



25 Days of Praise

Week One

25 Days of Praise

Printable Devotion Guide

This guide has been provided to use with 25 Days of Praise Card Set. You can purchase them from kellyostanley.com/product/25-days-of-praise/

A special note about our study:

We love to study God's word "verse by verse". While we always offer a verse selection, we encourage you to read the verse in context, asking God to enlighten your heart as you read His truth.

A special thank you to all our devotion writers:

Stephanie K. Adams

Lisa Appelo

Lynn Cowell

Cindy Krall

Mitzi Neely

Michele O'Leary

Nancy Silvers

Jana Kennedy-Spicer

Cindy Wilkins

You can read more about them and find out where to connect with them during and after the advent season in the devotion guide. We know and love each of them and trust you will also!

Father, You are worthy and wonderful, We lift our voices to praise you. Holy, Holy, Holy,
is the Lord God, the Almighty.

We rejoice and give you all the glory.

Amen

PRAISE GOD FOR HIS *listening ear*

"IN MY DESPERATION I PRAYED, AND THE LORD
LISTENED; HE SAVED ME FROM ALL MY TROUBLES."
PSALM 34:6 NLT

25 Days of Praise | Day 01
Praise God for His Listening Ear
Jodie Barrett

Less than three months had passed since our son's burial. I sat in silence and penned a prayer to the listening ear of the LORD. My prayer ended with a declaration for myself:

"Let this be a year of rejoicing...in who You are, the gifts You give, and the life You offer."

That was January of 2019.

I did my best to praise the Lord all year. Each time I read the scriptures I searched for reasons to praise God in my grief, remembering who He was and all He offers to His children.

Circumstances may seem grim, but God is always good.

Complaints are best silenced with prayer and praise.

There is always a reason to offer praise. I found this to be true and I found this to be healing. Thus, why I invite others to "glorify the name of the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together." (Psalm 34:3)

The Eternal One is always listening. His word assures us of this many times. How often have you longed for someone to hear your voice, but found your words fell on deaf ears? There are no gaps of time between

when God hears us. He invites us to come and disclose everything to Him and He promises to listen as we pray.

"You, Lord, hear the desires of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry." Psalm 10:17

Praise God for His listening ear. He listens as we share our struggles. He listens as we lift our praise.



Jodie Barrett is a girl who loves Jesus and sharing His Word. She and her husband, Thomas, reside in Roanoke Rapids, NC and love spending time with family and friends when they aren't working in their family business or exploring new places and foods.

Jodie is a mom and a new Gigi. Some of her favorite people are her adult children, Ryan, who resides in heaven with Jesus, and Lauren, who resides with her husband, Dylan, and their little man, Kolton.

She's the author of *Jingle and Joy, Praying Beneath the Tree*, and a ministry leader with Faithfully Following Ministries where she enjoys teaching alongside her energy filled ministry partner, Donna. Her passion is helping other women discover the treasure of God's word and encouraging them to move into a close relationship with Jesus.

To connect with Jodie visit
www.FaithfullyFollowingMinisries.org
You can also follow Jodie on Facebook at
@FaithfullyFollowingMinistries and Instagram at @faithful2follow



PRAISE GOD FOR HIS *instruction*

"TAKE HOLD OF MY INSTRUCTIONS; DON'T LET THEM GO.
GUARD THEM, FOR THEY ARE
THE KEY TO LIFE."
PROVERBS 4:13 NLT

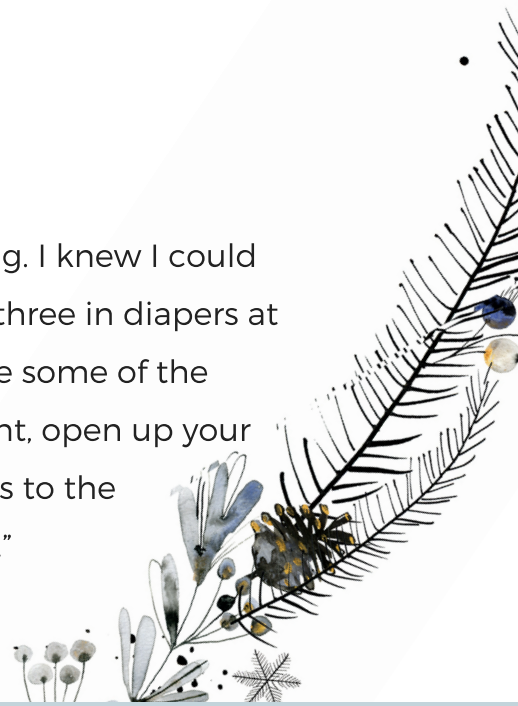
25 Days of Praise | Day 02
Praise God for His Instruction
Cindy Krall

Seven years. That's how long infertility shut the gates on parenthood for my husband and me. Looking back, I can see all the ways God used that season for our good. I had always assumed that one day I would be a Mom. Infertility showed me that I couldn't take that for granted. Although that was hard, it paved the way for life-giving humility.

Flash forward an additional three years, and God blasted open the gates! Our family grew from two to five. Three littles in three years. Do you believe it?! Little did I know that the years to come would drive me even further to my knees. The only thing more consistent than lack of sleep was the repetitive discovery that I didn't have what it took to be the kind of Mom I wanted to be.

Thank heaven for God's instruction.

I remember an occasion in which I was at a loss about parenting. I knew I could find help from scripture but time in His word was a challenge (three in diapers at the same time left little time for reading!) A dear friend gave me some of the wisest counsel I have ever received. "Cindy, if you have a moment, open up your Bible to the book of Proverbs. Go to whatever chapter correlates to the date of the month. Read what you can. Even if it's only one line."



Thus, began a practice for me that has lasted over twenty years. The book of Proverbs is still the most dog-eared, highlighted, marked up, messed up, tear-filled book in my Bible. But Oh! The wisdom!

God used His instruction from Proverbs to guide both my husband and me through anything from a two-year-old temper tantrum to a twenty-two-year-old asking Mom and Dad, "What would you do?"

I'm grateful for all of God's word, but His word of instruction from the book of Proverbs will always elicit praise from my tongue and gratitude from my heart!

Read Matthew 1:18-25
Consider the Lord's instruction to Joseph.
How did He respond?
What was the result?

When asked to describe herself, Cindy's first response will be "wife to Jeff and Mom to four amazing adults"! When others are asked to describe her you will hear, "wise, compassionate, wacky, and prayerful."

God has wired her to love connecting with others through speaking, writing, and of late, in person and online Christ-centered yoga. Cindy would love to meet you over at cindykrall.com or on Facebook at Cindy Krall or Rooted Yoga With Cindy.



PRAISE GOD FOR HIS *refuge*

"YOU ARE MY REFUGE AND MY SHIELD;
YOUR WORD IS MY SOURCE OF HOPE."
PSALM 119:114 NLT

25 Days of Praise | Day 03
Praise God for His Refuge
Jodie Barrett

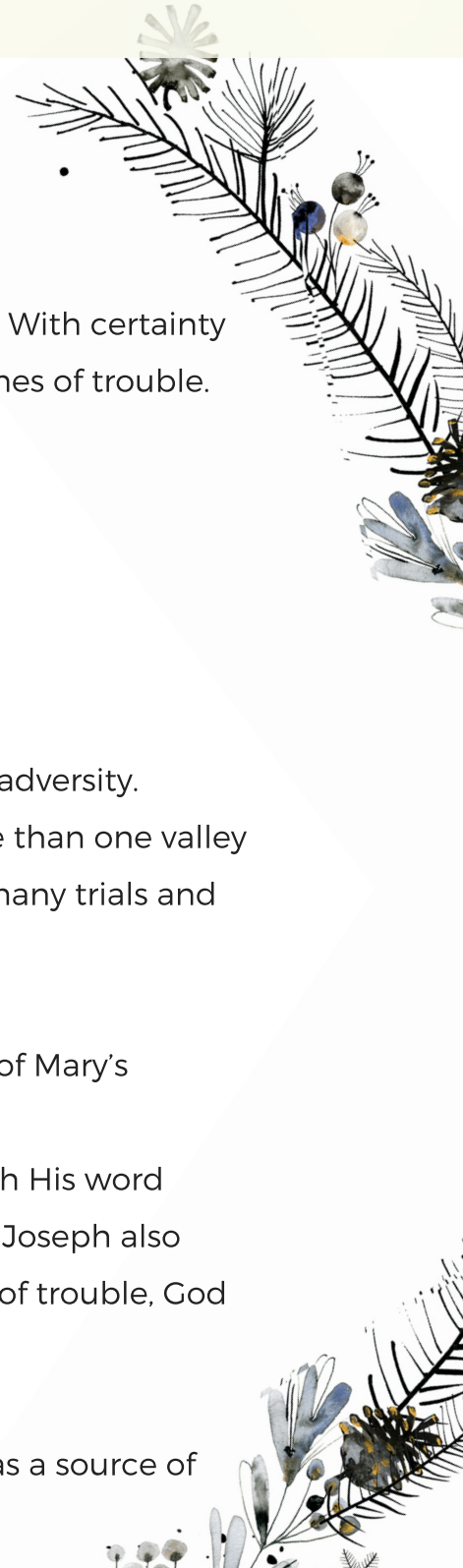
Nahum 1:7 proclaims, "The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble." I stand in awe of the confidence in which Nahum speaks. With certainty he proclaims the goodness of the Lord and notes His benefit in times of trouble. What is certain in this verse?

The Lord is good.
A refuge.
Even in, especially in our times of trouble.

"In times of trouble" is plural and suggests a repeated presence of adversity. Many of us can already attest that we have traveled through more than one valley in our lives. Jesus shared with the disciples about the coming of "many trials and sorrows" in John 16:33.

Consider Mary and Joseph. Each faced uncertainty with the news of Mary's pregnancy during their engagement. In that time, Mary could be stoned for being unwed and with child. God sent a messenger with His word (Luke 1:28-38), and His word brought Mary peace and reassurance. Joseph also received a message from the Lord (Matthew 1:20-23). In their time of trouble, God was a refuge and shield to them, guiding their steps.

Yes, it is certain, we will face trials. But God has given us His word as a source of instruction, comfort, and hope. As we walk through our struggles,



we can put our hope in God, trusting Him to be a place of strength, comfort, hope, and joy.

Today, praise God for being our refuge, a source of hope in times of trouble. Thank Him for all those who have walked through difficult times, faithfully following the Lord to make a way for the birth of our Savior. Our refuge and shield is worthy of our praise!



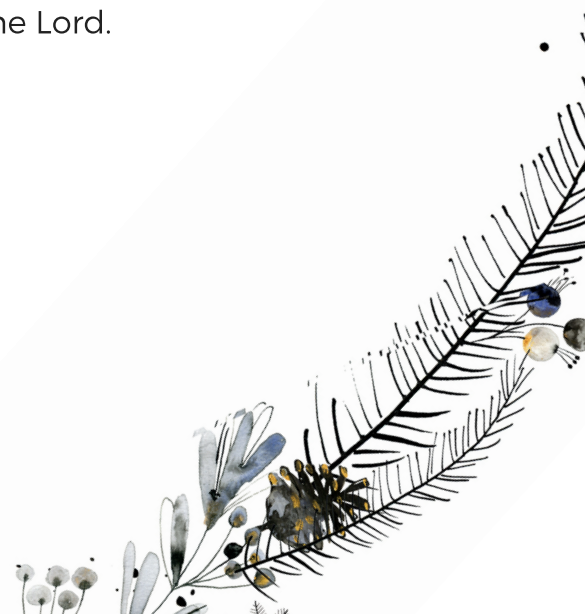
Pause today to read Matthew 1:20-23 and Luke 1:28-38.

When has there been a time that you needed the reassurance of the Lord?

Praise Him for a time that His word became your source of hope to help you continue to walk in faith.

Read Matthew 2:13. How did the Lord provide protection to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus?

Advent is a time of anticipation. As Mary anticipated Jesus' birth, she praised the Lord. Read Luke 1:46-55, making note of the names Mary uses for the Lord.



PRAISE GOD FOR BEING OUR *Shepherd*

"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD. THE GOOD SHEPHERD
SACRIFICES HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.
JOHN 10:11 NLT

25 Days of Praise | Day 04
Praise God for Being Our Shepherd
Lisa Appelo

God who is over us is also God who is with us. Christmas reminds us that we don't have a God who stays far off, but a Shepherd who walks with us in the hard places.

When life feels dark, our Shepherd knows the way. When circumstances seem bleak, our Shepherd meets our need. When the enemy taunts, our Shepherd protects us. And when life implodes with pain, our Shepherd gathers us to himself and carries us through.

How often we think we know best. How often we strive to take care of ourselves and our family. How often we tolerate fear for what could happen. We're tempted to make God Savior but not surrender to him as Shepherd.

Of all the ways God reveals himself, Shepherd is one of the most personal and practical. Is it any wonder that first Christmas that the angels announced Jesus' birth to shepherds first? I imagine these rugged men in turbaned heads and chiseled staffs in hand, bowing before the Great Shepherd who'd come to lay down his life for his sheep.

Psalms 23 says the Lord isn't a shepherd. The Lord isn't our shepherd.

But the Lord is **my Shepherd**. Let's praise God personally. Proclaim the words of Psalm 23 and every time it says "my" substitute your name. Ready?

The Lord is _____ shepherd.

He makes _____ lie down in green pastures.

He leads _____ beside the still waters.



He restores _____ soul.

He leads _____ in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though _____ walks through the valley of the shadow of death, she will fear no evil.

For her shepherd is with her; His rod and his staff, they comfort _____.

The shepherd prepares a table before _____ in the presence of her enemies.

He anoints _____ head with oil; her cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow _____ all the days of her life;

And will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.



Lisa Appelo is a speaker, writer and Bible teacher who inspires women to deepen their faith in loss and find hope in the hard. She's a Florida girl born and raised and followed her passion for writing into law, where she worked as a litigator for many years. God had other plans, quickly increasing her tribe, and when she had her fourth child in 7 years, she retired from law and has been home full time with her children since.

Eight years ago, Lisa went to bed happily married to her high school sweetheart and woke up a widow and single mom. As she navigated grief and shepherded her children through their own grief, God reshaped her broken heart. Lisa is passionate about rich Bible study and teaches a weekly ladies Bible class at her home church. She's a speaker with She Found Joy and has been published at Proverbs 31 Ministries, (in)courage, Risen Motherhood, Jennifer Rothschild and more.

Her days are filled top to bottom with stewarding her precious children, writing, ministry, speaking and running enough to justify lots of dark chocolate. Find her encouragement for faith , grief and hope at LisaAppelo.com and on Instagram @lisaappelo.



PRAISE GOD FOR *being mindful*

"AND MY SPIRIT REJOICES IN GOD MY SAVIOR,
FOR HE HAS BEEN MINDFUL OF THE HUMBLE
STATE OF HIS SERVANT."

LUKE 1:47-48 NIV

25 Days of Praise | Day 05
Praise God for Being Mindful
Jodie Barrett

As a child I visited the White House with a school group. Let me clarify, we visited the *outside* of the White House. We didn't have an invitation or special tickets, we didn't meet or even see the President, and we certainly were not invited inside for a meal at his table.

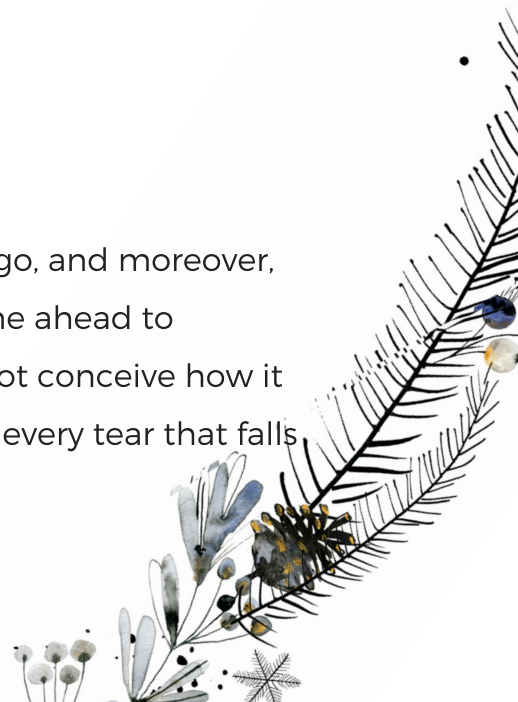
Later, as an adult, my husband and I took our children to the White House and showed them the outside. Even though the President was my husband's Commander and Chief, we still lacked a personal invitation to enter his home. I am certain that he was completely unaware of our presence outside the gate. While the President is working on our behalf, we have never received an invitation from him. I understand. He is remarkably busy running a country and hardly has the time or ability to meet with each and every constituent.

But God.

He is mindful of me...and you.

He counts the hairs of our heads, considers how we come and go, and moreover, gave His Son for our sins. His Son is so mindful of us, He has gone ahead to prepare a special place for us (John 14:2). Our finite minds cannot conceive how it is possible that God can hold the world in His hands and catch every tear that falls from our eyes. But, He does.

Omnipresent and Omnipotent, He has unlimited power and is able to do anything. His Majesty is mindful of all.



You and I can joyfully look forward to not only seeing His grand residence, but we can also trust that there is a place prepared for us. In the meantime, we are invited to come to His table daily and feast upon His word.

Just as Mary, we can rejoice and be glad! Write a prayer of praise to Him, today.

Father,

LUKE 1:46-47

**Oh, how my soul praises
the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God
my Savior!**

For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me
blessed.



PRAISE GOD FOR HIS *unending love*

"GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD!
HIS FAITHFUL LOVE ENDURES FORVER."
PSALM 136:1 NLT

25 Days of Praise | Day 06

Praise God for His Unending Love

Jodie Barrett

Every verse of Psalm 136 distinctively repeats the refrain, "His faithful loves endures forever." From beginning to end, all 26 verses call the reader to consider God's unending love. The first seven verses and the last verse begin with a call to give thanks. While this Psalm may have been a responsive reading for a congregation, we can read it for ourselves, from right where we are, trusting God's listening ear will hear the praise of His children being lifted. We can also read it trusting that His unending love is present today, just as it was when the Psalm was penned.

God's unending love is like none other. His word reassures us that nothing can separate us from His love. Nothing.

"Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow---not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love." Romans 8:38

While many may profess their love for us,
God's is unfailing.

When we want to be reminded of how He loves we read the scriptures and turning to 1 Corinthians 13. In a world filled with fleeting love, God's is sure. Sure, to be patient and kind. Sure, to keep no record of wrongs. Sure, to be unending.



The Life Application Study Bible says, “we never have to worry that God will run out of love because it flows from a well that will never run dry.”

In a world of temporary, God's love is constant and sure.

“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever!” Psalm 136:1



Using Psalm 136 as a guide, write the many reasons you give thanks to the Lord and praise Him for His unending love.





Lord, I praise you...