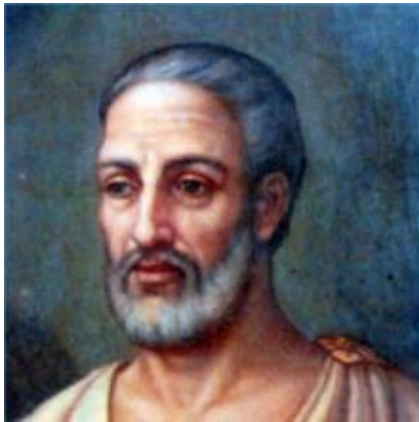


## Making the Most of Wednesday, July 22

*“Sell...give...provide for yourselves moneybags...” — Luke 12:33*



**BETWEEN 6:00—9:00 AM:** I hope you’re not getting tired of learning about ancient church heroes. It’s just that Pope Gregory the Great (“Invest your advantages”) and Benedict of Nursia (“Make time for reading”) aren’t just wise guides, they’re our great uncles. Forget about “23 and Me.” These men (and soon we’ll learn about some courageous women of God) who have inspired our prayers are *family*. We share the same Spirit DNA and we’ll sit down together to reign in God’s Kingdom. They flourished in turbulent times and carried the gospel forward. They ran their races and now they rest. But not us. We have miles to go before we “sleep” (1 Thes. 4:13-14).

Please meet Cassiodorus, the man pictured above who lived in the 500s. He wasn’t a pastor. He wasn’t a missionary. He was a government official under King Theodoric of the Ostrogoths. How he came to know Jesus, no one knows. But he loved the Kingdom of God and longed to advance it. He lived at a time when true Christian belief was rejected for a mutant form that didn’t believe in the Trinity.

What did Cassiodorus do? First, he worked hard at his job. It wasn’t easy working for a Trinity-denying government but he persevered, knowing that God works in mysterious ways. Likewise, many of us work for organizations and “tech kingdoms” with values that don’t perfectly accord with King Jesus’. But like Cassiodorus, we can grow in our faith, study hard, keep pure and do ministry. What’s more, Cassiodorus had a particular burden and a dream. He labored under the conviction that pastors in his time weren’t adequately trained. His desire was to change that, and he bided his time

Later, when the Ostrogoth Kingdom was overthrown, this servant of God didn’t retire to the country and wait out his days. He took action on his burden. On his own dime, he built a monastery, a center for Biblical studies and a library called the Vivarium. His monastery featured a scriptorium where believers would collect, reproduce and protect the Old and New Testaments — as well as other important books. Let me ask: where do you see a need? What’s your burden? Maybe God wants to lift you up into greater significance by carrying out a particular task in the future? Think about it. Talk to God about it.

**BETWEEN 9:00-12:00 PM:** You know this guy. This picture's a few years old, but the man is the same. You can see the joy he takes in talking to this child. He and Patty continue to sacrifice to help children in hard places get love, food, education and salvation through Jesus. Soon we'll get them to share at a Joel Moment so we can pray for them and others who serve in distant lands.

Let's sit at Jesus' feet and let him teach us about investing our money and resources into churches, missions and ministries. Like we learned, Cassiodorus dreamed of a study center. Glen and Patty dreamed of a ministry organization. Again, where do you want to invest your time, experiences and money for Jesus' sake? Meditate on this passage from Luke 12.



**32** *"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

**33** *Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.*

**34** *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

**35** *"Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning,*

**36** *and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.*

**37** *Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.*

**38** *If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!*

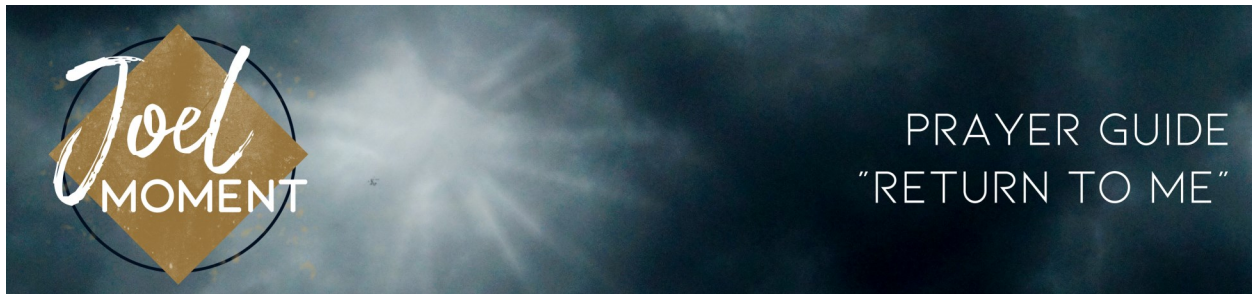
**39** *But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into.*

**40** *You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

**BETWEEN 12:00-3:00 PM:** Our fellow Apologist-Ambassadors, we're urging you to increase your level of study. It's time to build book towers with the Bible on top. (I showed you Janie's Lee's book tower in the Joel Moment email I sent out. I'd love to see yours, even if it's just one or two stories high.) We live in a time when orthodox Christian faith is being rejected for a deviant form of faith that some have called "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism." Here are its tenets, according to two Christian sociologists:

1. A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

Think about #3 in particular. Pinpoint what is dangerously inadequate about it. Talk to God about the central goal of life and try to think of one verse that encapsulates it. Be ready to share it at Joel Moment Part 2. After all, 1 John 4:1 warns us: *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."*



**BETWEEN 3:00—4:00 PM:** Join the **Joel Moment Prayer Gathering**. Go to [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us) and enter Meeting ID and Password.

**BETWEEN 5:00-9:00 PM:** Apologist-Ambassadors get tired. I was encouraged by the following message from our sister Donna Firstbrook. Her words remind us that we deprive ourselves of grace when we neglect worshipful music. Here's what she wrote:

*"When you mentioned...reading, I thought about how I am blessed through the past months in God's Word and several daily devotions, and also going through my hymn book. I find great comfort in hymns, sometimes I sing and sometimes I read them. Back in 1987, when my dear mom was dying of cancer, it was when I first used the hymn book like this."*

Here's a hymn called "**I am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus**" that has strengthened Donna on her journey with the Good Shepherd through dim lanes and dark places. Please make it your night prayer.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,  
Trusting only Thee;  
Trusting Thee for full salvation,  
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee to guide me;  
Thou alone shalt lead;  
Every day and hour supplying  
All my need.

I am trusting Thee for pardon;  
At Thy feet I bow;  
For Thy grace and tender mercy,  
Trusting now.

I am trusting Thee for power,  
Thine can never fail;  
Words which Thou Thyself shalt give me  
Must prevail.

I am trusting Thee for cleansing  
In the crimson flood;  
Trusting Thee to make me holy  
By Thy blood.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;  
Never let me fall;  
I am trusting Thee forever,  
And for all.

Also, what song has given you a lift? I'd love to know the title and how it spoke to you. Write to me about your situation and IF you give me permission, I'll weave your words/song into a Joel Moment. By doing do, you'll honor the Word of God which urges believers to share their spiritual riches with one another.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 14:26** *What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.*





**ALEX AUER** [He'll share his testimony and how God moved in his heart to be a shepherd-leader in the local church.]

<sup>ESV</sup> **Romans 8:38-39** *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**ANDY DRAKE** [He'll share a song on video that we'll make our own prayer as we listen and watch.]

**"Give Me Your Eyes" by Brandon Heath**

Looked down from a broken sky  
Traced out by the city of lights  
My world from a mile high  
Best seat in the house tonight  
Touch down on the cold black-top  
Hold on for the sudden stop  
Breathe in the familiar shock of confusion and  
chaos  
All those people going somewhere,  
why have I never cared  
  
Give me your eyes for just one second  
Give me your eyes so I can see,  
Everything that I keep missing,  
Give your love for humanity.  
Give me your arms for the broken-hearted  
The ones that are far beyond my reach.  
Give me Your heart for the ones forgotten.  
Give me Your eyes so I can see.  
  
Step out on the busy street.  
See a girl and our eyes meet.

Does her best to smile at me.  
To hide what's underneath.  
There's a man just to her right  
Black suit and a bright red tie.  
Too ashamed to tell his wife he's out of work,  
he's buyin time.  
All those people going somewhere,  
why have I never cared.  
  
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah  
  
I've been there a million times  
A couple million lives  
Just moving past me by, I swear I never thought  
that  
I was wrong  
But I wanna second glance so give me a second  
chance  
To see the way you've seen the people all along

**RACHAEL SEITZ** [She'll share about a boy named Casen and his inspiring example of sacrifice and love for the hungry.]

**DARREN SEITZ** [A prayer that Cassiodorus' God will also inspire us to dream and to do something.]



**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT (30 min.):** Let's keep it simple. We'll ask, praise, thank, urge, confess, plead and hallow the name of our Heavenly Father in our prayer groups for the next 30 minutes with no agenda other than to let the Holy Spirit guide in real time. Here's a verse to break us free:

*"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."*

Just think, the Holy Spirit is already paving the way for our flawed words to be eternally effective.

**Record what God shows you in Joel Moment, Part 2 — that is, the time after 4:00 PM — when we share Scripture, intercede and support each other as the Holy Spirit leads us.**

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