

Ashe Alliance Church

Devotional Guide

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed,
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus
Colossians 3:17*



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**INVESTING IN FUTURE
GENERATIONS**



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this devotional is to turn our focus toward the importance of being a good steward of all that God has given to us. We want to remember that whatever we have comes from God, and that we are called to use those gifts with which He has blessed us to glorify Him.

At the beginning of each week, take 5-10 minutes to think about and complete the exercises for that week. At the end of each week, review the weekly exercises to see if there are any changes.

Use the daily scripture and discussion point as a time to concentrate on God. Hopefully, this will be used by the whole family, perhaps it will generate discussion around the dinner table or serve as something to meditate on throughout the day.

It could also be used as a discussion topic in a small group.

Try to finish each day's devotion with prayer. Consider the prayer topics in the box at the beginning of the week as guidelines for prayer.

The whole devotion is meant to take 10-20 minutes per day.

Finally, don't be discouraged if you miss a day. Each day stands on its own, and you can focus your thoughts, prayers, and discussion on that day's Scripture.

Principles of Christian Stewardship

- 1. God is the sole and sovereign owner of all things, including all creation, the body and spirit of the Christian, and all of the Christian's resources.**
- 2. God expects His sovereign ownership to be cheerfully acknowledged as Christians present their entire life as a gift to Him.**
- 3. God holds every Christian accountable for all that has been entrusted to him/her.**
- 4. Christians are steward of life and all things, including time, talent/abilities, and resources/possessions.**
- 5. Christian stewardship requires personal commitment.**

FIRST WEEK: TIME

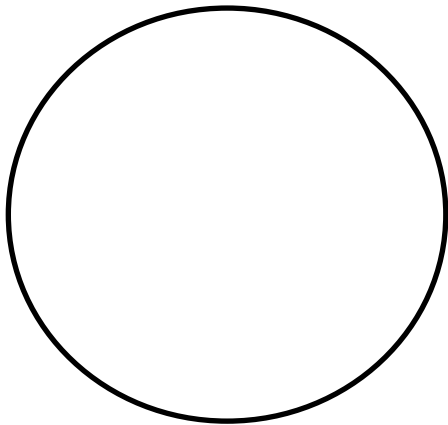
"Using time wisely" is an area of life that is a concern to everyone—from the teacher who marks "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" on the report card of the student, to the person who responds to a request to help in the church by saying: "I haven't the time."

God gives to every Christian the same amount of time and we are expected to use a portion of it in His Kingdom's work. It is not a question of not having the time, but of how to organize time.

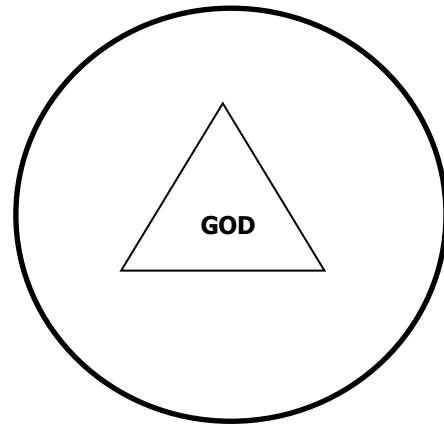
Read: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Spend 5 minutes to complete the exercise below in the beginning of the week.

1. Divide the circle below into pie pieces representing those weekly areas to which you devote your time.



2. Divide this circle into pie pieces representing your weekly time and service to God.



3. Take a few moments to review the circles. Do you need to make any changes in the priorities of your time?

Prayer Topics for the Week

- Ask God for wisdom to use time wisely.
- Ask for guidance on how to use time for the work of God's Kingdom.
- Ask God for help in setting aside time to spend with Him.
- Begin praying for guidance as to what response God would have you make to the campaign.

**Look carefully then how you walk,
Not as unwise men but as wise,
Making the most of every opportunity.**

- Ephesians 5:15

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Hebrews 10:22 For true power in prayer, hold nothing back. Surrender yourself to Christ, forsaking all to follow him. This type of devotion makes Christ Lord of all.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Take a moment and think of one thing that you can do for the Lord today.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray that you will make Jesus Lord over all that you do today.

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	I John 5:14-15 In praying, first make sure that you are in the will of God; then, you should pray, believing that He will hear and answer.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about the importance of choosing the right place to pray. This should be a place where you can communicate without interruption.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to protect your time of communication with Him today.

<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Psalm 119:33-40 Again and again, the psalmist prays for God to give him understanding of His statutes, laws, and precepts. You, too, should constantly seek to understand God's Word and His standards for living.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Do you desire the same things as the psalmist? Are you willing to set aside time in order to meet these goals?
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to help you carry out your plan faithfully and consistently.

<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Psalm 19 Is the Word of God the daily meditation of your heart, so that you are fed, instructed, encouraged, and kept close to God? Are the words of your mouth acceptable to Him?
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Are you willing to confess your failures as sins and make David's prayer your own?
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to reveal any unconfessed sin in your life and pray for forgiveness.

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Galatians 5:22-23 A lost temper is not the fruit of the Spirit...it is a work of the flesh. Heartache, pain, and misery can result from a lost temper. Whole families, whole congregations, have been victims due to lost patience and self-control.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about a time when you have lost your temper and hurt someone. Discuss how you as a Christian could have better dealt with the situation.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray that you might respond in love when wronged.

<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	John 14:13-14 Jesus taught us to pray in His name, that our joy should be full.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about different kinds of prayer; and different needs for which to pray.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray for someone you know that has a need, that only God can provide.

<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Philippians 4:19 God has made provisions for us as persons—for our health, our safety, and our peace of mind. God is our source. When you open your mind to His words, and act on faith, you will know His presence.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about a time when you have felt very near to God.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Thank God for three specific blessings in your life.

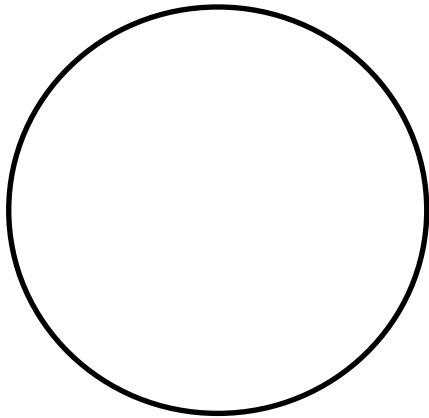
SECOND WEEK: TALENTS

Few people would argue about the importance of exercise for physical health. It is also important to exercise your talents, your skills, your abilities, and your gifts to maintain spiritual health. It is sad to hear Jesus' words about the person who buried his talent, or Jesus' words about the fig tree that bore no fruit. Think about how many talents you could be using in the Lord's work.

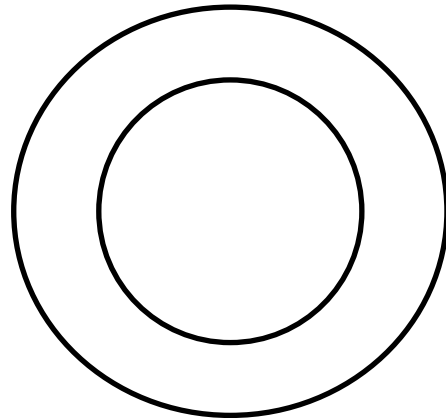
Read: Romans 12:1-8

Spend 5 minutes to complete the exercise below in the beginning of the week.

1. In the circle below, write your talents, skills, abilities, and gifts.



2. In the circle below, organize your talents around God. Write on the inner circle the talents that you could use in His service. Write on the outer circle the talents that you can use in the community as a Christian witness.



3. At the end of the week, take a few moments to review the second circle. Have there been any changes?

Prayer Topics for the Week

- Thank God for giving you skills and abilities.
- Ask God to open doors so that your skills and abilities are used in ministry.
- Dedicate your natural gifts to God so that they will be used in reaching your community for Christ.
- Continue praying about your response to the campaign.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father..

- Matthew 5:16

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	I John 4:15-19 God is love! God loved us so much He gave His only Son so that we may have eternal life. As Christians, we should give abundantly of that divine love to others daily.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Mention two ways of sharing your love with people that you meet today.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray that the love of Christ will be seen in you today.

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	John 2:1-11 Put your faith in God completely. Trust Him for all your needs. See His hand upon your life daily.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about a recent situation that required you to walk by faith.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Thank God for supplying the answer to that prayer.

<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	II Corinthians 5:7 To walk by sight means to see where you are going. Faith is to walk where you do not see.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Talk about the importance of choosing the right place to pray. This should be a place where you can communicate without interruption.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to increase your faith in a specific area today.

<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Psalms 118:8 A person determined to walk by faith can be sure that their faith will be tested. Sooner or later, they will be brought to the end of their human resources and will be tempted to appeal to their fellow man. If you really trust the Lord, you will turn to Him alone.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Share an experience of being tempted to turn only to others for help and what results happened.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray for a specific area of struggle that only God can help you overcome.

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Matthew 6:8 We turn to God for our salvation. We should also rely on Him for financial, material, or any other needs we have.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Discuss a situation where God met a need before you even asked Him for it.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Thank God for meeting even your unasked needs.

<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	I Thessalonians 5:16-18 With the pressures and disappointments of everyday life, it is difficult to be joyful and thankful in all circumstances. However, we understand that this is God's will for us and that His Holy Spirit can allow us to do so through Christ.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Discuss one area of your life in which it is difficult to be joyful and thankful.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask the Lord to help you begin today to learn to be thankful for that area of our life.

<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Nehemiah 2:4 We should not only pray at times when we have special needs. We should develop the attitude of prayer so that all during the day we look to the Lord...as we are walking along the street, driving in a car, at work, or at home.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Discuss different times during the day that you could turn to God in silent prayer.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to give you regular prayer time.

THIRD WEEK: TREASURE

All that we have, all that we are, and all that we will ever be comes from God. Our job is to be good stewards over the things that God has given to us. For some of us, the most difficult part of our lives to turn over to the Lord is our finances. However, to be the stewards that God truly wants us to be, we must come to the understanding that even our wealth comes from God.

Our Stewardship of Life campaign is not based on equal giving but, rather, on equal sacrifice.

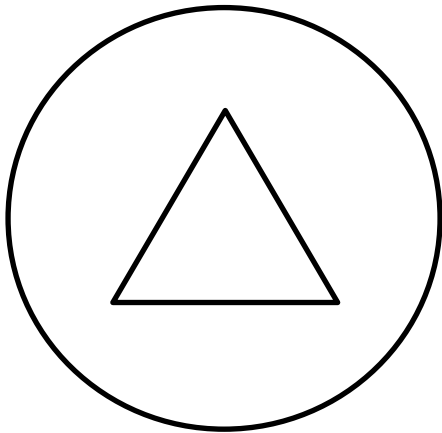
Prayerfully consider God's blessings in your life and what sacrifice He is asking you to make.

Read: I Chronicles 29:11-14

Spend 5 minutes to complete the exercise below in the beginning of the week.

In the inner triangle, write the amount of your treasure that you want to give back to God.

In the circle outside of the triangle, list areas where you spend your treasure.



**Read: Matthew 25:14-30
The Parable of the Talents**

Hopefully you, too, will hear your Master reply "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

Prayer Topics for the Week

- Thank God for providing your family with food, clothing, and shelter.
- Ask God to remove anxiety about material things from your life.
- Dedicate your treasure to the furthering of God's kingdom.
- Continue praying about your response to the campaign.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- Colossians 3:17

SUNDAY

Listed in the Introduction of this devotional are "Principles of Christian Stewardship."

Discussion: Take 15-20 minutes to re-examine and talk about these principles. Reflect upon their significance to your life.

Prayer: Pray about your commitment to the Stewardship of Life Campaign

MONDAY

Scripture: Luke 18:27

Our God is the God who specializes in impossibilities. Nothing is too difficult for Him. The things which are impossible for men are possible with God.

Discussion: Talk about a situation that you do not know how to handle.

Prayer: Ask God for one way in which you can release that situation to Him.

TUESDAY

Scripture: Psalm 66:18

If our prayer life is to be truly effective, we must keep in contact with God by confessing all sins as soon as He reveals them to us.

Discussion: Share one area of your life with which you struggle.

Prayer: Thank God for His assurance of forgiveness when you confess your sins.

WEDNESDAY

Scripture: Psalm 34

The Lord listens to the cries of His children. Whether He offers escape from trouble, or help in times of trouble, we know that He hears us and is our refuge.

Discussion: Share a time when the Lord answered a plea for escape from trouble, or the help that He provided during a troubled time.

Prayer: Praise God for hearing the cries of those who love Him.

THURSDAY

Scripture: II Thessalonians 2:13-17

We should be thankful for those whom God loves and has chosen.

Discussion: List five people for whom you have never given thanks or for whom you have not given thanks in a long time. Tell God why you are thankful for these people.

Prayer: Thank God for each of the five people.

FRIDAY

Scripture: Psalm 135

Few of us would argue about the importance of exercise for physical health. One of the spiritual exercises we should do daily to maintain our spiritual health is to praise the Lord.

Discussion: How many reasons can you give for praising God?

Prayer: Meditate on the goodness of God. Praise God for the opportunity to share in the Stewardship of Life Campaign. Remember those who are participating in the prayer vigil.

SATURDAY

The Scriptures teach that sin not only destroys fellowship with God but makes us useless vessels to God. Accordingly, we are exhorted time after time to cleanse ourselves from all sin. This would include sins of which we are aware as well as "hidden faults."

Discussion: In response to God's command to be holy, ask God to reveal to you those things done unintentionally that are sin. Confess these to God.

Prayer: Pray that God who "began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6).

FOURTH WEEK: STRENGTH

At times do you feel exhausted? How can I do all the things I need to do and not grow weary? How can I meet all the commitments I made and not become faint-hearted? Do you wonder where you can receive more energy? Do you pray, "Lord, how can I run and not be weary?"

Remember Moses (Exodus 17:8-12) tried to hold up his hands in prayer, but they became so tired that he could not keep them up, no matter how hard he tried. When Aaron and Hur saw that Moses could not keep his hands up all the time, they found a big stone for him to sit on. Aaron went on one side to him to hold up his right hand, and Hur stood on the other side to hold up his left hand.

Remember the author of Hebrews urged every Christian to always look toward "Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" for strength.

Read: Isaiah 40:28-31 and Hebrews 12:1-3

Take a few minutes to list below the resources God has given you to continually dedicate your time, talent, and treasure for His glory without growing weary.

Prayer Topics for the Week

- Thank God for His promise in Isaiah 40:31.
- Ask God to give continued energy to enable His people to do His will.
- Ask God for the energy to persevere in fulfilling any commitments you may have made during our campaign.

**But they who wait for the Lord shall
renew their strength.**

- Isaiah 40:31

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	II Corinthians 12:9 We must acknowledge our own complete helplessness and surrender ourselves totally to the rendering and protecting love of Christ. Then we will see His abundant power take over in our lives.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Share an area of weakness in your life that you have given to the Lord. Share how He has worked, or is working, in that area of your life.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray for one area that you can surrender to the Lord today.

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Philippians 4:6-7 The principle duty of a guard is to protect something of value. It is gratifying to know that God is willing to protect our hearts and minds from doubts, worry, and despair. All you need to do is make your request known to God.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Share an area of your life that is currently causing anxiety or stress.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask for the Lord's peace in that situation.

<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Psalms 28 Where do you turn when you have a problem? Do you turn to a friend, a counselor, or a pastor? In this psalm, we are reminded by David that God not only hears our prayers, but also answers and helps us.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	List three areas in your life with which you need God's help.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God for help in the areas listed above. "Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you." (Psalm 55:22).

<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Luke 17:5 Faith is strengthened by reading and learning the Word of God. A Christian should desire to saturate himself in Scripture—reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on it day and night.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Pick a Scripture that means a lot to you and to share why it is so meaningful.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Thank the Lord for the opportunity to participate in the campaign.

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	Romans 12:12 This Scripture challenges us to have an eternal perspective. Only when our focus is centered on the Lord can we truly be "joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer."
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Share one strategy that enables you to be more faithful in your prayer life.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray that you might be faithful in spending time with Him.

<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	I Corinthians 6:19-20 We are given only one body, and God trusts us to take good care of it. He chooses to live in us.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Name two ways that you can practice good physical and mental health habits.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray for diligence in developing those habits.

<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>Scripture:</u>	I Timothy 4:12 Sometimes we hear the term "generation gap," expressing the lack of communication between adults and teenagers. Parents face this problem with their children daily. There is one who bridges the gap...that is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
	<u>Discussion:</u>	Share an example of how God has used you in one of the areas mentioned in I Timothy 4:12.
	<u>Prayer:</u>	Ask God to use your time, your talents, and abilities, and all that He has given.

INVESTING IN FUTURE GENERATIONS



We will not hide them from their children but, tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

-Psalm 78:4 ESV