

S.A.I.N.T.S. II 2026

40-Day Lenten Challenge

 [Follow Pastor Benzinger on Instagram](#)

Week 3: Intercession

Simple Sunday Devotional

I am so glad you are still here with us in the **40-Day Lenten Challenge**. How well are you doing? How many successful days are you enthusiastically crossing off the calendar? Don't forget **Rule 1: live in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**. If you get behind, just get back into the arena.

By the end of the week, we will be roughly halfway through the **40-Day Lenten Challenge** and Lent. During the readings on Days 17-22 we are looking at how Christ our Savior continues to actively be involved in our lives through the way He still **intercedes** for us to God the Father. *“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).*

One thing I want to build up for the challenge is the intercession component and our prayer for one another. As Jesus intercedes for us before the Father, so too we should intercede for one another. This continues the vertical   fellowship between God and the horizontal   as we love our neighbor.

I do not want to miss the fact that intercession is about Christ's duty sitting at the right hand of the Father, but we are still called to pray for one another, even those that persecute you (Matthew 5:44). Your intercession and prayer for one another is only possible because Christ is constantly active in your life.

Jesus is not a distant God who is too busy to hear your prayers, but rather, we are reminded by Psalms 56:8 that God counts and records our misery, He keeps our tears

in a bottle... This week will serve as a dual trajectory. 1) To see how Jesus intercedes for us, and 2) To practice and build our time of praying for one another after our daily scripture reading.

For this week, one challenge I am asking is that you increase and set aside roughly an extra 2 minutes of your day to devote to prayer. If this scares you, please don't let it. Let's simplify and think of it this way. Who doesn't love **Tacos**? The acronym of **T.A.C.O.S.** will serve as a structure to remember what to say next.

T- Thanksgiving: Thank God for what he has done... "I thank you Lord for _____."

A- Adoration: Praise God for who he is. "Lord I praise You that You _____."

C- Confession: "I confess that I have sinned by _____, Please forgive me."

O- Others: "Look up _____ during _____."

S- Self: "Help me _____."

Here is a full example of my prayer for you this week.

Lord God Heavenly Father, I thank You Lord for the blessings you have bestowed upon our time together during this **S.A.I.N.T.S. 40-Day Lenten Challenge**. I praise You for the work You are doing in the lives of those participating. Lord, You look upon us in our daily needs and give us this day our daily bread. I confess that I haven't always been faithful the way that You ask me to. Forgive me I pray for the ways I fall short, for the things I have done, and those things I have left undone. Help my friends who are reading this week's Simple Sunday Devotional as they begin their week that You would send your Holy Spirit to enlighten their faith in your dear Son. Bless the rest of my time I have during this challenge to be present with them as we journey these remaining days together- In Jesus name, I pray- Amen.

Habit 5: Check in: (By Thursday midnight)

- **Fasting / Self-discipline:** *Where did you practice self-control this week, and where did you struggle?*
- **Scripture:** *Have you been faithful in reading and hearing God's Word? What stood out to you?*

- **Prayer:** *Have you been consistent in prayer, and what has been weighing most heavily on your heart?*
- **Work / Physical discipline:** *How did you care for your body through work or exercise this week?*
- **Community / Support & accountability:** *Where do you need encouragement or help to remain faithful in the coming week?*
- **Intercession:** *How may I pray for you specifically this week?*

Work [Week 2] (Increase your baseline) - check off when complete (any days) and doesn't have to all be done on the same day

- *3 times this week do you your baseline push-ups 2x's – increase your baseline by another 10% (If your baseline was 10 push-ups, increase to 12 push-ups. Complete 12 push-ups, rest, and then complete 12 additional push-ups.)*
 - *Day 1*
 - *Day 2*
 - *Day 3*
- *3 times this week do your baseline core 2x's – increase your baseline by another 10% (If your baseline plank lasts 30 seconds, increase to 36 seconds. Complete plank for 36 seconds, rest, and then complete an additional 36 seconds.)*
 - *Day 1*
 - *Day 2*
 - *Day 3*
- *3 times this week do your baseline cardio – increase cardio by completing activity at a faster pace or going the same pace for an extended amount of time (i.e. run/walk/ride at a faster pace for 15 min or go the same pace for an extended time of 21 min.)*
 - *Day 1*
 - *Day 2*
 - *Day 3*

Student Athletes: If you are currently involved in a sport, your practice time counts for Habit 6: Work

Disclaimer: Under no circumstances do we want anyone hurt. If you are physically unable to do anything, please keep things simple and just move through your house, walk to the end of the yard... anything you struggle to do and yet push through is a success. Celebrate small victories.

Week 3 Schedule

Day 17: Monday, March 9, 2026

Reading: [1 John 2](#) (click to go straight to the passage)

Reflective Question: How does knowing that Jesus is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1) bring assurance in moments of failure?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for being my advocate to the Father. Help me to trust in You above all things.

T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation.

But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen.

Day 18: Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Reading: [Hebrews 7](#) (click to go straight to to the passage)

Reflection Question: How does Jesus' eternal priesthood, described in Hebrews 7:25, emphasize His ability to save us completely as He intercedes for us?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, not only are you my Priest and King, but you are my Advocate to the Father. Grant me righteousness and peace through your Holy Spirit.

T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Day 19: Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Reading: [John 17](#) (click to go straight to the passage)

Reflection Question: How does Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17 demonstrate the depth of His intercession for His disciples and future believers?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, reveal in my life the love that You have shown me in your Son.
T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Day 20: Thursday, March 12, 2026

Reading: [Hebrews 9](#) (click to go straight to the passage)

Reflection Question: What assurance can we gain from knowing that Jesus appears in the presence of God on our behalf?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, by Your blood there is forgiveness of sins. Continue to purify me that I might honor You. Amen.
T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Day 21: Friday, March 13, 2026

Reading: [John 3](#) (click to go straight to to the passage)

Reflection Question: In what ways does the promise of eternal life through Jesus shape your view of His ongoing work for you?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, give to me a full measure of your Spirit, that I may always remain faithful to You and bear witness to You.

T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Day 22: Saturday, March 14, 2026

Reading [1 Peter 3](#) (click to go straight to the passage)

Reflection Question: In what ways does His victory over sin and death inspire confidence in His advocacy for us?

Prayer: Gracious Father, sin has corrupted your gift of marital and familial relationships. By Your Son Jesus, grant that we do not fall into the ways of a corrupt culture.

T.A.C.O.S.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation.

But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen.