

This calendar is meant to help you set time aside with Jesus. Decide on where you'll meet Him, and choose a time when you won't fall asleep or be distracted. You can cut this page out and keep it in your Bible. "Come close to God, and God will come close to you" (James 4:8).

MARCH



By Justin & Courtney Rose

Age 31 & 29 | Mayfair Community Church | Metropolitan Division



The abuse of power seems to have always been around. The powerful have often exercised their authority in a burdensome and unjust manner. However, Jesus tells us that His "yoke is easy" and His "burden is light" (**Matthew 11:30**). What does this tell us about Christ?

1

Today is the World Day of Prayer. Please pray against discrimination in your city, state, and school. Pray for oppressed people around the world, that they would be freed, encouraged, and blessed by God.

Psalms 102 is the prayer of someone oppressed.

Use it to pray by changing the word "my" to "their."

2

In the eyes of the world, the discriminated and oppressed are considered the lowest of the low. They are often unseen by the world and uncared for. However, in the Kingdom of God, Jesus flips this on its head. It is actually "those who mourn" who will be comforted (**Matthew 5:4**) and the persecuted who will inherit the Kingdom (**Matthew 5:10**).

3

God has always stood on behalf of the poor and afflicted. There are systems at work in our world that oppress the poor, but "the Lord will take up their case" (**Proverbs 22:23**, NIV). In what ways can you partner with God to stand up for the oppressed?

4

Acts 1:8 lays out Jesus' plan for the growth of the Church and the spreading of the Gospel. He tells His disciples to be His witnesses "in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." What role does diversity and multiculturalism play in the Church? What, in your opinion, does an ideal church "look" like?

5

Discrimination often rears its ugly head when people feel threatened, unheard, or scared. Discrimination is never the correct response to our fears. The Apostle Paul tells us that "there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus" (**Galatians 3:28**).

6

Spend some time journaling today. Write about any discrimination that you have experienced and ask God for healing from those things. Also, write honestly about any discrimination that you may have participated in, and ask God for healing and forgiveness.

7

There are vulnerable people all around us who need care. **Zechariah 7:10** says not to oppress widows, orphans, strangers, and the poor. As Christians, we are called to love all regardless of position or situation. Read **Matthew 25:31-46**.

8

Perhaps you feel discriminated against and oppressed. Remember that God, like a father, is "tender and compassionate to those who fear Him" (**Psalms 103:13**). And, like a mother, "hovers over her young" and spreads her wings around them (**Deuteronomy 32:11**). Find comfort in the love and acceptance of God.

9

Sometimes, if we are honest, we find ourselves in the position of the "oppressor"—either because of something we are personally doing or, as is oftentimes the case, because of our status in the world. Pray for eyes to see the oppressed in the world and for the deliverance of God (**Psalms 72:4**).

10

Read **Leviticus 19:33-34** and think about how we should be treating the "foreigners" among us. We are told to remember that we were once foreigners in Egypt, but furthermore, we were once strangers to God brought in by the love and sacrifice of Christ.

11

Luke 4:18 tells us that one of the reasons Jesus came into the world was so "that the oppressed will be set free." **Galatians 5:1** goes on and says, "Christ has truly set us free." The freedom we find in Christ is the freedom from slavery and sin and the ability to live the human life as it was intended (**Genesis 1:27**). Have you truly been set free?

12

There is a difference between the power structure of the world and that of the Kingdom of God. Read **Matthew 20:25-28** and consider what it looks like to be a leader in God's Kingdom.

13

Throughout Scripture, we are told that all authority and power belongs to God. It is important to note that Christ chose to relinquish that power, for a time, in order to experience death on our behalf. It is just as important to note that Christ chooses to give us His power through the Holy Spirit. Read **Acts 1:8**. What is amazing about the power of Christ?

14

Hosea 5:11 says, "The people of Israel will be crushed and broken by My judgment because they are determined to worship idols." What things are you putting before God? What other things do you worship? How can you "tear down" those idols?

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Throughout the Bible, especially in Genesis, we are shown the divisive and destructive nature of sin and how it separates us from God and one another. Evil oppresses and should be fled from at all costs. If you have questions or concerns about demonic oppression, please talk to a counselor or pastor (officer) immediately. **16**

Ezekiel received a prophetic message from God in which he was told to take two sticks and tie them together, turning them into one stick (**Ezekiel 37:15-19**). Even though there wasn't unity to begin with, now there would be unity through God. In a similar way, Christ unites all believers together through His love and peace (**Ephesians 2:14**). **19**

How aware are you of the sufferings of other people? Sometimes the suffering of another group gets dismissed because we are not good at empathizing and seeing life from someone else's perspective. Placing blame and judgment is easier than being compassionate. Pray that your heart would soften to empathize with people's suffering, rather than having a judgmental heart. **22**

Today is Palm Sunday, when we remember that Jesus Christ is our King of peace. He comes in gently, riding on a young donkey, rather than barging in on a warhorse. Our King has all authority and power, yet He chooses to be the picture of humility, gentleness, and love. Praise God for the example of Christ and the fact that He is our humble King! **25**

Through the breaking of bread in communion, Jesus shows His disciples that He physically and spiritually is the sustenance they need to continue the work of the Kingdom. Are you sustained by Jesus in the way He designed for you to be? Read **Matthew 26:17-30** to see what Jesus says about this. **29**

Rebekah got into trouble because she had a favorite son. Later, Jacob got into trouble because he had a favorite son of his own. But the Apostle Peter learned at the house of Cornelius that God does not play favorites (**Acts 10**). **Romans 2:11** says that "God does not show favoritism." In what ways can you practice true equality in your life? **17**

God can be thought of as a mighty fortress. His walls are thick and safe; enemies cannot get in. He is a refuge, stronghold, and safe place. Whenever we need protection, we can enter in and find rest. Remember that "the Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (**Psalms 9:9**). **20**

How do you feel discrimination takes place in your corps (church)? How prevalent is racism, ageism, or homophobia in your church congregation? Start praying for reconciliation in your corps and examine how you can be a peacemaker in your context. **23**

Look at **Isaiah 42:1-7** where it says, "In faithfulness He will bring forth justice" (NIV). Ask God to make you faithful, to make you faithful to partner with God to bring forth justice in the world. **26**

Psalms 71:5 reminds us that our hope should be found in God. Reexamine your justice goals and hopes for the world. Is God the foundation of those hopes? If we fight on behalf of God without the help of God, we're missing the point. **27**

Today is Good Friday, the day that Jesus was killed on our behalf so that sin could be dealt with once and for all. Today we remember that Jesus hung on the cross so that we would have the opportunity to experience full and abundant life. Spend some time with Jesus today, thanking Him for His love. **30**

Hatred is a dangerous thing because it is divisive, much like sin. Any tinge of hatred can send us spiraling away from God's love and grace, which should define how we live. Read **1 John 4:20** and think about how we can love our enemies and remove all hatred from our minds and hearts. **18**

In the Christmas carol, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," we find these words: "O come, desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind. Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, and be Thyself our King of peace." Pray for your church (corps), that all divisions would cease through the love and presence of Christ. **21**

An old Salvation Army chorus says: "Praise God I'm saved! Praise God I'm saved! All's well, all's well! He sets me free!" What an amazing yet simple truth we can proclaim. Proclaim this today. Pray that this would be true for your family and friends as well. **24**

Fighting for equality in the midst of oppression and discrimination can become discouraging. **Isaiah 59:8-10** reminds us that the Christian life will be difficult. As we contemplate Christ's death and resurrection this week, remember to find joy in the suffering of Christ. **28**

Today is Holy Saturday, the day when Jesus was dead, when His body was in the ground, and when He was dealing with our sin! To the disciples, this day must have felt so cold and hopeless. But we look forward to tomorrow, Resurrection Sunday, when the full power and love of God is made manifest. Jesus died for us all, so that the oppressed and discriminated could find peace in Him. **31**