Day 1

Read Malachi 3:2-4

Malachi foretells the coming of Christ. He tells us that Christ’s work will be that of a refiner, a purifier.

God will use these fires that are crackling around us as refining fires, if we allow Him to. If we submit. If, instead of holding fast to the things of our former lives that distract and distance us from God and each other, we offer them as burned sacrifices. We release them as offerings to God, along with our repentance, our changed hearts, and our changed actions.

Be still, and KNOW that I am God.

Read Psalm 46:10

Let’s sit and listen to God. Pray as individuals and as a family.

- Pray that God would help you embrace the stillness of this season.
- Pray that God would speak to you through that stillness.
- Pray that God would give you ears to hear what He is whispering.

Use the space below to reflect on the scriptures you read and to write out your prayer to God.

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Day 2

We all have a mission here. We were all created for a purpose. Have you ever thought about your life that way? If not, maybe now is a good time to spend some time thinking, praying about it. Spend a few minutes with these questions. Think through them. Pray. Before you talk, write out your answers below and then discuss them as a family.

- What is your mission from God as an individual? What gifts and talents has he bestowed on you and how might you use them to spread and grow God’s kingdom?

- What is your mission as a family?

- Were you living on mission for God?

- What things stood in the way of God having your full attention and your full devotion?

- Would you be willing to give up some of those things, to offer those things as a sacrifice?
Day 3

While our last question yesterday seems straight forward. You most likely had a mixed response. Part of you probably immediately says, “Yes!” But part of you probably also said, “Wait a minute, I really like those things. I don’t want to give them up.” If your heart desires to set these things aside but you find yourself struggling with the idea of actually following through, you are not alone. You find yourself in very good company.

Sacrifice is hard.

The struggle against the temptations this world is real. The battle is real. Jesus, himself acknowledged the struggle between spirit and flesh.

Read Matthew: 26:40-42

What was Jesus’ response to this struggle? He went away and prayed. He prayed for God’s will to be accomplished in His life, that God’s will would win out over any fleshly, earthly will.

Are you prepared to pray that prayer? It a big prayer and it may feel like you are missing something that you would need to live into that prayer. Maybe you do not even really, completely believe that it is possible.

You are not alone.

Read Mark 9:14-24

This passage tells us of a regular man, desperately needing Jesus help. In verse 23 Jesus tells him that all things are possible for one who believes. Immediately the man is struck with two different realizations, his lack of belief and his desire for greater belief. His response in Mark 9:24 is to acknowledge the deficiency of his faith and to ask Jesus to help him with his unbelief.

Maybe that is your first prayer. “I believe; help my unbelief”.

Reflect on your heart. Pray. Use the lines below to offer voice your prayer to God. What do you need God’s help with right now in your life? Do you need help with your belief?
Day 4

Once we have established and strengthened our resolve to believe, once we have even a microgram of faith, Luke 17:5 teaches us the immediate sufficiency and the power of a newly acquired grain of faith.

Read Luke 17: 5-6

As I sit and type this devotional, I hear a knock at my door and paused. I hesitated, almost not wanting to have the work I was doing interrupted. However, I arose and opened the door, because a knock at our door is a rare and notable event. I open the door to find two, sweet boys, standing there smiling at me. They introduced themselves and my husband and I had the best conversation we have had with a neighbor since moving to Illinois.

It turns out that one of the young boys used to live in our house. They liked our dogs and had a dog of their own. We told stories about our dogs. I told them how our dogs like to chase the squirrels. He told me about a time while they lived here, that a window was left open and a squirrel got in through the window, ran all about the house, got stuck behind the refrigerator, and they called animal control to come and help it out. We all laughed chatted a bit more and then they continued their adventure around the neighborhood.

The entire time we were talking, I was filled with peace and joy. Although we chatted on the stoop, at a safe distance, I was never afraid of any germs they might have been carrying. I was DELIGHTED to be having a conversation with them.

As I sit here and reflect, I am struck by how our current circumstances aligned to divinely orchestrate our encounter. I also cannot ignore that my immediate reaction was to see the knock at my door as a distraction and an interruption, and that I almost did not answer.
Read Revelation 3:20

God is knocking, can you hear Him now? Will you answer? What things are holding you back as you get up to go answer the door? Write them down your fears or hesitation below and ask God to remove or help you overcome the obstacles?

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Day 5

Do not miss what is going on around you. This is an opportunity to slow; to hear; to realize our true mission and realign our lives accordingly.

In Christ Church Children’s Ministry, each week we spend time trying to ignite the spirit of mission in the hearts of our children. We pray that they will have eyes that see the needs around them, that their hearts would be stirred, and that their hands would find a way to help.

That is our prayer now, for you as an individual and for you as a family.

What are the needs around you?

- They may be needs in your own families. Is there a need in your spouse or your child that has gone unknown and unseen?

- Is there a need in your neighborhood? Are there individuals who are alone, with no help, no family? Are there people who do not know Jesus?

- Are there needs at the church? Are there children without mentors in their lives, elderly who desperately need connection, disciples who you can engage in growth with? People who come each week to church seeking to connect with someone?
What is your mission? What is your true, God given mission?

Let’s look at our circumstances differently. Instead of being distracted by the crackling of the fire, let’s lean into the work that it is trying to accomplish in our lives keeping in mind the promise of Romans 8:28.

Read Romans 8:28

God loves you, love him back with your whole life.

Live into your divine purpose.

God is knocking, answer the door.

You won’t regret it.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGFCbmvk0vo

Listen to this song as you spend some more time your processing your thoughts. Make note of the needs that God has revealed to you or offer a prayer that he would give you eyes to see the mission he is assigning to you right now.