First Light with Jesus: best-performing Shorts and long videos

Prepared Nov 2, 2026 for review. Channel: First Light with Jesus, https://www.youtube.com/@FirstLightWithJesusDaily

What this is. A small sample of the channel's strongest videos, with the real YouTube Studio numbers behind them and how they were made, so you can decide whether any of them are useful to you. Nothing here is a promise of future results; the channel is about 7 weeks old (353 subscribers on Nov 2) and most numbers are small.

Where the numbers come from.

- **28-day Studio export, Oct 4 to Oct 31, 2026** (YouTube Studio Advanced mode, collected Nov 1). Used for every per-video metric unless marked otherwise.
- **Weekly channel review, Oct 26 to Nov 1, 2026** (Studio, collected Nov 2). Used for the Oct 30 Short's 7-day count and the audience and KPI figures.
- "Stayed to watch" is the share of Shorts-feed viewers who did not swipe away. "Avg % viewed" can exceed 100% on Shorts because of replays. Subs = subscribers gained. CTR = thumbnail click-through rate (meaningful for long videos; Shorts are mostly shown in the feed without a thumbnail).
- Video files: the Oct 30 Short is the exact file that was uploaded. The others were downloaded from the public YouTube videos (YouTube's re-encode: Shorts at 720p or 1080p, the sleep programs and the two 12-minute prayers added last at 720p to keep the package small). Original masters are on the owner's PC and can be provided on request.
- Dates are publish dates as shown in YouTube Studio. Videos scheduled for 9 PM Eastern can show the next calendar day.

Shorts (17)

#	Date	Title	Views	Stayed	Avg % viewed	Avg view	Watch h	Subs	Subs/1k
1	2026-10-30	You Have More to Thank God For Than You Think | Morning Prayer	999	41.2%	101.2%	00:51	5.8	12	12.0

#	Date	Title	Views	Stayed	Avg % viewed	Avg view	Watch h	Subs	Subs/1k
2	2026-10-11	Rest Here With God | Evening Prayer	1,011	42.9%	111.4%	00:56	6.6	13	12.9
3	2026-10-10	You Did What You Could Today | A Night Prayer to Let Go	672	46.4%	155.1%	01:14	6.1	16	23.8
4	2026-10-05	Prayer Before Bed | Give God Your Worries Tonight	618	55.9%	169.5%	01:28	6.4	7	11.3
5	2026-10-19	God, Help Me Begin Again This Afternoon | Midday Prayer	613	52.5%	131.3%	00:57	4.6	3	4.9
6	2026-10-15	Let Your Heart Be Still | Peaceful Evening Prayer	608	48.1%	88.7%	00:45	3.6	10	16.4
7	2026-10-15	A New Morning With Jesus | Prayer to Begin Your Day	500	44.5%	109.0%	00:57	3.4	8	16.0
8	2026-10-11	Thank You, God, for This Morning | A Prayer of Gratitude	352	55.3%	94.3%	00:47	2.3	6	17.0
9	2026-10-17	God, Hold Me Through the Night | Night Prayer	543	43.1%	156.5%	01:07	4.2	4	7.4
10	2026-10-20	Guide My Steps Today, Jesus | Morning Prayer	385	43.3%	108.6%	00:47	1.9	2	5.2
11	2026-10-14	A Fresh Start With God's Grace | Morning Prayer	382	51.5%	146.2%	01:05	2.9	2	5.2
12	2026-10-21	God, Give Me Grace for This Day | Morning Prayer	380	48.2%	86.3%	00:37	1.7	4	10.5
13	2026-10-18	End This Day With Mercy | A Peaceful Night Prayer	355	53.2%	113.8%	00:48	2.0	1	2.8
14	2026-10-20	Thank You for Carrying Me This Far | Afternoon Prayer	350	49.1%	103.0%	00:48	2.0	2	5.7
15	2026-10-13	Walk With God Today | Morning Prayer for Everyday Life	334	43.7%	109.7%	00:54	1.9	7	21.0
16	2026-10-17	Make Room for Kindness Today | Afternoon Prayer	299	55.8%	157.5%	01:06	2.5	2	6.7

#	Date	Title	Views	Stayed	Avg % viewed	Avg view	Watch h	Subs	Subs/1k
17	2026-10-14	Leave This Night in God's Hands | Prayer Before Bed	264	49.8%	155.6%	01:08	2.0	3	11.4

Channel average for all 153 Shorts in the same window: 44.5% stayed to watch, 0:53 average view, 173 subs on 16,943 Shorts views (10.2 per 1k).

You Have More to Thank God For Than You Think | Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/3Ca1xnacjR4 . Published 2026-10-30 (Morning, 5 AM ET). Length 0:51. File: `Shorts/2026-10-30 - You Have More to Thank God For Than You Think - 3Ca1xnacjR4.mp4` (1080x1920, 10.6 MB), original upload file (SHA-256 matches the production receipt).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 999 views, 41.2% stayed, 101.2% avg viewed, 118 likes, 12 subs, 5.79 watch hours. Weekly review (Oct 26 to Nov 1): about 1,006 views, roughly 45% of all Shorts views that week.
- How it was made: Original prayer inspired by Psalm 103:2 (WEB). Built with the channel's earlier AI-agent pipeline (Codex) on the owner's PC: one AI-generated photorealistic still (image model built into Codex) (empty bench and wildflowers on a morning ridge, no people) with a slow local parallax camera move, burned-in phrase captions, xAI Grok TTS "Leo" voice (Balanced Calm preset).
- Why it likely worked: Gratitude angle + "you" in the title ("You Have More to Thank God For..."), which matches the channel-wide finding that "you/your" titles convert better. Its stay rate (41.2%) was below the channel average (44.5%), so the reach came from a Shorts-feed push rather than unusually high retention. It is a one-off spike so far; no other Short that week passed 112 views.

Rest Here With God | Evening Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/YZPphBiwqeM . Published 2026-10-11 (Night). Length 0:51. File: `Shorts/2026-10-11 - Rest Here With God - YZPphBiwqeM.mp4` (1080x1920, 14.1 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 1,011 views, 42.9% stayed, 111.4% avg viewed, 146 likes, 13 subs, 6.63 watch hours.
- How it was made: Night prayer Short ("series-v1"). Native Grok Imagine scenery animation with separate narration, Leo voice.
- Why it likely worked: Most-viewed Short in the 28-day window; restful night topic ("Rest Here With God"); moving AI scenery rather than a still.

You Did What You Could Today | A Night Prayer to Let Go

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/u36HAfR0LRU . Published 2026-10-10 (Night). Length 0:48. File: `Shorts/2026-10-10 - You Did What You Could Today - u36HAfR0LRU.mp4` (720x1280, 12.6 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 672 views, 46.4% stayed, 155.1% avg viewed, 91 likes, 16 subs, 6.08 watch hours.
- How it was made: F04 "longer landscape" test: longer captioned animated scenery, Leo voice.
- Why it likely worked: Most subscribers of any Short (16) and 2.4 subs per 100 views; permission-giving title ("You Did What You Could Today") aimed at tired viewers at bedtime.

Prayer Before Bed | Give God Your Worries Tonight

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/h8g05NAl8FE . Published 2026-10-05 (Night). Length 0:52. File: `Shorts/2026-10-05 - Prayer Before Bed - h8g05NAl8FE.mp4` (720x1280, 10.0 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 618 views, 55.9% stayed, 169.5% avg viewed, 70 likes, 7 subs, 6.36 watch hours.
- How it was made: F01 research-format pilot: narrated moonlit lake scene, Leo voice (soft British male, speed 0.9).
- Why it likely worked: Best retention of the group: 55.9% stayed to watch and 169.5% average percentage viewed (many viewers watched it more than once). Concrete bedtime need ("Give God Your Worries Tonight").

God, Help Me Begin Again This Afternoon | Midday Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/cmQCMjDZe9I . Published 2026-10-19 (Midday). Length 0:44. File: `Shorts/2026-10-19 - God, Help Me Begin Again This Afternoon - cmQCMjDZe9I.mp4` (1080x1920, 9.2 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 613 views, 52.5% stayed, 131.3% avg viewed, 49 likes, 3 subs, 4.60 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer.
- Why it likely worked: 52.5% stayed; "Begin Again" framing, which the channel has since adopted as its default opening angle.

Let Your Heart Be Still | Peaceful Evening Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/bY6UdUmLU80 . Published 2026-10-15 (Night). Length 0:51. File: `Shorts/2026-10-15 - Let Your Heart Be Still - bY6UdUmLU80.mp4` (1080x1920, 20.4 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 608 views, 48.1% stayed, 88.7% avg viewed, 89 likes, 10 subs, 3.65 watch hours.
- How it was made: Narrated nature/scenery prayer (series-v2), existing Leo take.
- Why it likely worked: 608 views and 10 subs (16.4 per 1k views); calm, simple evening promise in the title.

A New Morning With Jesus | Prayer to Begin Your Day

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/5ytK46ye-Qk . Published 2026-10-15 (Morning). Length 0:53. File: `Shorts/2026-10-15 - A New Morning With Jesus - 5ytK46ye-Qk.mp4` (1080x1920, 22.6 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 500 views, 44.5% stayed, 109.0% avg viewed, 70 likes, 8 subs, 3.37 watch hours.
- How it was made: Narrated nature/scenery prayer (series-v2), existing Leo take.
- Why it likely worked: 500 views and 8 subs (16.0 per 1k); names Jesus in the title; morning habit framing.

Thank You, God, for This Morning | A Prayer of Gratitude

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/g-1o2DapVQg . Published 2026-10-11 (Morning). Length 0:50. File: `Shorts/2026-10-11 - Thank You, God, for This Morning - g-1o2DapVQg.mp4` (1080x1920, 13.3 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 352 views, 55.3% stayed, 94.3% avg viewed, 51 likes, 6 subs, 2.34 watch hours.
- How it was made: Narrated nature/scenery prayer (series-v2), existing Leo take.
- Why it likely worked: 55.3% stayed (one of the highest) and 6 subs on 352 views (17.0 per 1k); gratitude theme, same as the Oct 30 breakout.

God, Hold Me Through the Night | Night Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/tqLJeSx9oeo . Published 2026-10-17 (Night, 9 PM ET). Length 0:42. File: `Shorts/2026-10-17 - God, Hold Me Through the Night - tqLJeSx9oeo.mp4` (1080x1920, 4.3 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 543 views, 43.1% stayed, 156.5% avg viewed, 74 likes, 4 subs, 4.17 watch hours.

- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 113 "Held Through the Night".
- Why it likely worked: 543 views and 156.5% average viewed (many replays); simple, direct night-time request in the title.

Guide My Steps Today, Jesus | Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/3vZs9FMwmw0 . Published 2026-10-20 (Morning, 5 AM ET). Length 0:44. File: `Shorts/2026-10-20 - Guide My Steps Today, Jesus - 3vZs9FMwmw0.mp4` (1080x1920, 7.8 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 385 views, 43.3% stayed, 108.6% avg viewed, 43 likes, 2 subs, 1.87 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 142.
- Why it likely worked: 385 views; names Jesus and asks for daily guidance, a reliable morning angle for the channel.

A Fresh Start With God's Grace | Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/JU-sd2v5Fno . Published 2026-10-14 (Morning, 5 AM ET). Length 0:44. File: `Shorts/2026-10-14 - A Fresh Start With God's Grace - JU-sd2v5Fno.mp4` (1080x1920, 7.8 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 382 views, 51.5% stayed, 146.2% avg viewed, 37 likes, 2 subs, 2.85 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 130.
- Why it likely worked: 51.5% stayed (above the 44.5% channel average) and 146% average viewed; "fresh start" framing, close to the "Begin Again" angle.

God, Give Me Grace for This Day | Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/_8jmbwxZ9j8 . Published 2026-10-21 (Morning, 5 AM ET). Length 0:44. File: `Shorts/2026-10-21 - God, Give Me Grace for This Day - _8jmbwxZ9j8.mp4` (1080x1920, 4.9 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 380 views, 48.2% stayed, 86.3% avg viewed, 52 likes, 4 subs, 1.73 watch hours.

- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 118 "Grace for This Day".
- Why it likely worked: 380 views and 4 subs (10.5 per 1k); grace-for-today request in the title.

End This Day With Mercy | A Peaceful Night Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/w8nQpJ5BikU . Published 2026-10-18 (Night, 9 PM ET). Length 0:43. File: `Shorts/2026-10-18 - End This Day With Mercy - w8nQpJ5BikU.mp4` (1080x1920, 6.5 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 355 views, 53.2% stayed, 113.8% avg viewed, 39 likes, 1 subs, 1.99 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 137.
- Why it likely worked: 53.2% stayed, one of the better stay rates; peaceful bedtime promise.

Thank You for Carrying Me This Far | Afternoon Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/YsOPpHGMFd4 . Published 2026-10-20 (Midday, 12 PM ET). Length 0:47. File: `Shorts/2026-10-20 - Thank You for Carrying Me This Far - YsOPpHGMFd4.mp4` (1080x1920, 9.4 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 350 views, 49.1% stayed, 103.0% avg viewed, 38 likes, 2 subs, 1.99 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 143.
- Why it likely worked: 49.1% stayed; gratitude theme, which also drove the Oct 30 breakout.

Walk With God Today | Morning Prayer for Everyday Life

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/DFYqNORLDAg . Published 2026-10-13 (Morning, 5 AM ET). Length 0:49. File: `Shorts/2026-10-13 - Walk With God Today - DFYqNORLDAg.mp4` (1080x1920, 21.9 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 334 views, 43.7% stayed, 109.7% avg viewed, 44 likes, 7 subs, 1.90 watch hours.
- How it was made: Narrated nature/scenery prayer from the earlier Codex pipeline on the owner's PC (pre-gpt-leo-v1 schedule), AI-generated scenery, captions, Leo voice. Original

prayer.
- Why it likely worked: 7 subs on 334 views (21.0 per 1k), the best subscriber rate of the added Shorts; everyday-life framing.

Make Room for Kindness Today | Afternoon Prayer

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/K865-zfXfC4 . Published 2026-10-17 (Midday, 12 PM ET). Length 0:42. File: `Shorts/2026-10-17 - Make Room for Kindness Today - K865-zfXfC4.mp4` (1080x1920, 12.2 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 299 views, 55.8% stayed, 157.5% avg viewed, 33 likes, 2 subs, 2.52 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 136.
- Why it likely worked: Best stay rate of the added Shorts (55.8%) and 157.5% average viewed; practical "kindness" ask rather than a generic blessing.

Leave This Night in God's Hands | Prayer Before Bed

- Link: https://youtube.com/shorts/IPB7qEvJvDE . Published 2026-10-14 (Night, 9 PM ET). Length 0:43. File: `Shorts/2026-10-14 - Leave This Night in God's Hands - IPB7qEvJvDE.mp4` (1080x1920, 6.7 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 264 views, 49.8% stayed, 155.6% avg viewed, 22 likes, 3 subs, 1.99 watch hours.
- How it was made: Same "gpt-leo-v1" package format as the Oct 12-25 Shorts: AI-generated nature scenery with slow camera movement, every spoken word on screen, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Original prayer. Episode 129.
- Why it likely worked: Longest average view of the added Shorts (1:08, 155.6% viewed); bedtime "let go" theme like the Oct 5 pilot.

Long videos (7)

#	Date	Title	Length	Views	Impr.	CTR	Avg view	Avg % viewed	Watch h	Subs
1	2026-10-10	2.5 Hours of Gospel Prayer for Sleep	2:30:00	221	2,791	3.48%	0:29:11	19.4%	66.2	4
2	2026-10-22	2.5 Hours of Bible Stories for Sleep | God's Care Through the Night	2:30:00	94	787	5.59%	0:20:34	13.7%	16.5	2

#	Date	Title	Length	Views	Impr.	CTR	Avg view	Avg % viewed	Watch h	Subs
3	2026-10-17	Receive This Day With Joy | Morning Prayer	6:15	581	5,008	3.23%	0:02:56	47.0%	11.5	7
4	2026-10-27	Psalm 91 Night Prayer | Rest Under His Wings	12:02	42	807	3.22%	0:05:52	48.8%	2.8	0
5	2026-10-16	Sleep With Jesus | 3 Hours of Gentle Scripture & Night Prayer	3:00:01	29	357	2.52%	0:38:50	21.6%	6.5	0
6	2026-10-15	A New Morning With Jesus | 12-Minute Morning Prayer	12:53	120	979	4.19%	0:04:12	32.6%	3.9	0
7	2026-10-11	Rest Here With God | A Gentle Evening Prayer	12:37	26	119	0.84%	0:10:20	81.9%	4.5	1

All long videos in the same window: 1,947 views, 172.6 watch hours, 2.96% CTR on 21,736 impressions, 19 subs.

2.5 Hours of Gospel Prayer for Sleep

- Link: https://youtu.be/ez5BGywHaYs . Published 2026-10-10 (Sleep program, 2.5 h). Length 2:30:00. File: `Long videos/2026-10-10 - 2.5 Hours of Gospel Prayer for Sleep - ez5BGywHaYs.mp4` (1280x720, 890 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 221 views, 2,791 impressions, 3.48% CTR, 0:29:11 average view (19.4% of the video), 66.2 watch hours, 4 subs, 7 likes.
- How it was made: Eight AI-generated still compositions (GPT image model, peaceful lakeside scenery) with smooth slow camera drift and 8-second dissolves; Gospel readings from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (WEB, word for word) plus original prayers in 8 chapters; every spoken word shown as large centered captions; about 85-90% of the runtime is speech; xAI Grok TTS "Leo" (Balanced Calm). Built with the earlier Codex pipeline on the owner's PC.
- Why it likely worked: Largest source of long-form watch time on the channel (66.2 h in 28 days). Voice-led, dense content with no loop. Most of its watch time came from Suggested videos (50.0 h).

2.5 Hours of Bible Stories for Sleep | God's Care Through the Night

- Link: https://youtu.be/houvGiRfknU . Published 2026-10-22 (Sleep program, 2.5 h). Length 2:30:00. File: `Long videos/2026-10-22 - 2.5 Hours of Bible Stories for Sleep - houvGiRfknU.mp4` (1280x720, 614 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 94 views, 787 impressions, 5.59% CTR, 0:20:34 average view (13.7% of the video), 16.5 watch hours, 2 subs, 2 likes.
- How it was made: Built with the channel's newer Linux/ffmpeg pipeline (project "L1"). 11 Old Testament story chapters (14 full WEB passages, each with an original intro and original prayer) for the first ~70 min, then quieter night promises from Scripture; 173 sections, 12,954 words, nothing loops. xAI Grok TTS "Leo" sleep variant (speed 0.85, longer pauses). 16 Grok Imagine stills plus three short Grok Imagine clips (lamp, coals, mist) slowed and seamlessly looped, Ken Burns drift, 8 s crossfades, large Georgia captions that fade out after 45-60 min, picture dims to near black for the second half. Original synthesized ambience (no third-party audio).
- Why it likely worked: Best thumbnail click-through rate of any long video (5.59%, target 4%): bright "BIBLE STORIES FOR SLEEP / 2.5 HOURS" thumbnail on a navy scrim; "N Hours of ... for Sleep" title pattern; an under-served topic (Old Testament stories) for this channel.

Receive This Day With Joy | Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtu.be/U6U3sGdIMnU . Published 2026-10-17 (Morning prayer, ~6 min). Length 6:15. File: `Long videos/2026-10-17 - Receive This Day With Joy - U6U3sGdIMnU.mp4` (1920x1080, 63 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 581 views, 5,008 impressions, 3.23% CTR, 0:02:56 average view (47.0% of the video), 11.5 watch hours, 7 subs, 20 likes.
- How it was made: gpt-leo-v1 long: AI-generated scenic still(s) with slow camera movement, captions, Leo Balanced Calm voice. Its thumbnail was replaced in a thumbnail audit before release.
- Why it likely worked: Most-viewed long video in the window (581 views) and most subscribers from a long (7). Short enough to finish (47% average viewed); mostly Browse traffic (480 views).

Psalm 91 Night Prayer | Rest Under His Wings

- Link: https://youtu.be/W9LCcG9v7DQ . Published 2026-10-27 (Night prayer, ~12 min). Length 12:02. File: `Long videos/2026-10-27 - Psalm 91 Night Prayer - W9LCcG9v7DQ.mp4` (1920x1080, 69 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 42 views, 807 impressions, 3.22% CTR, 0:05:52 average view (48.8% of the video), 2.8 watch hours, 0 subs, 1 like.

- How it was made: gpt-leo-v1 long (episode 123 "Under His Wings"): AI scenery, captions, Leo Balanced Calm voice; WEB readings of Psalm 91, Psalm 121, Romans 8:31-39 and Psalm 27, with original prayers, in 9 chapters.
- Why it likely worked: Strong hold for its length (48.8% average viewed, 5:52 average), CTR 3.22%; names the scripture (Psalm 91) in the title, which was one of the week's top videos (43 views, Oct 26-Nov 1).

Sleep With Jesus | 3 Hours of Gentle Scripture & Night Prayer

- Link: https://youtu.be/AoSYQgeAIUU . Published 2026-10-16 (Sleep program, 3 h). Length 3:00:00. File: `Long videos/2026-10-16 - Sleep With Jesus - AoSYQgeAIUU.mp4` (1280x720, 710 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 29 views, 357 impressions, 2.52% CTR, 0:38:50 average view (21.6% of the video), 6.5 watch hours, 0 subs, 1 like.
- How it was made: A later variation of the sleep-program format, built with the earlier Codex pipeline on the owner's PC: a lower, slower Leo voice, calming water and wind ambience, moving biblical scenes (AI-generated), permanent on-screen captions and 36 chapters.
- Why it likely worked: Longest average view of any long video on the channel (38:50, about a third longer than the Gospel Prayer program's 29:11). Small sample (29 views), so treat it as a promising hold signal rather than proof.

A New Morning With Jesus | 12-Minute Morning Prayer

- Link: https://youtu.be/KJ7M2ULDAok . Published 2026-10-15 (Morning prayer, ~13 min). Length 12:53. File: `Long videos/2026-10-15 - A New Morning With Jesus - KJ7M2ULDAok.mp4` (1280x720, 206 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode, 720p).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 120 views, 979 impressions, 4.19% CTR, 0:04:12 average view (32.6% of the video), 3.9 watch hours, 0 subs, 0 likes.
- How it was made: 12-minute narrated morning prayer built with the earlier Codex pipeline on the owner's PC: AI-generated scenery with slow camera movement, captions, xAI Grok TTS "Leo" voice; original prayer with Scripture. Long-form companion to the Short "A New Morning With Jesus" (same theme, separately produced, not a loop or re-cut).
- Why it likely worked: Second-best CTR of the long videos here (4.19%, above the 4% target) and 120 views; morning + Jesus in the title. 0 likes and 0 subs, so the click appeal is stronger than the hold.

Rest Here With God | A Gentle Evening Prayer

- Link: https://youtu.be/9tvtgDxdXzA . Published 2026-10-11 (Evening prayer, ~13 min). Length 12:37. File: `Long videos/2026-10-11 - Rest Here With God - 9tvtgDxdXzA.mp4` (1280x720, 134 MB), re-downloaded from the public YouTube video (YouTube's encode, 720p).
- Metrics (Oct 4 to Oct 31): 26 views, 119 impressions, 0.84% CTR, 0:10:20 average view (81.9% of the video), 4.5 watch hours, 1 subs, 1 likes.
- How it was made: "series-v1" long (episode 106 "Rest Here With God"): narrated evening prayer with native Grok Imagine scenery animation, captions, Leo voice. Long-form companion to the top Short of the same name (separately produced, not a loop or re-cut).
- Why it likely worked: Best hold of any long video on the channel: 81.9% average viewed (10:20 of 12:37). Very low CTR (0.84%) on few impressions, so the thumbnail/title, not the content, limited reach.

Strong long videos not included

- Give God Your Worries Tonight | 3 Hours (https://youtu.be/lZrQBJAOFA0): 2nd-highest long watch time (23.8 h; 102 views, 2.87% CTR, 20:40 average view); left out because a 720p copy (~2.6 GB) does not fit in the shared storage. Watch it on YouTube.
- Fall Asleep to the Psalms | 2.5 Hours (https://youtu.be/o0PoGnvhx8Q): 10.3 h watch time; its main sequence plays twice (a repeat), so it is a weaker model under YouTube's repetitious-content guidance.

What performs well and what doesn't (channel-wide)

Last 7 days, Oct 26 to Nov 1, 2026 (weekly Studio review):

- 2,632 views (down 44% on the prior week), 38.6 watch hours, +22 subscribers, 353 subscribers in total.
- Shorts: 2,233 views, 41.3% stayed to watch (58.7% swiped away; the channel's target is 47%; prior week 43.5%), 10.3 subs per 1,000 Shorts views. 88.6% of Shorts views come from the Shorts feed and 10.1% from search.
- One Short (Oct 30, "You Have More to Thank God For Than You Think") took about 1,006 views, roughly 45% of all Shorts views that week. No other Short passed 112.
- Long videos: 393 views, 3.1% CTR on about 4.3K impressions, 8:39 average view. Traffic is 59.3% Browse and 24.7% Suggested.

Audience (same review): 93.5% of viewers are new and 6.5% casual (regular viewers under 0.1%); only 1.1% of watch time is from subscribers. 47.4% of watch time is on TV and 47.0% on mobile. 43.9% of viewers are 65+, 56.3% are female. Top countries are the US (37.1%) and the Philippines (6.0%).

Last 28 days, Oct 4 to Oct 31 (Studio export): 18,938 views, 275.3 watch hours, +189 subscribers.

- Shorts bring the views and subscribers: 16,943 views and 173 subscribers, but only 102.5 watch hours.
- Long videos bring the watch time: 1,947 views (about 10% of views) but 172.6 watch hours (about 63%). About 80% of that long-form watch time comes from the 2 to 3 hour sleep programs. Suggested-video traffic watches longest (14:33 average vs 8:04 from Browse).

What works

- **Sleep programs, 2.5 to 3 hours, voice-led, with no repeated or looped sections.** These are the channel's watch-time engine; the 2.5 h Gospel program alone logged 66.2 hours in 28 days. Front-load the strongest content: the best average view is 38:50 ("Sleep With Jesus").
- **Bright, simple thumbnails that name the content.** "BIBLE STORIES FOR SLEEP / 2.5 HOURS" got 5.59% CTR against a 2.96% channel average for long videos.
- **Shorts titles in second person.** In the 28-day data, Shorts titles with "you" or "your" gained about 14.2 subscribers per 1,000 views vs 8.5 for others.
- **Gratitude, rest and "begin again" themes; titles that name God, Jesus or Lord, in a first-person prayer voice.** The top Shorts are gratitude (Oct 30) and bedtime rest ("Rest Here With God", "You Did What You Could Today", "Give God Your Worries Tonight").
- **Start praying immediately.** The current rule (since Oct 26) is that speech starts within 0.05 s with a short prayer line and no intro, because Shorts viewers decide in the first second. Most videos in this package predate that rule.
- **Short morning or evening prayers of 6 to 12 minutes** hold a large share of their length (about 47% to 89% average viewed in the 28-day data) but get modest reach.

What doesn't

- An 8-hour program that loops a 2-hour sequence: 1.55% average viewed, 1.51% CTR ("God, Shape My Heart", Oct 4 to 31). It also carries repetitious-content risk on YouTube.
- Ambience-led formats (scripture with rain sounds): 0:52 average view, 1.05% CTR.
- Question titles have the lowest stay rates among Shorts as a group; the weakest Short in the window was a question title ("Someone on Your Heart? Pray for Them With Me", 20.5% stayed).
- End screens and cards got 0 clicks in 28 days.
- Returning viewers are still rare: about 94% of viewers are new each week, so the channel hasn't yet built a daily habit audience.

How the videos are made

Writing

- Each video starts from one concrete viewer need (worry, rest, gratitude, a fresh start) and one Bible passage.
- Prayers, introductions and reflections are original, written for the channel with AI assistance and reviewed against fixed rules: no promises of healing, miracles or guaranteed outcomes, no invented scripture, and no fake pastor or personal story.
- **Scripture** is the World English Bible (WEB, public domain, https://ebible.org/engwebp/). Sleep programs and long prayers read WEB passages word for word and list every reading in the description. Shorts are usually an original prayer inspired by one verse, cited in the description (for example, "Psalm 103:2, World English Bible").

Voice (AI)

- Every video in this package uses the stock AI voice "Leo" from xAI's Grok text-to-speech. The "Balanced Calm" preset is speed 0.9, extra pauses between sentences, a slight pitch-preserving slow-down, and loudness normalized to about -20 LUFS. Sleep programs use a slower, softer variant (speed 0.85) at about -21 LUFS, and the voice gets quieter later in the night.
- Since late October 2026, new videos use a free, open-source text-to-speech model (Chatterbox) run locally, imitating the same stock "Leo" and "Eve" voices. No real person's voice is cloned.
- Every take is checked with speech recognition (faster-whisper) against the script, and the word timings drive the captions.

Visuals (AI)

- Scenery is AI-generated: still images from Grok Imagine or a GPT image model, plus short Grok Imagine animated clips on some videos. The scenes are calm landscapes, lamps, lakes and night skies, mostly with no people or faces and no text in the image.
- Videos are assembled in FFmpeg with Python. Stills get a slow drift or zoom (Ken Burns) with 1 to 8 second dissolves, and short clips are slowed and looped seamlessly as background.
- Captions show every spoken word (Georgia or Segoe UI Bold, ivory with gold emphasis). On sleep programs, the captions fade out and the picture dims to near-black in the second half.
- Brand colors are navy #10252B, ivory #F7F1E6, gold #EAB86A and sage #8FABA0. Thumbnails are bright and simple, with 3 to 5 words, and name Jesus or the scripture.
- Background sound is an original synthesized pad or soft noise, with no third-party music.

Formats

- Shorts: 40 to 55 seconds, 1080x1920. They open with a prayer line and close with one spoken subscribe invitation.
- Prayer longs: 6 to 12 minutes, 1920x1080, with chapters.
- Sleep programs: 2.5 to 3 hours, 1920x1080, with chapters. Nothing loops or repeats, and they end with a fade to black.
- Since Nov 12, 2026, the schedule is two Shorts a day (5 AM and 9 PM Eastern, the evening one called "Lamplight with Jesus") plus two sleep programs a week at 9 PM Eastern.

Upload practices

- YouTube "Altered or synthetic content" disclosure is set to Yes on every video, and every description states that narration and visuals are AI-generated.
- Made for kids: No. Category: People & Blogs. Language: English.
- Every video has a custom thumbnail, chapters on longs, the scripture source link and a few hashtags in the description.
- Videos are scheduled in Studio for set Eastern times (5 AM, noon until Nov 11, and 9 PM).
- Night Shorts point viewers to a sleep program through a description link, a pinned comment and the Shorts "Related video" field.

Rights and policy notes

- **Scripture:** the World English Bible is in the public domain.
- **AI material:** the narration is a stock AI text-to-speech voice, and the imagery and clips were AI-generated for this channel. None of it is stock footage or third-party video or music. Each AI tool's terms apply to its output.
- **Fonts:** Georgia and Segoe UI Bold, rendered locally. The font licenses haven't been re-checked for redistribution.
- **YouTube policy:** keep the AI-content disclosure on. Avoid mass-produced near-duplicates and looped or repeated sections, which can fall under YouTube's inauthentic or repetitious content rules for monetization.
- These are published videos from the First Light with Jesus channel. Reuse, re-upload or editing terms are for the channel owner to agree.

Package contents

- `Shorts/` : 17 MP4s with their thumbnails. Names are publish date, title and YouTube video ID.
- `Long videos/` : 7 MP4s with their thumbnails.

- This brief, as PERFORMANCE_AND_HOW_MADE.md, .html and .pdf.