

Contributions can be sent to  
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the month.

### **Thought for the Month**

What does the average person in Britain want out of life today? The answer to that would hinge upon family, a good job, nice home, car and the basics of life. Depending how far from the 'average' a particular individual was to be found would depend how far from these ideals would be their expectations. In a similar way you could ask what the average Christian wants from their faith. Do they demand prosperity, freedom from guilt, 'nice' church and 'God on demand', like turning on the tap? How many Christians would be content to give up the nice middle class image and go and do a 'Paul', giving up worldly ambition to live a life dedicated to God? The answer to that is probably somewhere in between the two extremes. Not everyone is cut out to be a St Theresa of Calcutta, but everyone can do their 'bit' towards building up the Kingdom of God. Of course different people are to be found at different stages of spiritual development, some well advanced, and others new converts.

Praying about what you want from the Christian life may be the wrong way to look at it, perhaps more appropriate would be: 'not what I want but what God wants'. Getting to such a place in your thinking will not happen overnight, some people never make such a statement while others achieve such thinking almost as soon as Jesus moves into their life. Inevitably those who refuse to surrender their ambitions and hopes to Jesus will wallow in the 'Slough of Despond' for years, as John Bunyan put it. When praying this month ask God to guide your thinking about where you have got to along the road of discipleship which leads to being more like Jesus.

A very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year to everyone.

# tabernacle : penarth

purpose : to reflect God's love in  
our church, community and world

## prayer diary : december 2016

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the  
government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Every year there are newspaper items, sermons, radio 'thoughts for the day' and Twitter messages reminding people of the 'real' meaning of Christmas. Amid the present buying, parties and shopping they urge people to remember that Jesus is the reason for the season, and to spare a few moments thought for the baby in the manger. These messages are usually directed at non-Christians, and are an attempt to get those in the secular world to think about the Nativity. However, it occurs to me that Christians are perhaps worse than non-Christians for filling our Christmases with activity. Let me urge you to make sure that amidst the business and evangelistic opportunities that will come this Christmas, to make sure you experience the Prince of Peace too!

Roger Grafton

### **Thursday 1st**

Please remember those in Small groups who will be having Christmas functions in the next few weeks.

### **Friday 2nd**

Please pray for people not to drink and drive, mobile phone and drive, or drugs and drive this Christmas.

### **Saturday 3rd**

Remember today the medical team at Green Pastures Hospital Nepal run by INF\*. Providing: spinal cord injury rehab, leprosy care, and many others to the people of Nepal.

### **Sunday 4th**

The Sundays of Advent remind Jesus' followers that preparation for His arrival is very important. Not just the Christmas gifts and trimmings, but also thinking about who Jesus is and what happened on Christmas night.

### **Monday 5th**

Please remember young people doing Nativity Plays, Christmas Concerts etc. this next couple of weeks.

### **Tuesday 6th**

Who could you give a special treat to this Christmas? Do something extra ordinary for someone less fortunate than yourself this season of goodwill.

### **Wednesday 7th**

Please remember the Pastoral Visitors who go to see the housebound and infirm, pray they will have some extra cheer this Christmas.

### **Thursday 8th**

The Paradise Run takes place every evening with different churches providing supplies and volunteers. Remember the volunteers from Tabs out tonight.

### **Friday 9th**

Pray for the young people who attend Tabs' youth outreaches every Friday. Pray for the leaders, young people and their parents.

### **Saturday 10th**

Collecting old postcards is a great way to support MAF\*, which works in Africa, Papua New Guinea, Arnhem Land, Australia, Timor-Leste and other places. Pray today for the day to day operations of MAF, moving goods and people in the service of the kingdom.

### **Sunday 11th**

Please pray about how you can give thanks for the gift of Jesus, how it effects your faith, who else can you pray about or with today.

### **Monday 12th**

Please pray for those families and individuals who will be overseas for Christmas. Send a card or write a letter today.

### **Tuesday 13th**

Think about the situation in Syria. Pray for peace and the needs of the many refugees in the country and countries nearby. Ask God to bless relief efforts wherever they come from.

### **Wednesday 14th**

Please pray for the food distribution and breakfast club held at Arcot House each Wednesday.

### **Thursday 15th**

Please pray today for people who are sick, those who will be in hospital over Christmas, and anyone you know who is ill.

### **Friday 16th**

Please pray for those who have lost loved ones this year, for whom Christmas will be particularly difficult.

### **Saturday 17th**

Do you own up to having spiritual ambitions? Do you want 'God on demand' or are you more the prosperity gospel approach? How often is your ambition just 'to be like Jesus'? (See piece at the end).

### **Sunday 18th**

The last Sunday in Advent should be a time to prepare for gladness and joy. For most people this will be the case, for some it will be a sad time, pray for gladness and those in sadness today.

### **Monday 19th**

As the shopping madness draws to a head this week, pray for overworked shop staff, medical staff dealing with injuries and drunks,

police dealing with difficult situations, in fact anyone working while everyone else is celebrating.

### **Tuesday 20th**

Take time to pray for members of your family, perhaps those you will not see this holiday, those with whom you have fallen out, or those who are lonely.

### **Wednesday 21st**

Remember to pray for the Crib Service (Christmas Eve), The Midnight Communion (Christmas Eve), and Christmas Service (Christmas Day).

### **Thursday 22nd**

Today many businesses will breakup for the holiday. Ask God to preserve those who travel, from idiot drunks, bad weather and accidents.

### **Friday 23rd**

Pray today for those who will lead worship and preach at services up and down the land this weekend. Ask God for a special blessing on your favourite preacher.

### **Saturday 24th (Christmas Eve)**

Pray for shop staff faced with preparations for the sales next week. Ask God to curb the greed and money lust of corporate managers whose only motive is profit. Pray for good outcomes for shop workers at work today.

### **Sunday 25th (Christmas Day)**

Today is the day to give thanks to God for your faith, for the eternal life He promises each person who believes on His name. Give thanks for the gift of Jesus today.

### **Monday 26th (Boxing Day)**

Ask God to curb the greed and selfishness on display in shops and supermarkets today in the sales.

### **Tuesday 27th**

Please pray today for families travelling to visit relatives, particularly if the weather is bad.

### **Wednesday 28th**

Please pray today for old people, those who live on their own, the foreign person who has no friends in the local area, think of anyone who needs a touch from God today.

### **Thursday 29th**

If you enjoyed a good Christmas, give thanks to God today.

### **Friday 30th**

Please pray for those suffering for the gospel in places around the globe. Ask God to bless them just like you expected to be blessed this Christmas.

### **Saturday 31st (New Year's Eve)**

Give thanks for the good things which God has given you and done for you this past year.

\*INF International Nepal Fellowship

\* MAF Missionary Aviation Fellowship