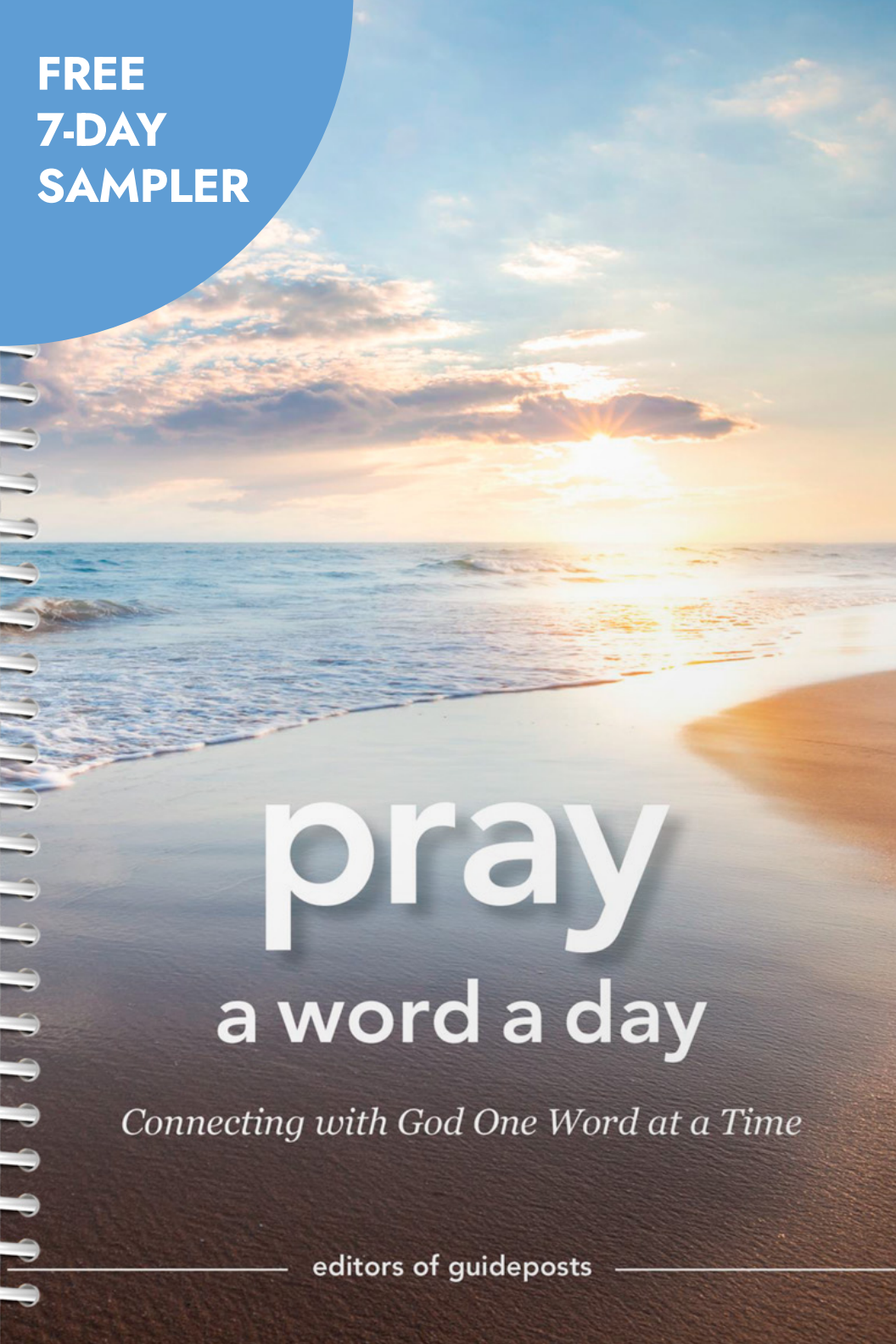


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pray

a word a day

Connecting with God One Word at a Time

editors of guideposts

goodness

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

—Psalm 23:6 KJV

When I was a little girl, this verse made me very nervous. I thought there were two little old ladies, Shirley Goodness and her friend Mercy, who were going to follow me everywhere!

Imagine my relief when I learned my mistake. Years later I learned that the original Hebrew word translated as “follow” really means “chase.” Sometimes when I’m feeling sorry for myself, or when I’m unable to forgive myself for a wrongdoing, I think about being “chased” by goodness and mercy. God loves me so much that He sends them out to pursue me. He is merciful toward me when I am not merciful toward myself; He sends goodness to me and instructs it to hurry up!

—Michelle

Thank You, Lord, for sending Your goodness to me—for pursuing me with Your mercy. Amen.



change

Change your thoughts and you change your world.

—Norman Vincent Peale

Recently, the word of the day suggested by my Bible reading was “change.” So, I prayed that short word throughout the day: “Change my heart, O God. Give me strength and hope through the changes of these coming weeks.” A grocery store transaction put change in my pocket, prompting a prayer for the wise use of our “loose change.” A sudden schedule change seemed providential. And so on.

Even Facebook somehow got into the act. I know Facebook’s algorithms detect websites I visit or purchases I make and incorporate those into ads and promotions, but I couldn’t think of any online hint I gave of my word-of-the-day prayer. But “change” nonetheless became a theme, popping onto my computer screen through the rest of the day. I even noticed the word in a television commercial or two, which sent me back to prayer when I saw and heard it.

—Bob

*Father, change my heart, thoughts, life,
and circumstances as You will. Amen.*



together

None of us, including me, ever do great things.
But we can all do small things with great love,
and together we can do something wonderful.
—Mother Teresa

This past year I have become involved in a ministry that gives baby showers for new refugee moms here in Boise, Idaho. Refugees are brave. Leaving family and friends and flying halfway around the world to establish a new life is daunting. If I can be part of making that transition easier, I want in. All over this world millions of people need food, water, and shelter. Diapers too. Such needs can be completely overwhelming, until I remind myself of all the people who are working together to usher in love and hope. *Together* is a powerful concept. I may not have a whole lot to offer on my own, but together, little by little, small things can be accomplished with great love.

—Susanna

*Lord, show me how to work together with those around me
in the spirit of Your love. Amen.*



enlarge

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, “Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory!”

—1 Chronicles 4:10 NIV

Two of my grandchildren cope daily with a condition known as cystic fibrosis, which affects (among other things) their breathing and lung capacity. They undergo treatments a couple times each day to try to maintain—and enlarge—their pulmonary functions. So, I pray every day for such results, sometimes with the single word “Enlarge.”

It’s a great word to pray, and it can apply to so many areas of concern and desire. For God’s kingdom to rule in my life: Enlarge. For my capacity to love others: Enlarge. For my ability to give generously: Enlarge. For the church’s influence in my community: Enlarge. For the ability to see clearly, speak constructively, and work creatively: Enlarge.

—Bob

*Lord, I pray that You would bless me and enlarge my territory.
Amen.*



creativity

Creativity is intelligence having fun.

—Albert Einstein

When I taught sixth grade, I papered the classroom with colorful posters featuring inspirational quotes. Then I had my students complete a quote walk, studying each poster, choosing their favorite. One funny class favorite was a fake Abraham Lincoln quote, “Don’t believe everything you read on the Internet just because there’s a picture with a quote next to it.” Another was Albert Einstein’s real quote, “Creativity is intelligence having fun.” With kids, creativity is a given. Everyone likes to have fun. Our minds and hands are naturally drawn to build, craft, and problem-solve. *Why?* We are made in the Creator’s image, the One Who spoke galaxies into existence with a single word. When I write a poem, plant flowers, or prepare a delicious meal, God’s presence and creativity are unleashed in me. What could be more fun than that?

—Susanna

God, thank You for unleashing Your creativity in my life. Touch those around me with the creative gifts You have given me.

Amen.



persistence

He may not get up and give you the bread, just because you are his friend. But he will get up and give you as much as you need, simply because you are not ashamed to keep on asking.

—Luke 11:8 CEV

Really? He’s playing the piano with only one hand?” My husband, Kevin, smiled at my response to the recording of a well-known twentieth-century Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein. I marveled at the depth of feeling and wide use of the keyboard in this composition.

Wittgenstein lost his right arm during World War I. In a Siberian prison camp, he determined to continue his career after the war by commissioning music written for the left hand. Many of Wittgenstein’s arrangements are performed by modern pianists—even two-handed ones. Thanks to his persistence, music lovers on every continent find joy and inspiration. All because a one-armed pianist refused to give up.

—Jeanette

Lord, may I persist in every good desire, remembering that nothing is impossible with You. Amen.



giving

Every good and perfect gift is from above.

—James 1:17 NIV

Mom had been battling breast cancer that had spread to her bones when she became confused and disoriented. As the ambulance lifted her from the sofa onto the gurney, the nurse in me knew her cancer had gone to her brain as well. My eyes took in the woven basket Mom always kept nearby. It was filled with pretty note cards she loved to send to cheer anyone she thought of while she rested. The wooden spring clothespins she used to attach them to her old wrought-iron mailbox were there as well. But then I noticed something else. The unaddressed envelopes already bore Mom's Love stamps, ready to dispatch at a moment's notice. My mother would never pen another encouraging missive in this life. But she'd sent one more message to my heart: the importance of always being ready to give.

—Roberta

*Lord, teach me to give in ways large and small,
every single day. Amen.*



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