaling.

Ask, ask, ask: Do you have a need that feels especially large in your life? Have you been waiting for a long time to see God move in an area? What might 21 days of

concerted prayer yield, not in terms of results (who knows?) but perspective. We are believing for answered prayers, but also that God is transforming our hearts through the asking. Ask that your heart's desire would be "to be holy" as God "is holy" (1 Peter 1).

Don't just ask on behalf of yourself. Pray for friends to come to know Christ as he has known and loved them, pray for your neighbors, pray for what breaks your heart in the world. I (Ian) will be praying and interceding for Christians in Nigeria who have been in the midst of long-standing, violent persecution and martyrdom.

The Joy of Holiness- Invite others from Ecclesia to share a meal once during the 21 day time. Break bread and give thanks to the Lord. Offer the habit or hobby that brings you joy as expressed worship to God. Invite the Lord to go on a walk or a run with you, to listen to your favorite podcast with you, to go fishing with you.

The Lord's Prayer- Pause from your day in the afternoon and pray the Lord's prayer. Consider fasting lunch on Thursdays and using the time usually allotted for lunch to go on a prayer walk.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Some books for further reading. One of the ways that our lives deepen is through the witness and story of others. I have found great joy in encountering writing that is pointing me to Christ. I know not everyone is a "reader," so just reminding you that audiobooks count :-) and are a great gift.

Answering God- Eugene Peterson on the psalms

The Jesus Way- Eugene Peterson on the way of Jesus vs all manner of lesser ways

The Deeply Formed Life- Pastor Rich Villodas with keen insights into an integrated life

This Beautiful Truth- Sarah Clarkson talks her struggle with OCD and finding Jesus faithful in the midst of it

God Speaks Through Wombs- Poet Drew Jackson walks through the book of Luke

Seeing Jesus in East Harlem- Pastor Jose Humphries talks about finding God in the midst of the beauty and the brokenness of his place.

Restless Devices- Felicia Wu Song outlines our struggle with addictive technology and the invitation of Jesus that remains.

Jesus Wants To Save Christians- I know Rob Bell has gone a bit adrift in terms of an orthodox expression of faith in Jesus, but this book is such a short mediation on the story of the scriptures and our responsibility as the people of God.

The Soul of Desire- Curt Thompson. This is a great book packed with spiritual insight and the care of a wise and skilled therapist.

Reading While Black- We've had this one around Ecclesia for a while. Dr. McCaulley effortlessly merges critical hermeneutics with an exegesis of his experience as a black man in America.

Life Together- Dietrich Bonhoeffer absolves us of any of the delusions we often carry about community while inviting us to a better way.