

## Succeeding in Life and Love: Choose the Ending James 1:2-5

### Prayer Link

### Prayers for the Community

American Troops and their families; all families, tribes and nations to know and experience God's peace.

Additional Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SUGAR RIVER'S PRAYER MINISTRY IS SEEKING REQUESTS

Did you know that Sugar River UMC has an active E-Prayer Chain? A group of people have covenanted to pray for special requests they receive periodically via email. If you have a request you would like the E-Prayer Chain to pray for, please send it to: [amberw@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:amberw@wisconsinumc.org). Amber will send out the request as soon as possible to activate our circle of prayer.

If you would like to become a "Link" on our E-Prayer Chain, please send your email address to Amber at the address listed above. New "links" are always welcome!

### Inspirational Link

### Thoughts and Insights from Worship

### The Word Link

### Daily Readings from God's Word

This week we will focus on practicing what John Wesley called "the means of grace." These practices are ways of opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit's work in restoring and transforming us. This week we will simply "taste" a few of the various disciplines. Seek God's vision for the future that you may live today with the end in mind.

**Monday, June 16 – Prayer** Begin your study time today by praying this simple prayer, "Lord, as I begin this time of study, help me to be open to your Holy Spirit. I invite you to work in me, to shape me into the person you long for me to be. Help me know you. Help me love you. In Jesus' name. Amen." As we focus on prayer

as a means of receiving God's grace and opening ourselves to the work of the Spirit, it would be good to remember that prayer is to the spiritual life what breathing is to our physical life. **Read Matthew 6:1-14.** Using a sheet of paper and pen, take each phrase of the Lord's Prayer and re-write and expand upon it in your own words (for example, in the first phrase, instead of "hallowed by thy name" take the time to praise God, in your own words. Speak to God as your heavenly Father. In the second phrase invite God to have his way in your life, asking for his help in living for him. In the third phrase, share with God your needs and concerns. Do this for each phrase of the prayer). As you do this, focus on making this written letter your prayer – write to the Lord as you would to one who loves you dearly, and one you seek to love.

**Tuesday, June 17 – Scripture Reading** There are two primary ways of reading scripture. We can read it for information, or for spiritual formation. These are not mutually exclusive, but as we are reading for spiritual formation we are inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts in the reading of the Word – to shape us by virtue of our reading, and to meet us in this act. As you begin today, pray to the Holy Spirit and invite the Spirit to do these things in your reading. **Read Isaiah 55.** This passage was a promise to the Jews, who at the time were living in exile, oppressed by the Babylonians, that God would deliver them – it painted a picture of what that deliverance would one day look like. Read this passage in silence, listening for God to speak to you. Then read it aloud, slowly, listening for what you did not hear the first time. Now, read it again, and write down those verses which speak to you. Finally read these verses once again listening for God's word.

**Wednesday, June 18 – Christian Conferencing** For Wesley, Christian conferencing meant talking about matters of faith with other Christians. **Read Hebrews 10:25.** In having discussions about the scriptures or matters of faith God's Spirit works to help each participant grow in Christ. This is the power and importance of small groups. Today you are encouraged to have a spiritual conversation with someone else – study the scriptures with a friend or to take the time to share with someone else what you gained from Sunday's sermon or from yesterday's scripture reading and invite them to share with you their insights. Pray that God might speak to you and through you in this sharing.

**Thursday, June 19 – Acts of Kindness** One of what Wesley called the "prudential" means of grace was acts of kindness or compassion toward others. He believed that we grow in grace when we're serving others. **Read Hebrews 10:24-25 and Romans 12:3-13.** Make it your aim today to bless others – is there someone you know in the hospital? Visit them. Is there someone you know that needs a special blessing – bless them as a part of your service to Christ – inviting God to work through you. In what ways did you grow as a result of your acts of kindness today?

**Friday, June 20 – Fasting** Wesley encouraged fasting every Friday, as a means of deepening our hunger for God, clearing our mind, and as an act of devotion and love. **Read Matthew 4:1-11.** Notice how Jesus used the discipline of fasting to prepare for his life and ministry. Today consider fasting from one of the following: Fast from turning the stereo on in your car, using this time of silence for prayer and communion with God. Or fast from television, using the time you would have watched to read the scriptures or other books aimed to help you grow in grace. Or you may fast a meal, or a particular part of a meal. Is there some activity in your life that has become too important – fast from it today as a means of breaking its hold on you. Pray and invite God to use your fasting as a vehicle for his Spirit to shape your life.

Copyright © 2003, The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection.  
13720 Roe Leawood, Kansas 66224, (913) 897-0120 voice, (913) 897-0361 fax <http://www.cor.org>

**The Spirit Link**

**God's Action Point for My Life**

I feel led by God to...