

A Year of Focused Prayer

CONSIDER

REFLECTING ON THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE

Author: Terri Prah

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

2 Timothy 3:16,17

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***Editorial Note:** Due to varying rules on capitalizing pronouns of God and various translations used, I have chosen not to capitalize second person pronouns in my prayers for easier reading. I am always talking with God, so the audience is clear. God knows the respect I have for His precious name.*

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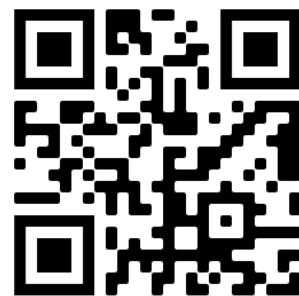
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C O N S I D E R

"I will meditate on your precepts, and fix my eyes on your ways."
Psalm 119:15



Three-fold hope for this book:

1. To draw believers to the beauty of Scripture and the sweetness of God's word.
2. To give words to deeper issues of our life and times that reflect the character of God.
3. To build perseverance and security in the hearts of believers so they will grow in the hope of Christ.

*"For the word of God
is living and active,
sharper than any two-
edged sword, piercing to
the division of soul and
of spirit, of joints and of
marrow, and discerning
the thoughts and
intentions of the heart."
Hebrews 4:12*

I hope that you will find both comfort and challenge; strength and humility; and thirst and peace within the pages of this prayer guide.

I encourage you to write out prayers of your own that reflect the words of God's heart.

We don't have to fear messing up because the Spirit goes to the Father on our behalf, aligning our will to His.

Hello & Welcome

There have been many times in my life when talking to God felt foreign. After heavy seasons of loss, no words could express my deepest feelings—or I was afraid to speak in honesty.

In moments of big decision in my life, I didn't often know what I should be praying for—what was the will of God?

Other times, I lost the relational aspect of prayer, forgetting that God is a divine being with a perfect mind, will, and intellect. He is also a loving Father who longs to hear from His children.

I believe dwelling on the words written for us in our Bibles is a wise practice for a deep, abiding prayer life. It's a way to draw near.

As I have studied Scripture, I have noticed how Jesus talked to His Father, and as imitators of Christ, we should too:

In Matthew 4:1-11, when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He quoted Scripture that was pertinent to the accusation/temptation. This requires us to be familiar with Scripture.

Jesus refuted Satan's attempts to use Scripture with false intent by comparing it to other Scripture. Knowing truth protects us from being deceived.

This past year, I have been drawn to pray through Scripture as I seek to grow in faith and knowledge of God. As Romans 10:17 (NKJV) says, "So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Following the example of Jesus as He was tempted in the wilderness, I began to look for the will and mind of God through Scripture. This is where we hear if we listen. It is also our weapon against all that threatens to destroy our effectiveness as light in the world.

I have tried to give context to certain passages to inform the prayers for accuracy, but I would invite you to look them up. Grab a journal and begin to write out your own prayers as you read Scripture—or simply speak them to the Lord.

Jesus is the Word (John 1:1).

The Word bridges the gap between earthly and divine; between God and man. It is here that we should begin our journey of faith through a walking relationship with the Word.

Terri Prah
Author/Editor



Benefits of Praying Scripture:

- Strengthens our faith (Romans 10:17).
- Builds confident hope (Romans 15:4).
- Brings freedom to live in holiness (John 8:32).
- Aligns our desires with God's, leading to answered prayers (John 15:7).
- Reveals the inner thoughts and intents of our hearts, protecting us from harm (Heb. 4:12).
- Grows us in wisdom and understanding (Ps. 119:66).

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.
— 1 John 5:13

CONSIDER



In the quiet, may we hear you louder, finding comfort in your song.

GIVE US EARS TO HEAR

"The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing."

—Zephaniah 3:17

When we can't feel you close, Lord, remind us you are in our midst.

When we are lost, assure us that you are mighty to save.

When we feel you are angry and irritated with us at our unfaithfulness, allow us to see the joy you experience as our Father.

When our lives are loud and chaotic, let us rest quietly within your perfect love.

And when guilt, shame, and deceit threaten to steal our joy in Christ, give us ears to hear the songs you are singing over us.

Lord, we don't deserve to know you, but we are allowed to look upon your face and live. Through Christ, you are accessible to us.

You take delight in and sing over your people—those you have redeemed and restored through the sacrifice of your son.

May your hymn of gladness minister deep to our insecurities and fears, allowing us to rest in who we are in you.

As that melody reverberates in our hearts and minds, accept our outpouring of gratitude through the songs we offer back to you this day.

Thank you for the gift of music and how it connects us to your heart. It brings healing to pain in unimaginable ways.

In the quiet, may we hear you louder, finding comfort in your song.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

TEACH US TO DELIGHT IN YOU, GOD.

“I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word. Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word. Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”—Psalm 119:16-18

Father,

As we practice listing our gratitude, expand our capacity to truly delight in you—the God who delights and sings over our souls.

Help us to move beyond intention to an ingrained knowing of your character and holiness as we live in the light of your presence.

You alone keep and sustain us, God. It's by your words we were formed and through your son, the Word, that we are saved to walk in new life.

Give us a mirror into who you are as we sit with Scripture and take in the wonderful truths that lead to life and peace. Grow us in obedience and open our eyes to see the beauty of your ways.

We delight in what we love, so may we be utterly enamored with you this day.

Remind us in the hard that there is hope for a better day. May we delight in the promises yet unfulfilled, holding tight to believe when our eyes can't see.

Your instructions don't always feel good to our flesh, God. Increase our vision for what is beautiful and good. Preserve our memory. Revive us by your Word.

Teach us to take pleasure in you alone. In want or plenty, may your name be praised, and your presence be a powerful reminder of what we truly need.

Teach us to delight so we may exhale out of thankfulness and praise.

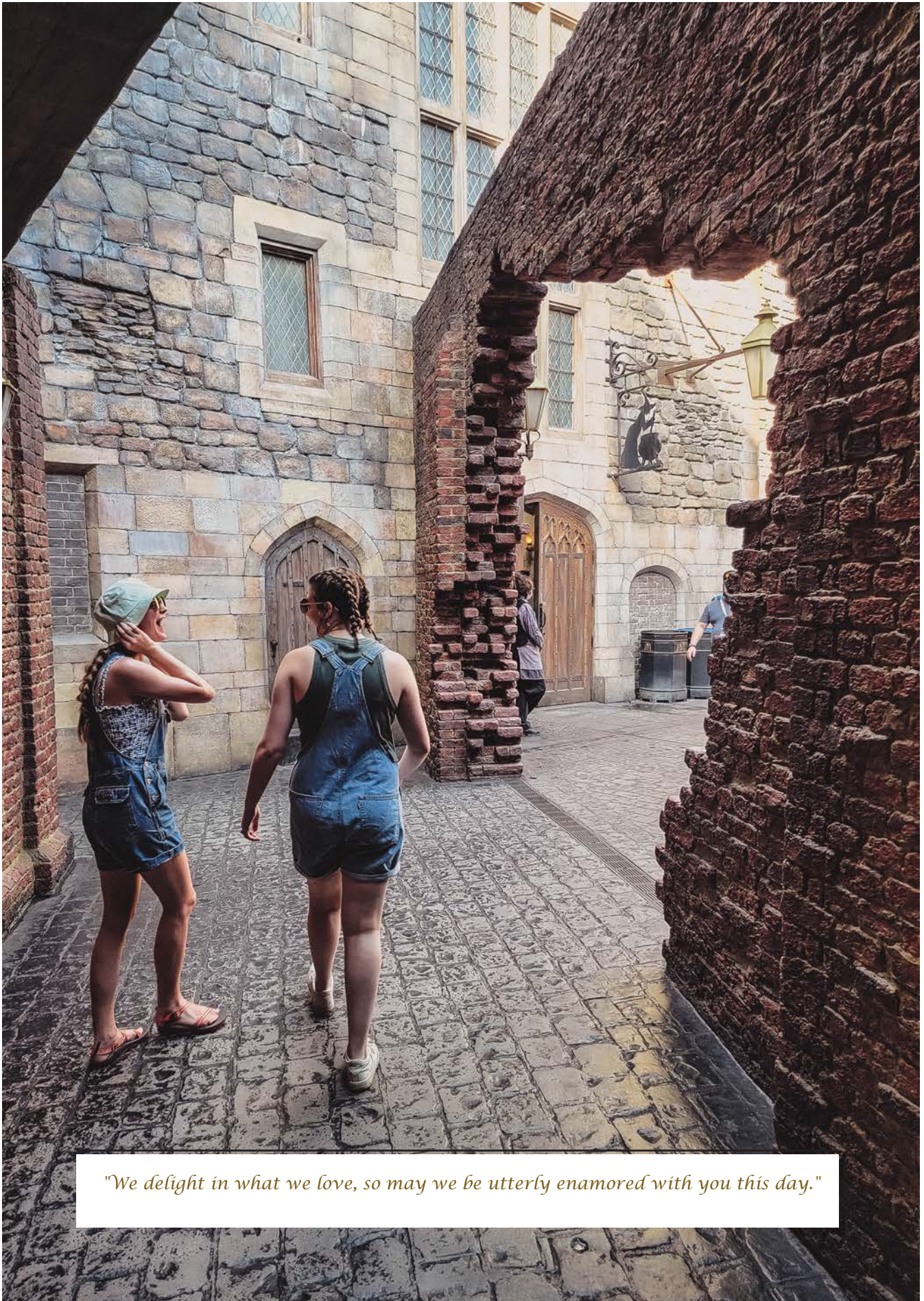
You alone are worthy. You are all we need.

The blessings of this life are icing on the cake, Father. Open our eyes to see how wonderful you are.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Context: Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm and talks about the beauty of God's word. Anyone who follows Christ must live in obedience to the Scriptures. While we often fight against restraints on our behavior and lives, the only way to freedom is through Christ, who is the Word. Happiness comes through following the instructions laid out for believers in the Bible, for it reveals the holy character of God. We are to delight in the Word, obey the Word, and pray for the Spirit to open our eyes to truth. This is the way to grow and deepen our faith and confidence in God.



"We delight in what we love, so may we be utterly enamored with you this day."

REMINDE US OF WHAT'S TRUE, GOD.

So many of us are struggling through things that God can free us from, but because we are forgetful, we live tied up to unnecessary weights of sin.

In Lamentations, the prophet, Jeremiah, writes a song of lament over the destruction of Jerusalem due to their unfaithfulness. He had pleaded with them for 40 years to return to the Lord. Since they didn't, judgment came, and Jeremiah was broken about the state of God's people.

Jeremiah experienced deep grief over this situation that could have been avoided if the people had only repented and remembered the faithfulness of God.

The weeping prophet only overcame his grief by remembering the faithful mercy and love of God. Remembrance allowed him to hope. Rehearsing the character of God redirected his vision for the future.

Lam. 3:24 (NLT) says, "I say

to myself, "The Lord is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in Him!"

In 2 Peter 3:1-2, we are told that we too should remember these stories, commands, and truths of Scripture, being stirred in our minds to hold on to hope.

Peter writes to strengthen believers through thinking about where their faith began. As long as we live, we must remember and stand firm in the grace of Christ over our lives.

- We are to remember that the Lord is coming again and that His promises are fulfilled in His timing, not ours.
- We are to remember that false teachers will come so that we can avoid falling prey to their lies.
- In moments of weary waiting, we must consider that the Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. Don't we want that over our comfort?

This is why after 30 years I still gather weekly with other

believers. I desperately and consistently need to be stirred up in remembrance of what is true. Through teaching and song, the gospel message washes over me anew, building my hope and growing me in the grace and knowledge of God.

Father,

*Help us to cling to you,
our first love. Strengthen
us against false teachers
and the attempts of the
evil one to plague us with
hopelessness and doubt.
Forgive us for our repeated
forgetfulness and grow us
into your likeness. Remind
us of what's true, God.*

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

*“But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the LORD never
ceases; his mercies never come to an
end; they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.”*

—Lamentations 3:21-23



PLOW UP THE HARD GROUND OF OUR HEARTS, GOD.



“For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem:
‘Break up your fallow ground,
and sow not among thorns.’”

Jeremiah 4:3

Context:

Jeremiah was a prophet sent to turn the Israelites back to God. They had failed to remove the idols from their lives and served false gods. Judgment would come to them if they did not repent. In this passage, Jeremiah is warning them that their hearts had become hardened to truth and good seeds would not be able to survive in the hard soil of their lives. Old ways needed to be dug up for the new and better ways of God. A softening was necessary.

How do we have soft hearts that are receptive to truth?

Jeremiah 4:4 commanded the Israelites to surrender their pride and power, calling them to change their hearts before the LORD. This is the key to soft hearts for us too.



*Surrender and
change require
humility.*

We can turn to the Lord and ask for help in this. He is faithful and just to forgive (1 John 1:9).

God,

As we begin a new week remembering the price you paid for our sin on the cross and the victory of your resurrection, break up the hard soil of our hearts so that gospel seeds can take root in our lives.

Uproot all the old ways we cling to and remove anything that hinders our closeness to you. Forgive us of the sin we are aware of that weighs us down, and reveal anything hidden that is hardening our hearts.

Help us to sow seeds of right living.

Give us the strength to practice the truths we read in Scripture.

Tear down strongholds of past sins and behaviors, making space for good seeds to grow.

In light of your love, God, may we abide in your presence, patiently waiting as you work the soil of our stony souls.

Plow up the hard ground of our hearts, God. Turn our affections as we surrender all that we are to you in this day. May you be glorified always.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

HEBREWS 12:1



Heavenly Father,

Let us throw off every weight that slows us down, put away any sin that trips us up, and run with endurance the race set before us. Let us be the witnesses surrounding one another to keep pursuing!

Thank you for loving us so faithfully and providing the grace of community to protect our weary hearts. Teach us to run well, God.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



LET US STRIP OFF EVERY WEIGHT AND RUN WITH ENDURANCE, GOD.

Context:

Good earthly fathers are reflections of our heavenly Father. They should be pointing us to follow Christ and persevere in faith—even through the trials of life.

I am fortunate to have an earthly father that surrounds me as a witness to the faith and encourages me to run the race God has set before me. He taught me that church, as imperfect as it can be at times with pews full of humans, is still the place to find the encouragement we need from worshiping and learning together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

My Dad has been an amazing Bible teacher, and I remember all the props he would use to make his lessons engaging for his elementary students. He genuinely cared for those he taught for so many years.

I have seen my dad sacrifice much for his children. He is a great example of how to love like Christ and remain faithful when

life is hard.

Hebrews 12:1 is my prayer today. If you have not had a spiritual father here on earth, this passage reminds us that all the people of faith in Hebrews 11 are witnesses and encouragers for us from which to find strength. This is why genuine Christian community is so valuable to us, because we need to be surrounded by a crowd of witnesses of the faithfulness of God. In this, we are equipped to strip off everything that slows us down and keep running with endurance—together.

Can you picture all those who have received the hope they lived cheering us on? When you are discouraged, revisit the biblical accounts of those who have seen their hope realized. We all have a crowd of witnesses pointing us to the Father.

I am thankful for my dad and his testimony that has encouraged me in the hardest of times. His quiet resolve to serve God speaks volumes to those who know him.

Help us, God, to be loyal in the motives that drive our actions. May you be honored by the way we represent you before a world longing for genuine hope and faith evidenced in your people.

The real us is hidden in our hearts, so may our hearts be found hidden in you.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." —Psalm 19:14 NKJV

I pray our actions and motives will be pure before you, God.
Grow our faith even as we seek to humble ourselves through prayer.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

MAY OUR ACTIONS AND MOTIVES BE PURE BEFORE YOU, GOD.

Context:

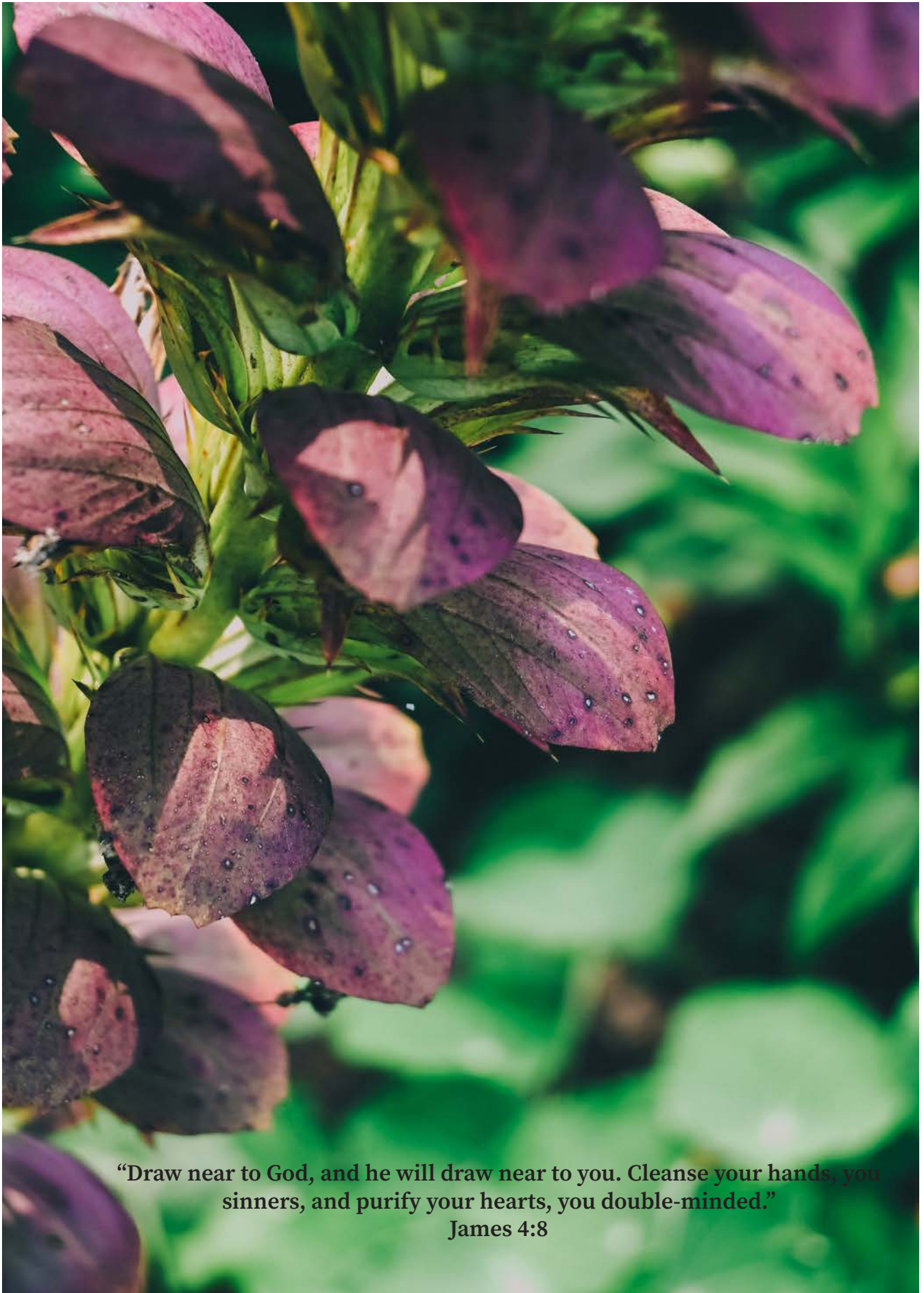
James 4:8 is often quoted without the last half of the verse. It is comforting to know that when we draw near to God, He comes close. While He has promised to never leave nor forsake us, there are many times we pull away from the closeness we long for in our relationship with God.

One of the reasons we don't always feel connected and close to God is a result of unconfessed sin in our lives. Verse eight tells us that Christians can be disloyal and have hearts divided between God and the world. But no man can serve two masters.

We know the audience of this letter was written to believers (see verses 1,2), and James refers to them as brothers and sisters throughout, so when he is referring to sinners, he is speaking to each of us.

There has never been a doubt from reading Scripture that those in Christ are free from bondage to sin but still capable of living in our flesh. We can have victory through Christ, but we don't always live worthy of the call on our lives.

So today, I pray that we would heed the commands in the second half of James 4:8. May we wash our hands and actively pursue godliness that reflects Christ. May we cleanse our hearts through repentant tears for the inner motives that pull us away from drawing close to God.



“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

James 4:8

HELP US TO DESIRE YOUR WORD THAT WE MAY GROW IN YOUR LIKENESS.

“So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

1 Peter 2:1-3

Father,
Teach us to wrestle the right things—those things that weigh us down and hinder our growth. We aren't meant to live clinging to our newborn ways.

Let us make every effort to live a life worthy of you, God.

Then, and only then, will we experience the freedom we all desperately long for.

Spiritual maturity takes intentionality, but it leads us closer to what we were always created for—to be in close relationship with you, Father. Give us a thirst for truth and righteousness as we taste your goodness.

May we encourage one another to keep growing, desiring to know the Word.



In Jesus' precious name,

Amen.

MAKING EVERY EFFORT

1 Peter 2:1-3 shows how a new life in Christ requires effort on our part to grow.

We are to lay down our old ways that are contrary to the character of God.

All of it.

All deceit. All malicious intent and behavior. All envy. All hypocrisy. All evil speaking.

This is a daily, life-long process.

How do we do this?

By desiring the things of God and filling our hearts and minds with truth.

If we are in Christ, we will never be satisfied if we aren't growing closer to Christ.

We can't grow closer without seeking Him through the daily disciplines of Bible reading and prayer (talking with God).

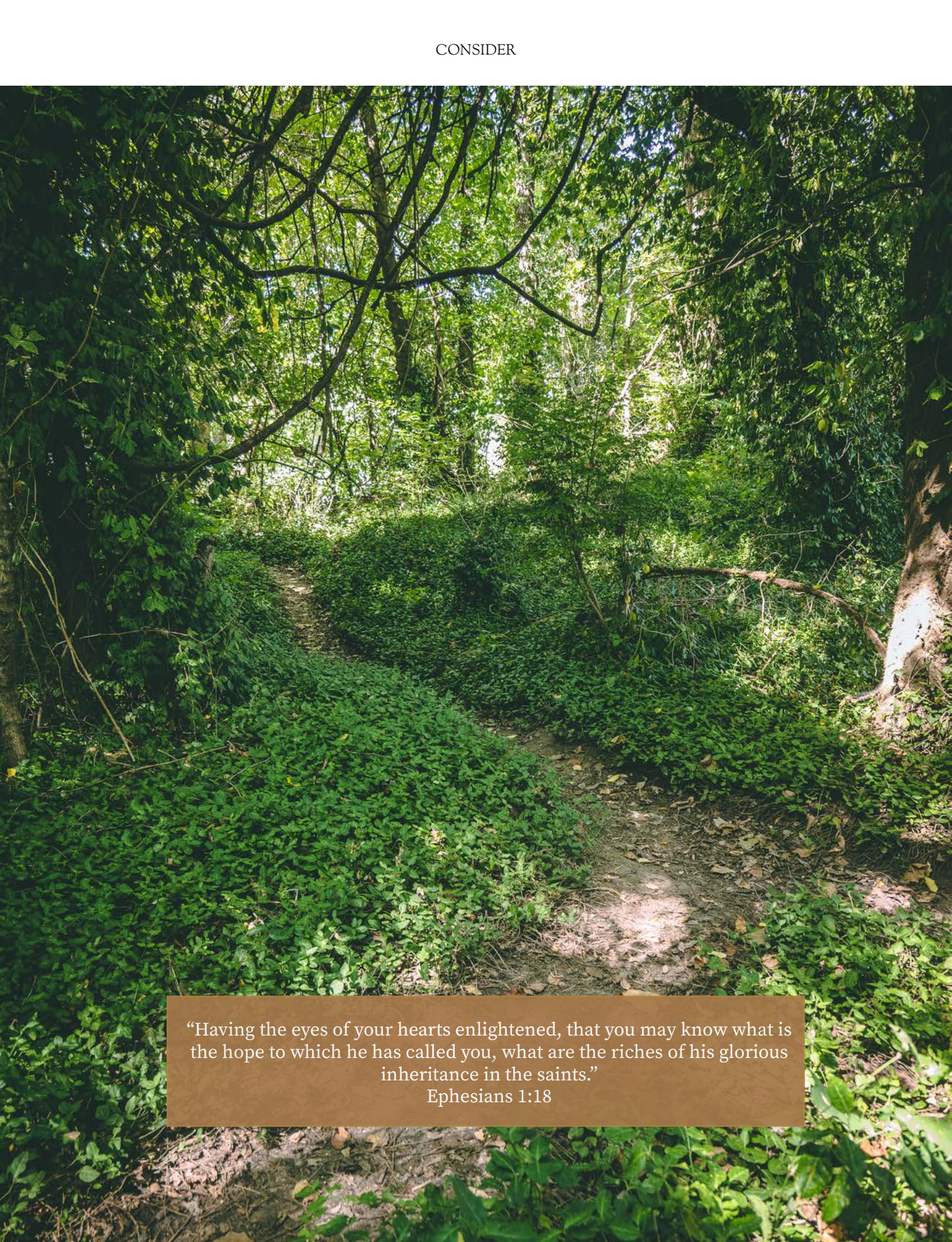
Laying aside any and all sin that reveals itself in our lives is the only way to growth. And growing is the natural process for a believer.

There are many weary, frustrated believers today, because they don't do the challenging work that yields their lives to the Spirit's power. They are holding onto things that need to be laid down. Obedience may feel hard but it's the path to truly knowing God and what He wants to do in each of our lives.

There was a time in my life when reading my Bible was the last thing I desired to do. It felt like a weighty religious command, not a life-giving practice. When we are hurting, the discipline it takes is often hard to muster. But God wants us to see the beauty in Scripture, causing us to thirst for its presence in our lives. He wants us to obey, yes, but more than that, He wants us to find joy and rest in Him. The only way to know how is to search His words for truth. Jesus is the way, the truth, and life, and nothing outside of knowing Him will satisfy. As we show up, He is faithful to reveal Himself, enlightening our minds with His light and moving us from glory to glory. It's so worth the effort we make in allowing the Spirit to speak through the word.

✧ Visit terriprahl.com/subscribe to receive a link to my Psalm 119 study! ✧

CONSIDER



“Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.”

Ephesians 1:18

MAY OUR HEARTS BE FLOODED WITH LIGHT, GOD.

Father God,

We know that we never fully arrive in our understanding of your ways in these earthen vessels. We also know that it's easy to stumble in the places we aren't looking for you. We often think we are standing on solid ground until a tsunami of earthly sorrow corrodes the foundation we thought had been laid. Human weakness is a daily struggle. Sometimes the receding of the waves reveals false foundations of our own construction.

God, we also know that you are faithful and constant—an ever-present help in times of trouble. Your desire is for us to stand, and you equip us with the strength we need through the power of Christ in our lives.

Thank you for the gift of your Spirit to affirm our relationship and to keep us from falling.

May the disciplines we practice be for the purpose of knowing you deeper, imitating your character, and growing in your likeness. Give us wisdom to honor you as we live in the tension of this fallen world. Build in us a confident hope as we wait to inherit all that you have promised your people.

I pray that our hearts will be flooded, in this day, with the light of Christ, for only then will we understand and see the hope we have through salvation. When we are tempted to lose heart, remind us of where our confidence resides. Remind us to hope in our rich and glorious inheritance.

Flood us with the light of your presence, God, as we seek you today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Build in us a confident hope.

Context: The purpose of Ephesians is to encourage and strengthen faithful believers. The apostle Paul greets them in verse one and acknowledges their commitment to Christ. In Ephesians 1:15-23, after referring to their strong faith, he prays for their continual growth and wisdom.

It's for this I pray over us today.

CONSIDER



Isaiah 58:11

*“And the LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your desire in scorched places
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.”*



STRENGTHEN OUR FRAMES, GOD.

Context:

In Isaiah 58, the Israelites are called out for living in contradiction to their true heart desires. Outwardly, they looked religious—but God saw their true motives for seeking Him. They talked of righteousness but mistreated their neighbors. They fasted for personal gain, not spiritual strength. They kept the Sabbath for duty's sake but did not delight in the Lord of the Sabbath.

This is often our story as well—speaking one way and living another, and acting righteous without walking with God.

But the true worshipper receives the blessings and promises of God. Sincere hearts and motives draw us into the intimate places of fellowship with Christ, bringing the best of all He offers.

Some of these blessings listed in Isaiah 58 are:

- * Your light shall dawn in the darkness.
- * The LORD will guide you continually.
- * Your spiritual thirst will be satisfied in drought.
- * Our bones (frame) will be strengthened.
- * Our prayers will be answered His way.

Father,

Strengthen my frame, God.

Without your strength, I can't carry on. The weight of the world threatens to crush my weak bones. I don't want to be a shiny cup with dirty insides. Remove my hypocrisy and fill me with sincere worship this day.

God, though my flesh and heart may fail, you are the strength of my heart and my portion forever (Ps 73:26). I have experienced this strength in the darkest days of earthly loss. Help me to remember it in the times of joy and plenty.

Strengthen my character to reflect yours.

Restore my faith where it has weakened.

Build my hope.

Increase my compassion for the world.

Rekindle the joy of my salvation.

Grow me in love for what you love.

Help me to cultivate a vibrant prayer life and live with true wisdom.

For all these spiritual blessings, today I pray.

When the storms come, may I remain steadfast in you.

Strengthen my frame, God.

Strengthen my frame.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A TRUE HEART, IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

F^{ather,}

Help us believe you with full assurance of the promises you have given to those who call upon your name. Forgive us for holding you responsible for disappointments over promises of our own making.

If we want to be free, we must know truth, which is only found in the presence of Christ. Give us the desire to remain and grow us in knowledge and understanding.

May we continually draw near and boldly enter in—beginning today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

*Full
Assurance*



Drawing Near

Today my prayer for all who are in Christ, is that we would draw near to God with sincere love in complete assurance of faith.

Why is it so hard in the day to day to abide, trust, and grow a deeper relationship with Christ?

We have been given full access to the Father through the blood of Christ (Heb. 10:19). He made a new and living way where we can come boldly—without the aid of a priest to mediate a relationship between us and God.

Because of these privileges borne out of our salvation, we are duty bound to continually seek and strengthen our belief in the promises of Scripture.

Life distracts.

Sin deters.

We grow tired and forgetful.

Again and again, Christ invites us to come.

A saving faith begins our journey of a walking faith. We walk by faith, not by sight. We can only see where we are going by living in the light of truth.

And truth must stay close enough to hear for it to affect the way we live. The noise of our daily lives, in this world at war with God, is too much for our humanity to bear alone.

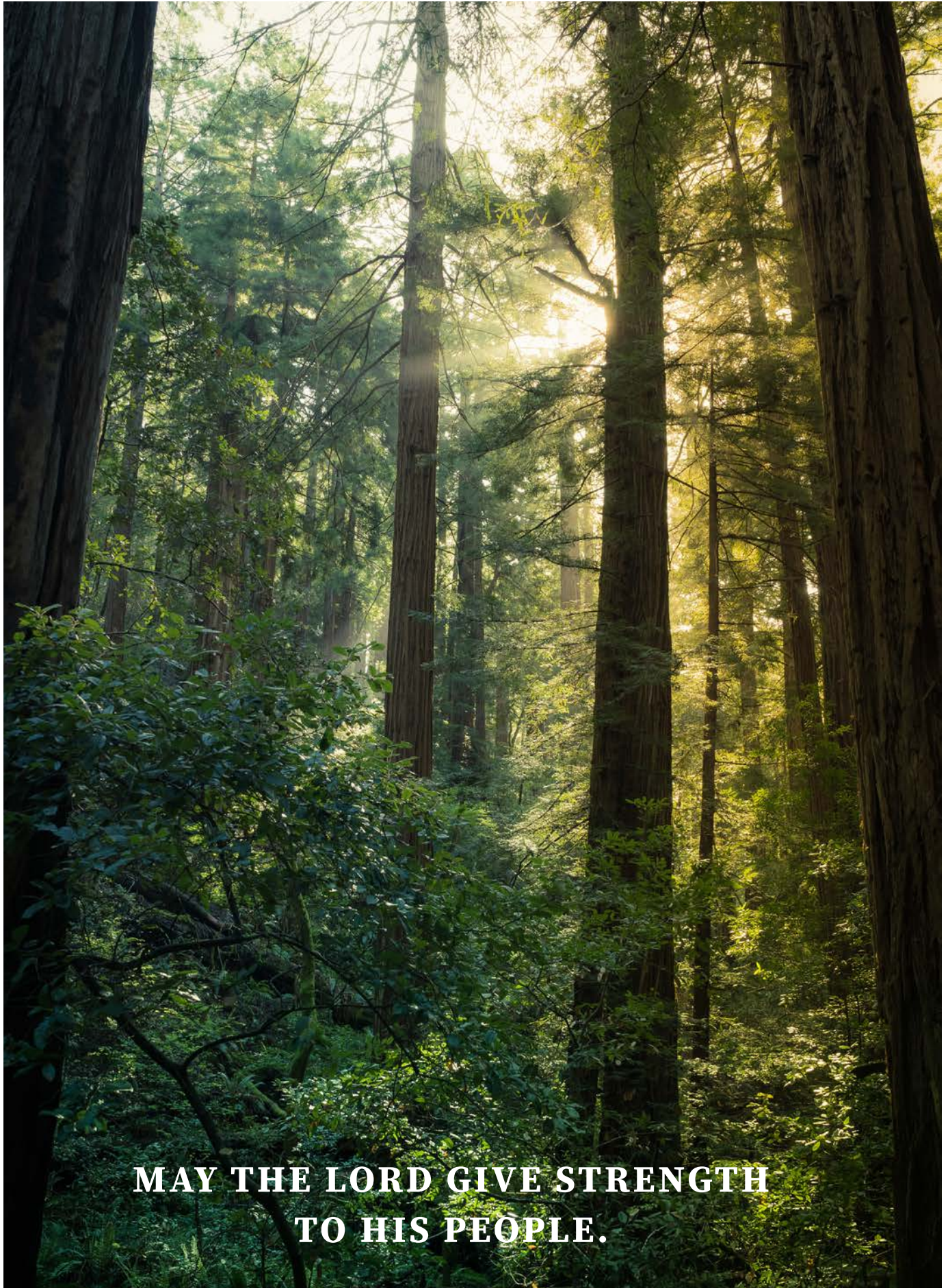
So, let us draw near.

Faith

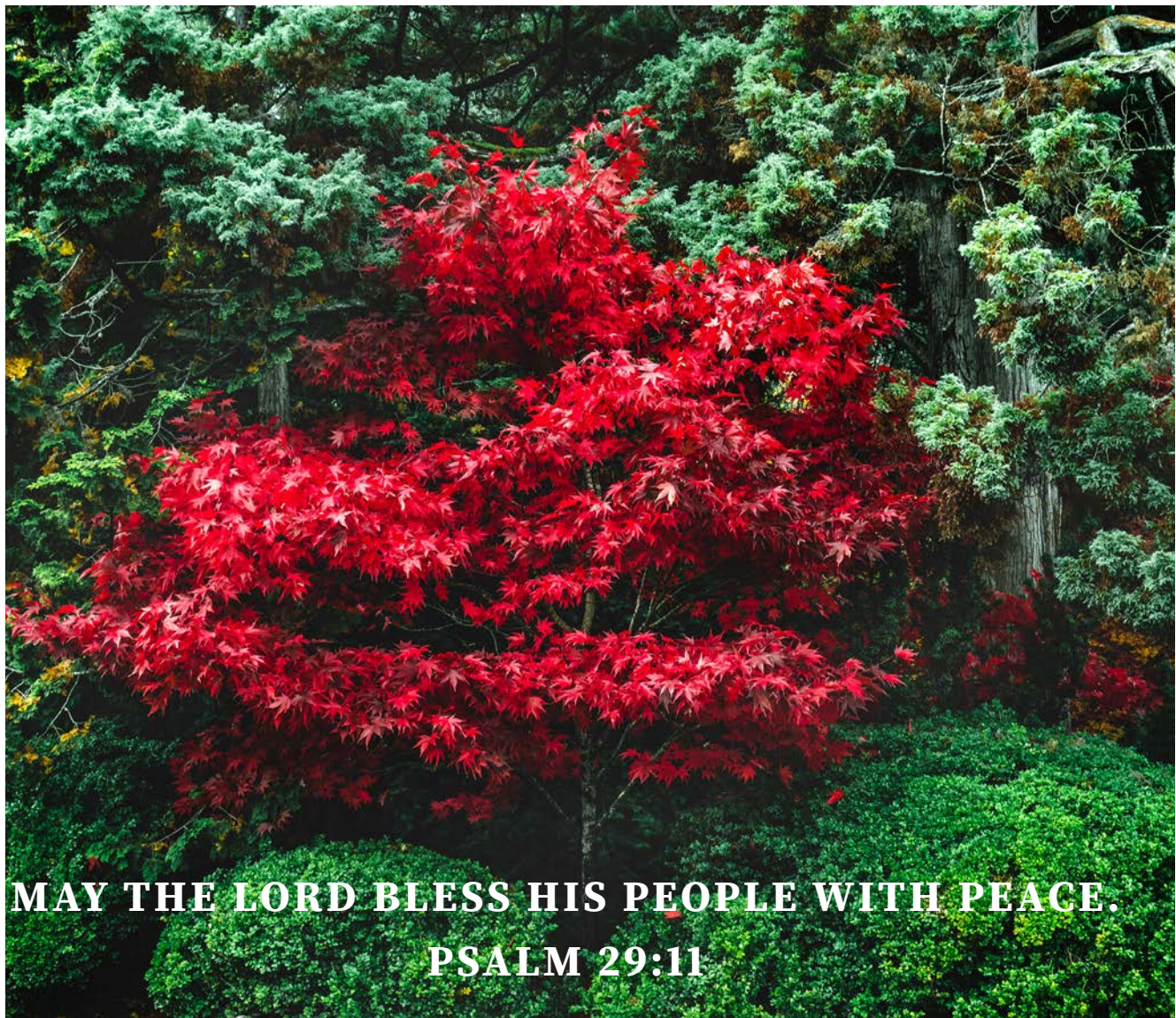
"let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful."

—Hebrews 10:22-23

CONSIDER



**MAY THE LORD GIVE STRENGTH
TO HIS PEOPLE.**



Context:

Psalm twenty-nine is a song of David, describing the great power of God over creation. It reminds us of why we should have a healthy fear of God while assuring us that He is on our side. His power is cause for praise, because that same power that raised Jesus from the dead, is available to us. The cedars of Lebanon could grow to 120 feet tall and thirty feet in circumference, and yet the softest whisper of God could split them in two. David reminds us that we can trust God to give us strength and peace through all of life's storms.

If you feel powerless and afraid today, read Psalm 29.

It reminds us that God is powerful over all of creation. His voice calms the tumultuous seas. The mighty cedars are split with merely a whisper.

God rules over the floodwaters and reigns as king forever.

We can trust this same God to give us strength and peace in the midst of all our personal storms of life.

The LORD gives His people strength.

The LORD blesses us with His perfect peace.

Ephesians 1:18-23 tells us we have all the power of Christ's resurrection within us, working in our weakness.

The hardest part is often admitting our weaknesses and asking for help.

So today I pray that God would give strength to His people, especially those who feel like they are losing heart in the battle.

I pray that God would bless each one of you with His unsurpassable peace

as you believe He is who He says He is.

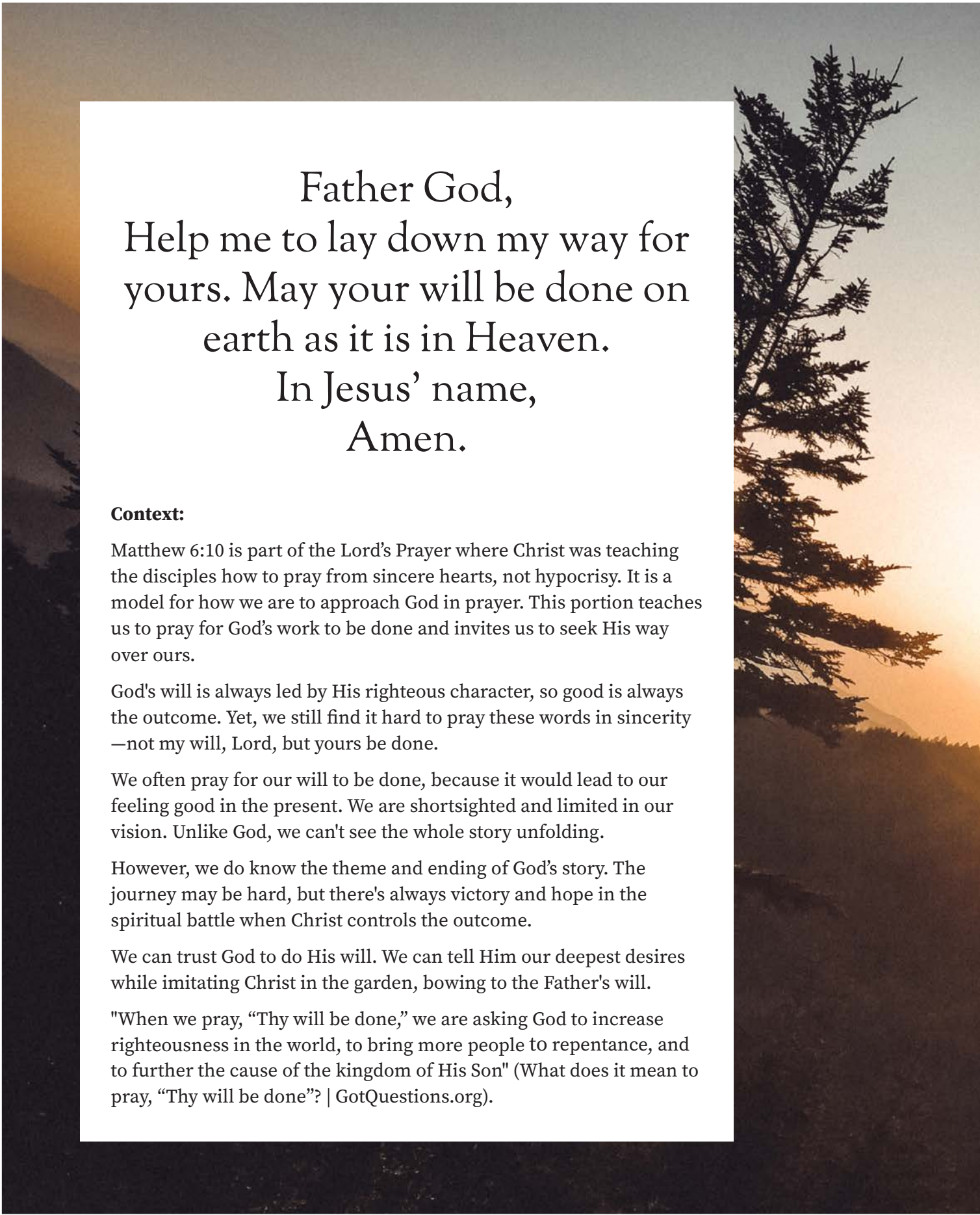
He is more powerful than we can imagine, and His power is available to those who trust in Him.

Will you join me in praying for God's people all over the world to be strengthened and at peace today?

May it be so, Lord.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



Father God,
Help me to lay down my way for
yours. May your will be done on
earth as it is in Heaven.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Context:

Matthew 6:10 is part of the Lord's Prayer where Christ was teaching the disciples how to pray from sincere hearts, not hypocrisy. It is a model for how we are to approach God in prayer. This portion teaches us to pray for God's work to be done and invites us to seek His way over ours.

God's will is always led by His righteous character, so good is always the outcome. Yet, we still find it hard to pray these words in sincerity—not my will, Lord, but yours be done.

We often pray for our will to be done, because it would lead to our feeling good in the present. We are shortsighted and limited in our vision. Unlike God, we can't see the whole story unfolding.

However, we do know the theme and ending of God's story. The journey may be hard, but there's always victory and hope in the spiritual battle when Christ controls the outcome.

We can trust God to do His will. We can tell Him our deepest desires while imitating Christ in the garden, bowing to the Father's will.

"When we pray, "Thy will be done," we are asking God to increase righteousness in the world, to bring more people to repentance, and to further the cause of the kingdom of His Son" (What does it mean to pray, "Thy will be done"? | GotQuestions.org).

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE.

- Who wouldn't want to pray for more of Heaven on earth?

- What are you asking God for in belief? Are you seeking His will to be accomplished above your own?

Praying God's will be done always leads to good. Our eyes may fail to see it. Our hearts may lose faith to believe. Yet, He is always working all things according to His good will.

"Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven." Matthew 6:10

CONSIDER



BLESS US, GOD.

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”
Numbers 6:24-26 NIV

This prayer of blessing, found in Numbers 6:24-26, was offered by Aaron, the priest, on behalf of the Israelite people. Aaron asked God for the following things:

- protection for the people,
- to bless them in both spiritual and earthly ways,
- to keep them under His protection and provision,
- to make them aware of His love for them,
- and to help them live at peace with God, themselves, and others.

Through Christ, we are now able to come boldly to God without the aid of a human priest, because Jesus became our great high priest, a once and for all sacrifice (Hebrews 4:14).

As we are now a priesthood of believers (1 Peter 2:5), I would like to pray this blessing over each of you.

Father,

I pray for each one who has read these words. May you bless and keep them and make your face to shine upon them. Be kind and gracious to your people. As you look on them today, give them a peace that defies all logic. Help them to know how much you love and desire to bless them. May we all be faithful to live worthy of your blessings.

In Jesus' holy name,

Amen.

RENEW US, GOD.

"But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator."

—Colossians 3:8-10

Context:

Colossians 3 instructs us how to live our new lives in Christ.



According to this passage, there are things to take off and new things to put on.

Believers are renewed as we learn to know Christ. After receiving salvation, we have the responsibility to keep seeking and abiding in His presence.



Above all, we are to clothe ourselves with love and live at peace. It's no coincidence that He tells us three times in this passage "to be thankful".

Despite the circumstances of the world we live in, we are called to be thankful to God for His redemptive work in our lives.



We grow in these ways by making every effort to fill our lives with the message of Christ.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:16-17).

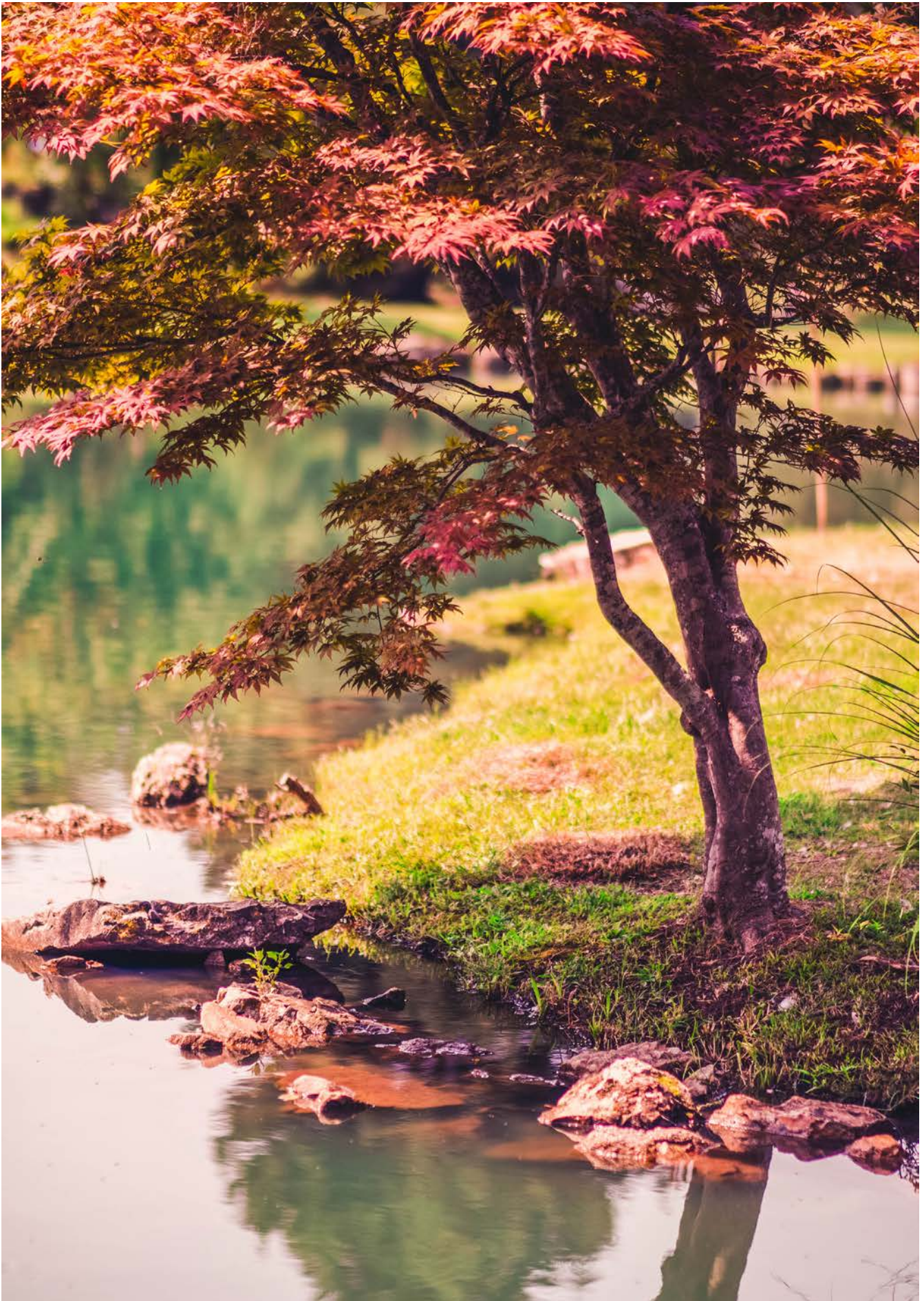
Heavenly Father,

I pray that you would renew us through the teaching of your Word. Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. I pray that we would be a thankful people. As many of us gather to worship, teach, and counsel one another in truth, may we allow it to change the ways we live and love others around us. Teach us to be doers of what we hear.

May we reflect Christ brighter after being in your presence.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.





STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH, GOD.

Heavenly Father,

Help us to not lose heart.

What we can see is hard to witness with earthly eyes. Please help us in our uncertainty and fear, Lord. When discouragement comes, remind us that it will not always be this way. And while we wait, renew us from the inside even as our fragile bodies waste away.

Our afflictions feel heavy, not light. Please give us a glimpse of the unimaginable glory that waits for those sealed by the Spirit through faith in Christ.

Help us to imagine the glory and plant it deep in our hearts, assuring us when our eyes can't see. Gift us with eternal eyes, God.

I am reminded through Scripture that, “we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the

Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Thank you for removing the veil for all who believe.

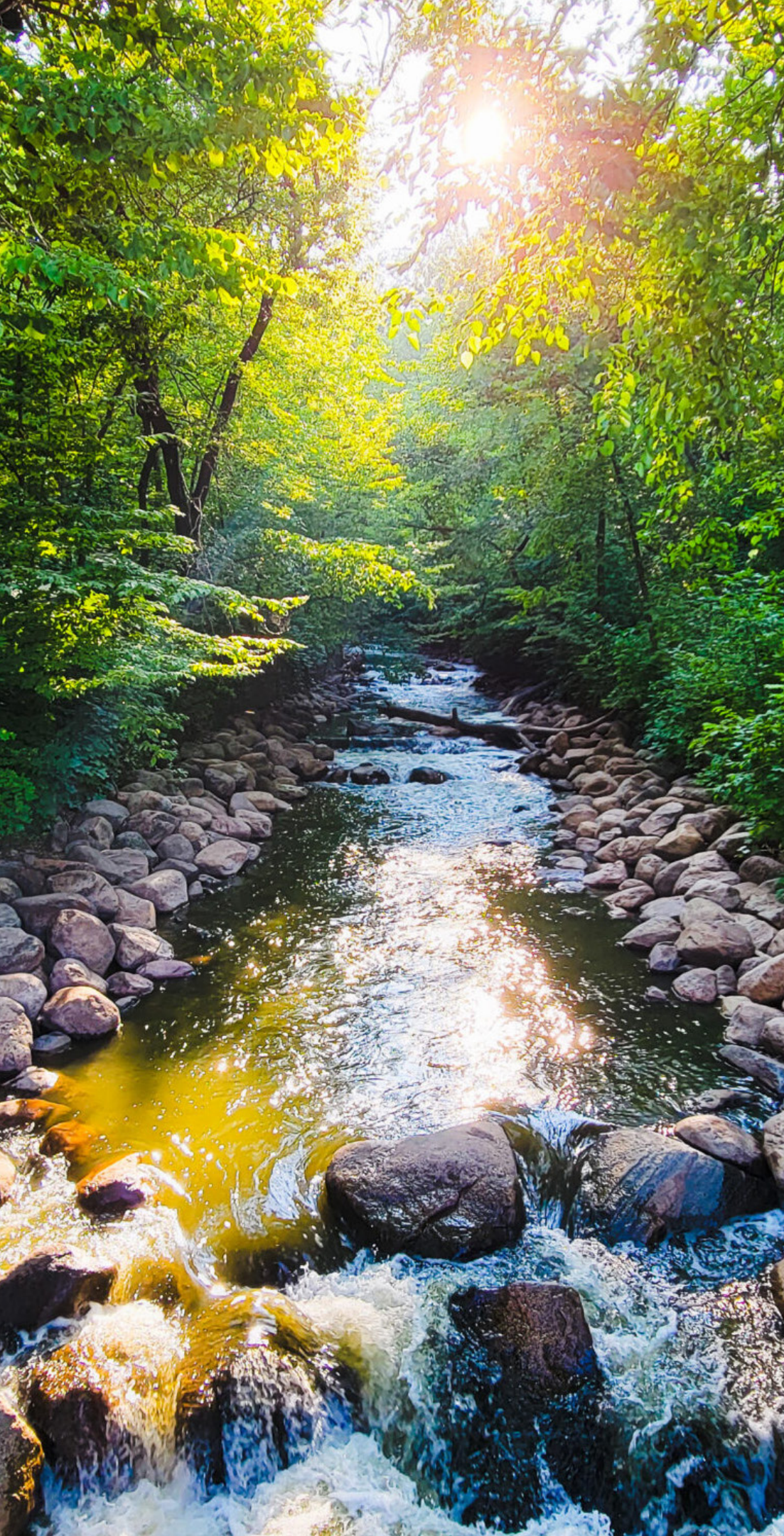
Thank you for showing us your glory, Lord, as we contemplate your brightness, excellence, dignity, and grace.

You are in the unveiling business, and we ask you to remove all barriers to those who need to hear the gospel message.

Strengthen your people all over the world. Hear our humble prayers and bold confidence as we believe these words spoken to us this day.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



“So we do not lose heart.
Though our outer self is
wasting away, our inner self
is being renewed day by
day.” —2 Corinthians 4:16

Hebrews 12:14-15

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.”



Context:

In Hebrews, Jewish believers were going through tremendous persecution unlike most of us will ever experience. And yet, Christ called them to a higher way—a way that required seeking grace, forgiveness, and harmony toward people that wanted to kill them. This is not a natural response to human suffering and injustice. However, it is God's supernatural way of walking in holiness.

We are often uncomfortable and defensive when a Christian discusses the topic of holiness, but Scripture is clear on holiness being a beautiful attribute of God. Our growth process involves being detached from the world and connected to the holiness of God.

"Be holy, because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16 NIV).

Like the Jewish Christians under serious persecution, I began to see that God asks us to war against sin in our lives, not people. We have a full-time job keeping ourselves from growing bitter roots that cause destruction in our lives, rippling out to hurt those in our circles as well.

When we pray, we assert hope. It's when we stop seeking God's help that the bitterness begins to take hold.

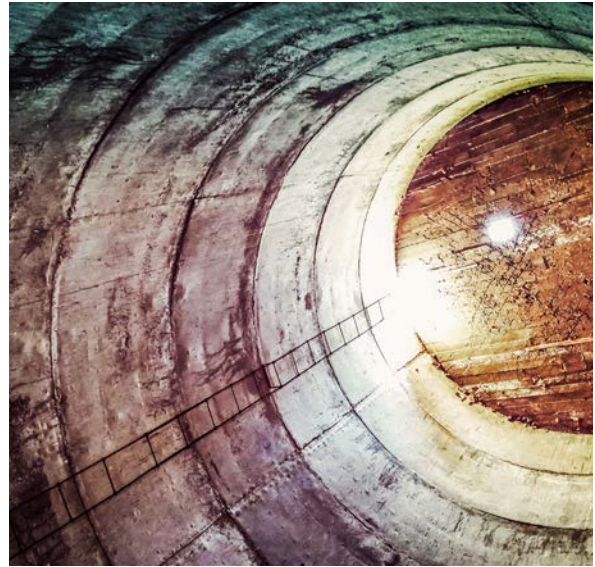
PIKRIA:
(pik-ree'-ah)

Strong's G4088

Definition: from G4089; acidity (especially poison), literally or figuratively:—bitterness.

- extreme wickedness
- a bitter root, and so producing a bitter fruit
- metaph. bitterness, bitter hatred¹

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org>



**LET NO ROOT OF BITTERNESS
GROW UP IN US, GOD.**

Lord,

I am discouraged by the division and fractures I see within the Christian community over many of the same issues the world wrestles through.

Lord, help me to strive for peace with my neighbors as much as possible without dishonoring your name.

Remind me to be intentional to live in the light of your holiness, regardless of how that looks to the world.

It's hard, Lord.

Protect me from bitter roots that seek to destroy from within.

May I make war with my sin and not my neighbors as I live in the tension of being renewed day after day.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

The Bible refers to the bitterness we allow in our hearts and minds as poison. It kills any healthy fruit growing in our lives. Bitterness creates barriers to authentic relationships, hindering our ability to fulfill the purposes God has for us. Make war with the root of bitterness, asking God to reveal the true cause, removing it from your life. This is the way to true life and happiness in Christ. It's so worth the work to walk in His peace and joy!

TEACH US WHAT FREEDOM MEANS, GOD.

“Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.”

1 Peter 2:16



Context:

I am thankful for the spiritual freedom I have because of knowing Christ.

With this freedom, there is also a level of responsibility that comes with the high price it took to secure it for those benefitting from it.

As I was studying about humility, I began to see that Jesus laid down His freedoms for our good. He had authority, power, and rights like no one else. Yet, He didn't use His power to destroy but to restore.

Many times in a Christian's life, we will be free to do certain things, but because of

the needs and well-being of other people, we will need to refrain. This is brotherly love.

Paul discusses Christian freedom in 1 Corinthians 10 and Romans 14. It looks much different than what our world prescribes.

Believers are to be servants of God, imitating the life of Christ. If we read the account of what Jesus endured on that cross as He humbly served us through His sacrifice, we will see how to live as people who are free—spiritually free and able to love in a way that glorifies God and draws people to Christ.



Father,

Help us to know the freedom Christ brings, living responsibly unto one another in love.

Your freedom doesn't allow us to do whatever we want, God. Selfishness is never a good standard for living as earthly citizens, especially as your children. Help us to follow Christ's example, living as humble servants.



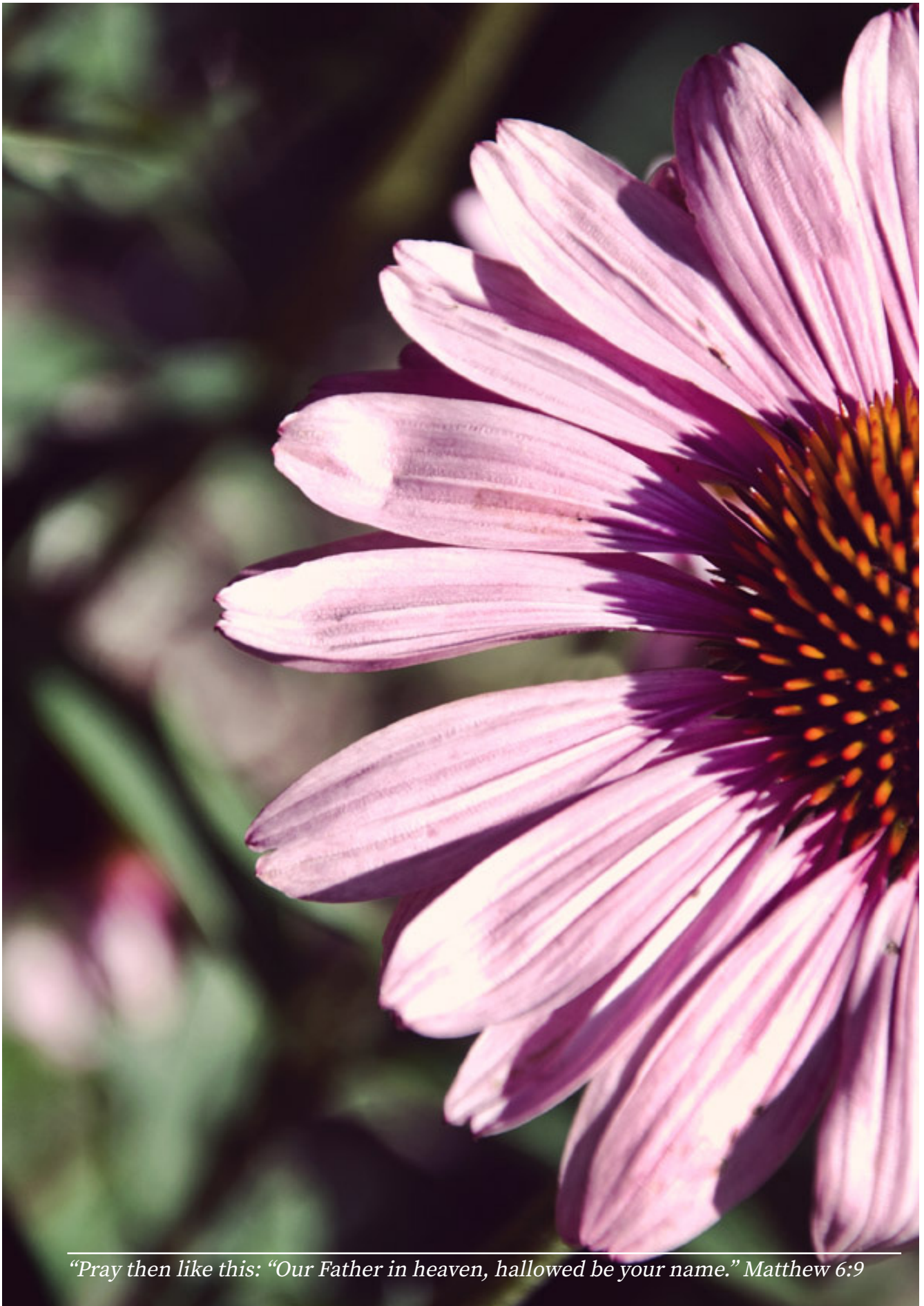
May we live the words you gave us in Philippians 2:3 HCSB, to "do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than ourselves."

Pleasing you, God, leads to the greatest freedoms of mind, body, soul, and spirit. Give us the capacity to grow in selflessness, even this day.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

CONSIDER



"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.'" Matthew 6:9

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.

Context:

Pray like this.

The Lord's Prayer is a model for His people to boldly and reverently enter the presence of God. In the preceding verses of Matthew 6, we are told that rote, empty prayers do not please the Lord. Our prayers aren't answered by merely repeating certain words, but by a humble, persistent pursuit of God.

Motivation matters.

Our heart's posture matters.

This prayer teaches us to enter His presence with praise. It reinforces that God is holy and powerful while also loving and merciful. He is a good Father to His children.

It reminds me to come boldly but respectfully in full awareness of who He is and who I am in light of Christ.

As we pray to our Father in Heaven, we make a commitment to honor His name. That means we set it apart from all other names.

God has many names throughout Scripture, but they do not include "sky god", "big guy/man upstairs", or "a higher power." These descriptions are used by people who are afraid to call God who He really is. For when we know Him as The Great I AM, Jehovah, God Almighty, and Christ as Savior, it changes us.

Being loved by such a magnificent, gracious God should humble us.



Father,

I pray we will all begin our prayers with worship today, being careful about how we speak of you to others. Your name is precious, and we are grateful for your powerful presence in our lives.

Forgive us for the times we have dishonored your name and stolen your glory.

May you be glorified today in all we say and do.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

CONSIDER



DIRECT OUR HEARTS, GOD.

“May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and the steadfastness of Christ.”
—2 Thessalonians 3:5

Context:

2 Thessalonians 3:5 is a key verse in the letter Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. After his first letter to the Thessalonian church, some were confused about the timing of the second coming of Christ. Due to this confusion, there were many within the church that grew idle in their walk with God and responsibility to the Church.

They thought since Christ could come at any moment, they didn't need to worry about anything. The heavy persecution going on against Christians made them think that the end was near. So, they chose to live unto themselves instead of unto Christ as they expected His imminent return.

I hear this kind of talk among believers today—especially young people who are troubled about the state of the world, disgusted with politics, scared about the viruses plaguing the world, and hardened against a Church that has failed their human expectations. All of this leaves many idly biding their time on this earth. Whether they believe God will come again or not, they are running from the expectations of Christian disciples as recorded in the Scriptures.

No one can know the hour of Christ's return. While there are events that will happen beforehand, we all live with the possibility that today could be the day. We should give our lives to Christ today, because we aren't promised tomorrow.

In our verse for today, Paul reminds us that we are to be patiently enduring until Christ returns. We don't sit around idly waiting for His return. We live in a manner worthy of a God who solved our sin problem through the sacrifice of His son.



Heavenly Father,

Lead our hearts into a full understanding of your love for us—for if we really comprehended the depth of grace and mercy shown to those who trust in Christ, we would be moved to genuine and sacrificial love. Your love motivates us to keep the eyes of our hearts and minds upward while our earthly eyes look to the harvest that ripens before us.

Give us strength to patiently endure with hope—even in suffering.

Direct our hearts to your love, Lord.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

HELP US NOT TO FEAR, GOD.

Father God,

I thank you for redeeming me, calling me by name, and declaring I am yours. I am forever yours. I am thankful for your faithful presence in my life. I struggle in the rising waters, fiery trials, and rushing rivers of this fallen world to fully trust, but I desire to grow in my unbelief. Forgive me when I look at the storm instead of looking unto Christ. I know you are with me. You are the Lord, my God.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



“Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by
your name, you are mine.”
Isaiah 43:1b

Context:

As I looked over this passage, I went back to Isaiah 42 to find the prophet Isaiah scolding the Israelites for their persistent disobedience, despite God delivering them from slavery in Egypt. This is such a picture of our sin nature and

our need for forgiveness apart from our own efforts.

Then in Isaiah 43, instead of destroying the people, God, through Isaiah, tells the people to "fear not". The Israelites were His people, and He had chosen to rescue and redeem them despite their failings.

The people are reminded that "when" they pass through the waters, He would be with them. The Israelites had watched their enemy swallowed up in the Red Sea. Yet, they forgot and doubted God's care over them even in the mundane moments of life.



Even as Daniel and friends had survived the fiery furnace, so the Israelites would experience God's presence in their own fiery trials.

Unfortunately, after all God had done, they still struggled to trust and worship Him.

Yet, God called them His own and

remained faithful even when they weren't.

God does the same for us through Christ. He redeems us and calls us by name. We are His. When we experience uncertainty, fear, and doubt, He is an ever-present help in times of trouble. As humans, we will face fiery trials, situations that seem to overwhelm, and waters that rise

higher than we care for. It's a matter of "when", not "if".

Just as the complaining, forgetful people of Israel needed to be reminded of all the ways God had delivered, so we too need to revisit the faithfulness of God throughout history and even in our present lives so that we can "fear not".

Context:

When.

Did you notice that first word? It is natural for us as humans to feel fear or anguish as we live in this broken world.

And yet, we beat ourselves up for being fearful at times when God understands our human limitations.

Jesus came in flesh so that He could sympathize with us in all our weaknesses. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ agonized over the physical torture He would endure and the ultimate loneliness He would experience as He was separated from the Father by *our* sin. The cross was brutal, and He knew everything it would entail. In His flesh, He didn't desire to feel it. But in His Deity, He chose to endure it for the joy that would follow.

There will be times we are afraid. That is not a sinful thing. As the Psalmist shares, what we do with our fear, anxiety, and despair is what's important.

When we are afraid, the answer is to trust.

Like Jesus, we must go to the Father and trust that what He has said is true. Even when we walk through the shadow of death, which is often dark and scary, God is with us. He has overcome the world.

He is the peace that calms us even during a scary storm.

It's not easy. Sometimes our fears are so big that it takes effort to wrestle the "what-ifs", looming giants, and even exaggerations of our minds into submission to the truth.

Because no matter how big the fear, our God is bigger.

Will you acknowledge your fears and trust that God is aware and can handle it all?

*"When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you."
Psalm 56:3*

Father,

It is hard to wait when we are in the storm. We grow impatient in our trials, longing for a physical escape, never looking for the gift of your presence. Align our hearts with yours, God. Help us to persevere in faith. Remind us to call upon you in times of fear. Stir our hearts to know the joy of suffering on your behalf. May Christ's example to us remind us that He understands our humanness.

Hear our prayers, God. Teach us to trust.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

How can we show that we trust God?

*Pray.
Seek.
Wrestle.*

How long? Until...until God answers, until there's victory, or until we see Him face to face. We grow until. We rest in the fact that He gave His all to rescue us from the darkness, so He will rescue us even now as we come to Him for help. The rescue may not be physical, but it is always relational and leads us to the heart of God.



**HELP US TO TRUST AND
NOT FEAR, GOD.**

UNITE OUR HEARTS, GOD.

Context:

The previous verses of Romans 14 and 15 are encouraging believers to pursue peace with one another. One way to accomplish this is by putting the good of others before our own.

Willingly causing a young, weaker brother or sister to stumble because of what we eat or drink is not following the way of Christ.

Read Romans 15:4: "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

The Bible is for our learning and growth. As we individually study and learn, we collectively unite around truth.

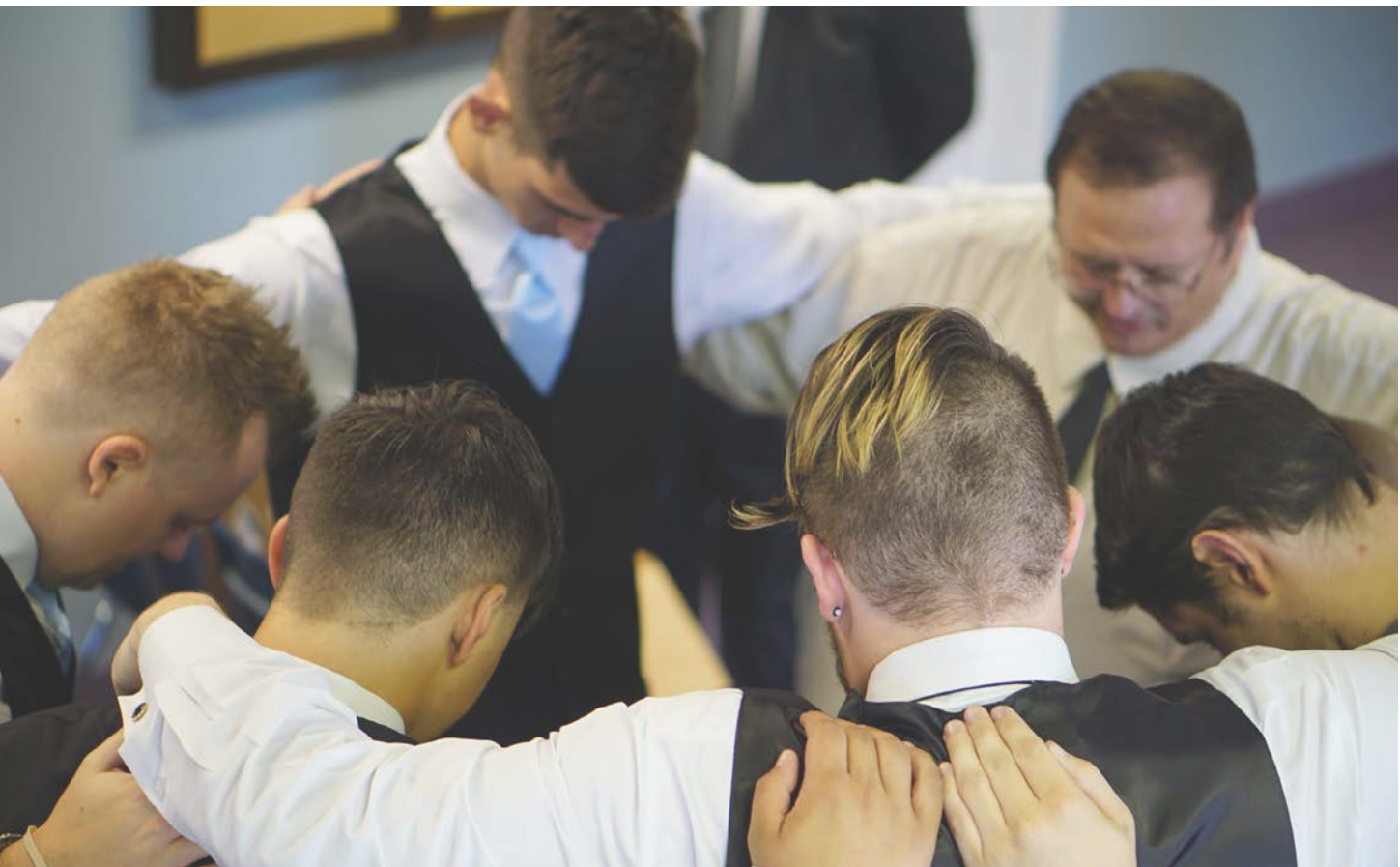
The Scriptures give us hope through reading about the patience and encouragement of Christ, the very Word.

Imagine how pleased God would be if we allowed His patience and comfort to lead us to be like-minded toward one another.

Preferring one another. Praying over each other. And praising God with one mind and mouth through our faith in Christ.

That's a picture of Heaven, and we have an opportunity to experience a glimpse right here in this broken world...if we make every effort to pursue it.

This is a worthy, worthy goal for a worthy, worthy God.



“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
Romans 15:5-6

THAT
TOGETHER
WITH ONE
VOICE WE MAY
GLORIFY
GOD.

Father God,

May your patience and comfort grant us to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify you and your son, Jesus. Grant us a glimpse of your glory through the unity of your people. Help us to genuinely prefer one another above ourselves, pray earnestly over one another, and lift your name together in praise.

You are worthy, God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

TURN MY EYES FROM WORTHLESS THINGS, GOD.

Renew

Father,

It's so easy to be distracted chasing after worthless things. These things might seem good, but they take our eyes off of thinking about truth, slowly causing us to drift away from your heart.

May we stop to examine what our eyes, hearts, minds, and bodies are giving attention to in our lives.

Reveal to us those parts that need to be revived and replaced with the truth and beauty of Scripture.

Only the eternal will last.

Before we enter in to worship, may we acknowledge our worthless idols, repenting of their elevated place in our lives. Revive us in your ways, God.

Turn our eyes from worthless things and renew a right spirit within us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



*a right
spirit within*

CONSIDER



“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.”
Psalm 119:37

Context:

Worthless things are anything that is against the character of God or keeps us self-focused. It could be anything that makes us so busy pursuing earthly gain while leaving little time for investing in the eternal. Psalm 119 reminds us that our lives should be immersed in the truth of Scripture, and in so doing, we can recognize and flee sin before it ruins us.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.



—Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus (Hymn)
Helen Howarth Lemmel (1922)

CONSIDER



LET ME HEAR YOU, GOD.

“Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love,
for in you I trust.
Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.”
Psalm 143:8

Context:

Starting our days dwelling on the steadfast love of God leads us to trust and the ability to live and walk in God's ways.

If you know anything about King David, you know that he didn't always get it right. But in his deepest sin, he heard and experienced the unfailing love and mercy of God.

He humbly repented and was forgiven. Knowing this allowed him to write Psalm 143. David knew he needed to remember it each morning to guard his life and keep sin out.

Whatever battle we are facing, remembering God's faithful love leads us to remain. To trust. And to walk in truth.



*It's harder to live contrary to truth when we
meditate on it.*



But when we meditate on His truth, through the written word, we are most free indeed.

Free to love Him in sincerity—to choose the better thing.

How about you? Will you pray this each morning and remind yourself that His love is unfailing?

It gives us purpose for living right before God.

Father,

Let us hear of your unfailing love each morning. We are trusting in you. Show us where to walk. Rescue us from our enemies. Hide us as we come seeking refuge.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

TURN TO ME AND BE GRACIOUS, GOD.

*“Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your way with
those who love your name.”*

Psalm 119:132

Context:

Isn't it amazing to think that God turns to give His attention to us? Because of His mercy, God can look on us without us being consumed. We can behold His beauty and live to tell of it.

The God of all creation turns to us and offers grace in abundance.



I love the phrase, "as is your way." It shows a pattern of faithfulness to those who love His name. God behaves the same way because His character cannot lie or change with the tide. He is steadfast and good. What He promises to us will be delivered.

I hope this encourages you to praise God with your life today. Whether you are in a house of worship, singing in a hospital bed, or expressing gratitude for a vacation, may you keep seeking and inviting God to turn to you and be gracious.



Loving God's name means we love all that His name implies. We will love who He is. We will love His written words revealed to us through the Bible. We will love His character enough to imitate it. And we will show our love through giving praise and recognizing His vast glory.

I have prayed for God to rescue me from the penalty of my sin, but I still want to grow in my knowledge of who He is.



"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

2 Peter 3:18



Father,

Turn to us and be gracious.

Give us direction as we seek your will. We know you have promised to draw near, and your grace reaches further than we can imagine.

May you turn to those who love your name and pour out your kindness upon us all, for that is your way.

We love you, God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

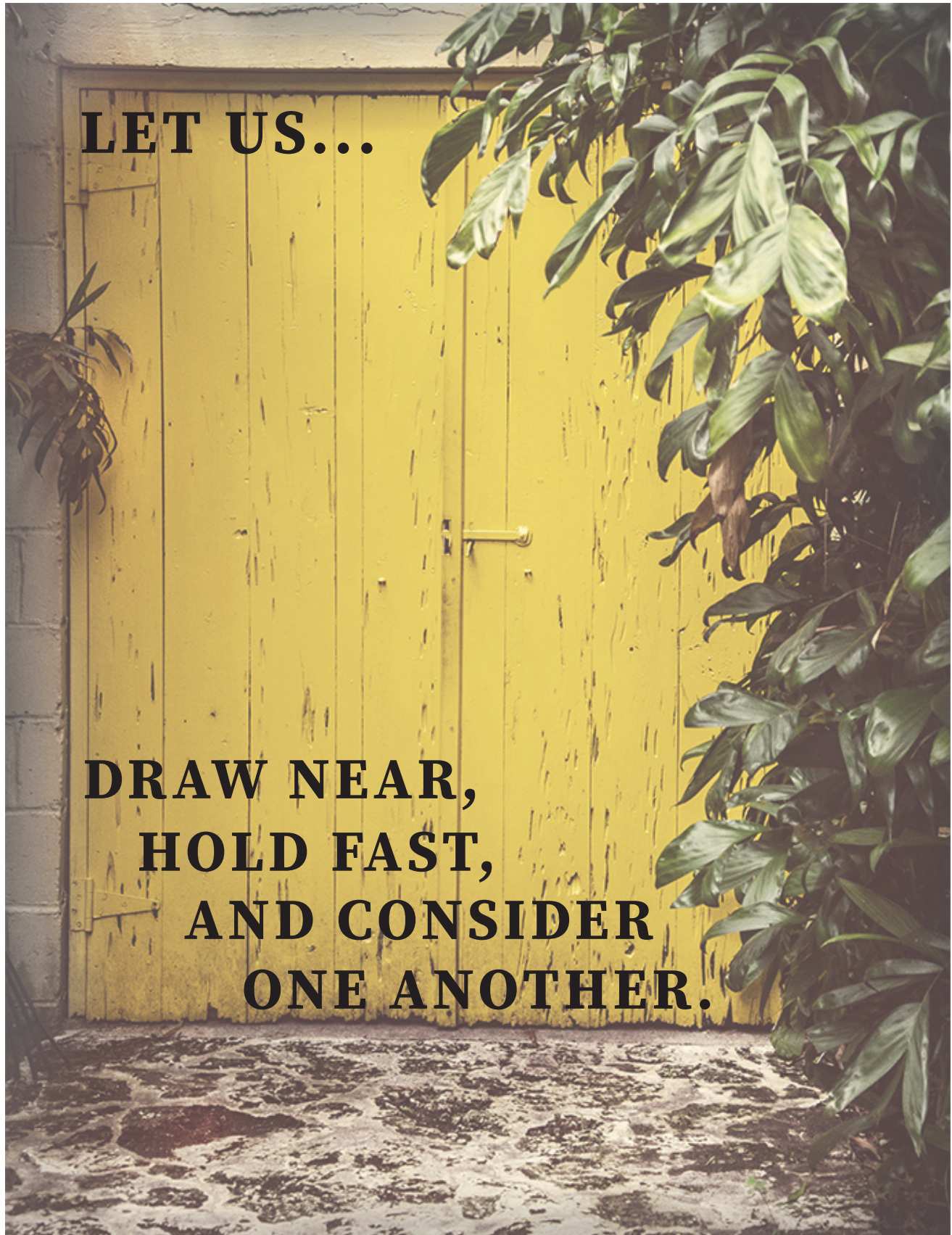
Matthew 6:7-13

“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:



“OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN,
HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.
YOUR KINGDOM COME,
YOUR WILL BE DONE,
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.
GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,
AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS,
AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS.
AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.”





"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and even more as you see the Day drawing near."

Hebrews 10:22-25



Context:

This passage in Hebrews is one of my favorites and a worthy prayer. I think, as believers, we forget that we still need God's help to walk in faith in practical ways.

If we are afraid to come, may we pray for boldness to draw near.

If we doubt He is listening, may we pray for a heart full of assurance.

If we are weary, may we pray for the ability to hold fast—to know truth and rest in it.

And when we are discouraged by people and tired of the hard work it takes to build community, may we pray for ways to consider how to encourage others who are weary travelers too.

May we find ways to meet together and love one another faithfully.

Heavenly Father,

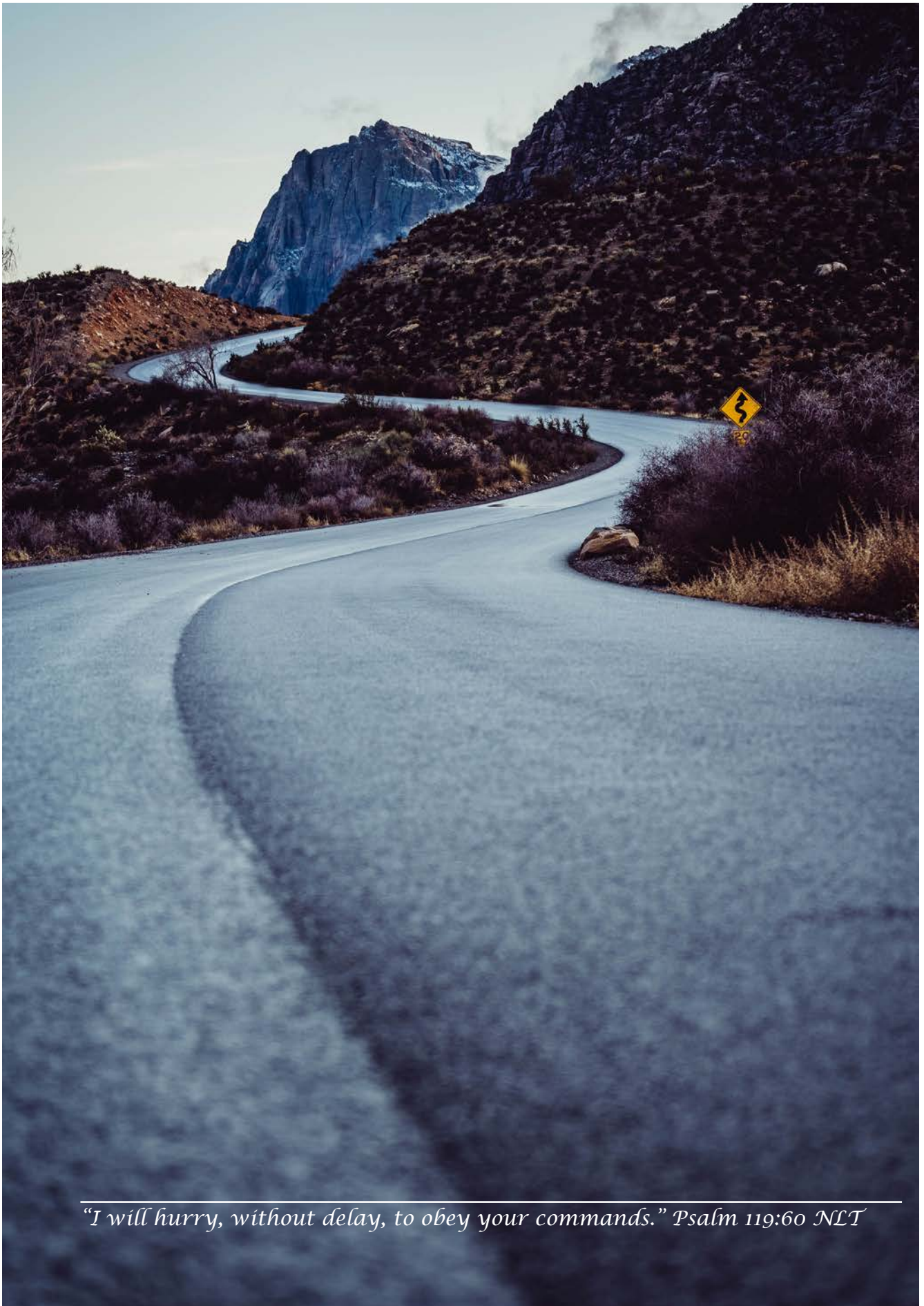
Draw near to us, God, as we confidently draw near to you. Hold us fast to what is true, steadying our failing hearts. Teach us to consider one another, always looking for ways to build community and encourage others to hold fast as well.

The Word, working in our fervent prayers, can change the world.

We believe and pray for it today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



"I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands." Psalm 119:60 NLT

HELP ME TO OBEY WITHOUT DELAY, GOD.

There are times for slowing down but let us never forget that there are times for hurry as well.

As Psalm 119:60 reminds, obedience to Christ is one of those times. In order to obey, without delay, we must know His commands and be convinced in our position, ready to act. It requires knowing. Knowing requires abiding in the presence of God through prayer, Bible reading, and other spiritual disciplines.

In Luke 19:5, we hear Jesus telling Zacchaeus to hurry down from the tree where he was watching Jesus from. Jesus invited Zacchaeus to come without delay.

The dangerous position of the lost requires haste. Today is the day of salvation. Another day or moment may not come.

Christ invites us all to come. Come for salvation. Come for fellowship. Come for forgiveness. Come boldly. Come for rest. Come.

And there remain in His joy.

His call to obey and abide requires "making haste"—our thirsty souls should run to Him for rest.

If you are a seeker like Zacchaeus, looking down from that tree, unsure of who Jesus is to you, Jesus sees you too and invites you to come. Email me at terriprahl@gmail.com if you would like to know how.

Today is the day!



Father God,

Give us the wisdom to know how to discern the times to "make haste" and "be still".

Grow our capacity to obey quickly with steady conviction.

May we be quick to draw near and hurry to obey.

Even as we do, keep us anchored in your grace and rest.

These are your words, Father. May we be quick to heed them in our lives this very day.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD, GOD.

We so often wake up and move through our day without a thought to God's provision and care over us.

We assume that our basic needs will be met.

But Jesus modeled how a communicative relationship should look through prayer.

'Give', or grant, means we can confidently come before the Lord

asking for our needs to be met.

'Us' means that our prayers should include more than self.

'This day' means we ask for this moment, showing complete dependence on His provision.

'Our Daily Bread'—bread symbolizes the most basic of provision. God wants us to trust Him for our daily sustenance and not to borrow trouble from tomorrow. He desires for us to rest in His love and care for us in this day. As He provides for the birds, so He will faithfully provide for us (Matthew 6:26).

He doesn't want us to arrogantly ignore Him, assuming our needs will bet. He invites us to come. And sometimes we have not because we haven't asked. God desires specific prayers and a trusting heart.



What do you NEED today that you haven't paused to prayerfully consider? He knows but wants to know if YOU know who does the providing.

"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

—Matthew 6:26



"Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:11

*Father,
Give us this day our daily
bread. We need you.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.*

CONSIDER



LET YOUR PEACE RULE OUR HEARTS, GOD.

“And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.”
Colossians 3:15 NLT



While the world knows no peace, the heart of a believer can be ruled by it.

We have to "let" His peace rule our hearts, actively stripping away any anxious thoughts.

We have to "be" thankful, which takes practice from an active prayer life. Walking in close relationship with God daily is necessary—not just an occasional cry for help when we have reached the end of ourselves.

Philippians 4:6-7 tells us to bring our anxious thoughts to God in prayer and give thanks. Then, His peace will guard our hearts and minds.

Peace is possible for those in Christ. It involves taking off our fears and putting them at His feet. Prayer is an act of trust, placing our worries in His capable will. It produces gratitude and grows our peace.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* —Philippians 4:6-7



Father,

I pray we would all "let the peace of Christ rule our hearts" today, being faithful to express gratitude for your grace in our lives.

Our world is clamoring for peace and missing you as the source, God. May we, your people, humbly lead by example.

May the solutions to our anxieties, fears, and cares of this world always begin by seeking your face on our knees in prayer. Lead us to the help we need.

You are our peace. Help us to surrender daily, so we can experience what you have given. With grateful hearts, we pray for this today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

CONSIDER



STRENGTHEN US IN OUR SORROW, GOD.

“My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word!”
Psalm 119:28

Can you relate to the description of the psalmist's deep pain here?
He is literally feeling like his soul is melting or dissipating from the sheer weight of his grief.

Through losing a child, I can say that I understand the overwhelm or heaviness of sorrow on the soul.

Charles Spurgeon said, "Heaviness of heart is a killing thing, when it abounds it threatens to turn life into a long death, in which a man seems to drop away in a perpetual drip of grief."

In his weakness, the psalmist prays for God to strengthen him. How? According to His word.

This is the power of truth and the presence of God revealed to us through reading, studying, and meditating on Scripture.

Psalm 138:3 asserts, "In the day when I cried thou answered me, and made me bold with strength in my soul."

I have experienced this strengthening in my soul through the grace of Scripture. When I least wanted to read it was when I needed it the most. Meditating on it is life-giving.

I pray that we would not wait to be heavy with sorrow to be in the word of God. Having a firm foundation before the winds blow is the wise choice to make.

I pray that if you are in a deep valley and find yourself sucked down into darkness through soul-melting grief, that you would call out for God to strengthen you according to truth.

The Spirit will answer your request and bring to mind all that was stored there. And when we are too weak, making every effort is hard but will shed light on the grief we bear.

I am so thankful to have experienced this rescue.

I hope you will join me in seeking light in the darkness through making time to read God's words to us and nestling in close to the heart of Christ.

Father,

Strengthen us in our sorrow, God. This world is full of pain, but you are our refuge and strength in times of trouble.

Your word is a light to our path when we feel lost, so help us to hold tight to it when we are tempted to lose heart.

You are faithful through it all.

We trust you to rescue us, God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

MAY WE PRAISE YOUR NAME FOREVER, GOD.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

1 Peter 1:3



Today, my prayer is a song of praise.

While my words may fail to do justice for all Christ has done to redeem me, I know the Spirit intercedes on my behalf, leaving no lack.

The resurrection is not something to be celebrated only on a holiday.

It is the reason we show up to the house of worship every Sunday we are able.

It is the reason we have joy in our day-to-day lives despite any suffering endured.

It's the reason we can find contentment in the waiting, rest in our work, and strength to endure.

The resurrection of Christ is our why for everything we do as Christ-followers.

It fills us with gratitude for being brought from death to life; from hopeless to hopeful.

May we join the worldwide Church through our local assemblies as a way to be obedient, to worship, to be reminded of truth, to encourage others, and to grow in love and grace.

God's grace saved us.

That is why we worship. No one needs to cajole us to show up.

Christ showed us a better way, and we should desire to walk in it.

It's a hope lived out by faith—making every effort for all He's done for us.

Father,

May we learn to sacrifice our time each week to celebrate the resurrection hope with a heart of love and joyful praise. May we bless your name by the way we live and breathe.

*May all who enter your courts, bless your holy name.
We are thankful for you, Lord.*

*In Jesus' name,
Amen.*





“Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.”

Psalm 5:3 NLT

HELP US TO WAIT ON YOU FOR ANSWERS, GOD.

Take a moment today to pause and talk to God before starting your day.

He is listening. He desires to hear our requests and praise.

Even when we don't know what to say, the Spirit is uttering prayers on our behalf, filtered through Jesus' righteousness to the Father. We will be heard when we humbly, yet boldly, approach His throne.

The psalmist in Psalm 5:3 says he is directing or putting his requests in order, to bring before God.

The word for waiting expectantly is *tsaphah*, which means to lean forward; to peer into the distance; to look up; to behold and watch.

Asking in faith requires us to pray with this expectancy. To lean in, look up, behold, and watch.

Let's believe God hears and is going to act on our behalf in the best interest of His will for our lives.

Heavenly Father,

May we all be found **leaning in** and **looking up** today, **believing** that you hear, **expecting** an answer.

Your answer may sound different than we expected, so give us ears to hear and accept your will.

We believe you are for us, because you have declared it in your word.

Help our unbelief and grow us in faith.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."

Romans 8:31-34



May we do no evil, God.

“Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified.”

2 Corinthians 13:7 NKJV

Keep us Faithful.

I don't think we pray these kinds of prayers enough: prayers for one another to remain faithful, live in obedience, and put away sinful attitudes and behaviors.

I had to do some studying of Paul's prayer and look over the book of 2 Corinthians to understand why he would write such words.

The church at Corinth had been critical of Paul and questioned his authority as an apostle of Christ. They didn't heed his prior warnings to put away their sin. He asked them to examine their own lives before criticizing his and offered proof of the call on his life.

In this section of 2 Corinthians 13, Paul tells them that truth is truth whether they believe he has the authority to correct them or not.

The Corinthian believers were to quit sinning, because God requires it. As people saved by grace through faith, we have a responsibility to live differently than the world. We are to put off our old ways and live in the new ways of Christ. We don't follow rules to please man. We follow the example of Christ out of obedience as His children.

Don't let anyone deceive you. God cares about our efforts to live in holiness. He provides the Spirit to help us be successful as we yield our ways to His.



Father,

May we do no evil.

Our world desperately needs more people committed to this end.

I pray that we would care enough about the body of Christ and those He loves to pray for one another to stand firm in our faith and avoid sin, encouraging one another to good works.

Our freedom from sin came at a tremendous price paid by your Son. Our sin led to Jesus' crucifixion. Forgive us for forgetting what sin cost and treating it so lightly in our lives.

Help us to never grieve the Holy Spirit through willful sin. Remind us how our sin can ripple out and hurt those around us, discouraging other believers in their own faith.

You deserve our obedience and praise, God.

May we think about how to encourage another saint today.

Keep us faithful.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

HELP US TO LOOK CAREFULLY

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,
making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”
Ephesians 5:15-16

Context:

Christ has freed us to conduct ourselves according to the new nature He placed within us. Walking with Christ requires turning our thoughts toward truth and examining the ways we carry our new name in this world.

According to Paul, we are to imitate Christ and produce a sweet aroma to God. We are to walk in the way of love, leaving behind the old, corrupt ways.

This is why we must make every effort.

2 Peter 1:5-8 NIV says, "Make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

God doesn't excuse sin, and our desire should be to please the Lord. I pray that we would walk in wisdom and redeem the time He gives.

It is not burdensome to imitate Christ, as His sacrifice warrants our best. May we rest in who He is today as we heed Paul's words to live in the light.

- I ask for help in examining how to live the days He gives to us.
- I ask for eyes that discern wisdom, setting aside foolish ways.
- I ask for repentant hearts that turn fully back to God.
- I ask Him to give us the fruits of the Spirit needed to make the most of every opportunity and stand in these days full of "hardship, labor, and annoyance" (Strong's)¹.

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4190/kjv/tr/0-1/>



AT HOW WE WALK, GOD.

Father,

Keep us from falling asleep—losing sight of the opportunities to serve and glorify you through our lives. Help us to carefully walk in a manner worthy of people of light. Expose the sin that so easily besets us and give us wisdom in all the opportunities we have to live in your likeness.

In Jesus name,
Amen.

GROW US IN GRACE AND PEACE, GOD.

“May God give you more and more grace and peace
as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus
our Lord.” 2 Peter 1:2 NLT

Context:

Peter prayed for those who shared the same precious faith in Christ as he possessed.

Today, I pray it over all that share it with me.

What did Peter pray for?

*Increased grace (kindness from God) and peace that passes understanding.

How did the believers obtain it?

*He prayed for grace and peace to increase as they grew in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ.

Knowledge comes from seeking and knowing.

Without prayer, Bible reading, and being a part of a community of believers, we remain stagnant.

We receive the gift of salvation by faith, but as Peter prays, there are further depths of intimacy and blessing unearthed through knowledge.



Father,

Thank you for your amazing grace and peace in our lives. We are undeserving. Out of gratitude, may we choose to set aside time to know and grow through worship and praise, reading and meditating, and building one another up in the faith.

May we rest in you today as we seek your knowledge. And may we experience the fullness of your grace and peace in our lives.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Let the Words of Our Mouths
and
Intents of Our Hearts
Please You, God.



"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

- Psalm 19:14 NKJV

Context:

Psalm 19 is a song of praise AND prayer, which should be our daily song as well.

As we grow in our relationship with God, this becomes a natural response.

As the psalmist, we see God revealed in His created world and through the written words penned for us.

What does knowing God through Scripture do?

converts the soul;

makes the simple wise;

rejoices the heart;

enlightens the eyes.

Scripture is a special gift to every believer. If we want the words we speak to be pleasing to the LORD, the self-existent One, it begins by reading and meditating on who God is.

Disciplining ourselves to seek truth through spending daily time in our Bible produces a love-driven desire for more. Reading God's word is no longer a chore, because I have seen it satisfy and grow my faith, and I genuinely want more. It's sweet to me.

Scripture makes my heart rejoice, gives me wisdom, enlightens my eyes and understanding, and transforms my soul's desires to reflect His.

It makes me feel close to God; to feel His presence daily.

It leads me to both prayer and praise, which are beautifully intermingled.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

May we stop to behold the beauty of your world, praising you for your faithful testimony to all of creation.

Let your truth from your written word fill us so that all the words of our mouths and the will, emotions, and intellect of our minds will be pleasing to the one who saved us.

Strengthen us as we abide in Christ.

You are a rewarder of those who diligently seek you, and we desire to know you, Lord.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

HELP OUR UNBELIEF, GOD.

“I BELIEVE; HELP MY UNBELIEF.” —MARK 9:24b



Aren't you thankful that God sees us and knows where we struggle to trust Him?

There was a man in the Bible who had a demon possessed son. He brought his son to the disciples for healing. However, they were unable to remove the demon, and the father despaired.

When Jesus came and asked what was happening, the father explained the disciples' inability to help his son. Jesus gently rebuked them for their unbelief.

Then the father asked, "if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Again, Jesus, gently says, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Crying out with tears flowing, the father utters this humble prayer, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief."
God healed the boy, removing the evil spirit.

Jesus rewarded the man's faith even knowing that it was lacking. God gave him room to grow. He sees our imperfect attempts to trust and believe the things we can't see.

God is a rewarder of those who seek Him. Jesus met this man in his mustard seed faith. He heard the man's cry for help in his weakness.

And He will be there in ours.



Father,

May we seek you daily with the humble prayer to help us in our unbelief.

Nothing is impossible for you, God. When our eyes can't see, give us a holy vision for what's possible through Jesus in us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



CONSIDER



RESCUE US, GOD. MAY OUR EYES REMAIN ON YOU.

“O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”
2 Chronicles 20:12

God can give victory when our eyes are set on Him.

I learned new things from Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, recently in my Bible reading. This prayer comes after his kingdom was attacked, rendering him afraid.

Jehoshaphat's response?

He asks God for help. He admits he doesn't know what to do. He sets his eyes on God. In turn, his leadership causes all of Judah to fast and seek God. A revival broke out.

Jehoshaphat stirred the people to remembrance. He prayed and rehearsed the past faithfulness of God.

This is a great prayer for us during our own battles. When we don't know what to do, we must cry out to God.

We must remember, praise, and trust.

If you are struggling today, He is listening. You may not know what to do. You may be afraid.

But God can give victory when our eyes are set on Him.

Keep our eyes on you, God.

Father God,

Rescue us, God. Keep our eyes set on you. May we never fail to seek you for help, thinking we can do better on our own. In our seeking, may others be drawn to know you. Remind us that you alone give victory. When we see the victory, help us to give you all the credit and praise. Keep our eyes on you, God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

GIVE US STRENGTH TO COMPREHEND YOUR LOVE FOR US, GOD.

Context:

God's love is so high, deep, and wide, that we need strength to comprehend and understand it.

Think of how content we would be if we were so grounded and rooted in Him that we could know the fullness of God in daily living.

Paul prayed this over the Ephesians. It's possible for everyone who knows Christ as we learn to abide.

The fullness of God's perfect love is possible to rest in.

We grow in His love as we study and learn about it in Scripture. We grow through abiding, and spending time close to Christ. And we increase our ability to love through giving thanks for His love and expressing it toward others every chance we get.

What a great Scripture prayer to begin a day of worship and rest! We are loved and known and can grow into it.

Father,

Increase our ability to love like you love. We want to experience the fullness of who you are, God. Give us patience to abide so we may put down deep roots, grounded in your love. Strengthen us to grasp the vastness of your love so that we can remain steadfast in faith.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

- How have you grown through the study of Scripture?
- How will you rest in the love of God today?

“That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” —Ephesians 3:17b-19

“Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy
in body as you are strong in spirit.”
3 John 1:2 NLT

This is the greeting from John to Gaius, someone John had fathered in the faith.

John prays that Gaius would be well and prosper in all he does. He acknowledges his brother's strong faith and asks for Gaius's physical health to be as good as his spiritual.

Christianity doesn't guarantee wealth and prosperity. The lives of the disciples denounce that thinking, and Scripture doesn't promise it.

But, we can pray for and work towards good health. God cares about all of us—mind, body, and soul.

As John, we should pray for the prospering of all those in Christ, that we may be as fruitful as possible in building God's kingdom.

We should pray the best for one another and encourage one another to take care of our bodies—as temples of God.

If you have these things, recognize who gives it and give thanks.

Sometimes we have not because we ask not. Sometimes God allows things to bring about an eternal purpose. And sometimes we haven't taken proper care of ourselves. It all starts with asking, doing what we can to make healthy choices, and then trusting God with the rest.



HELP OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST BE WELL IN BODY AND SPIRIT, GOD.

Heavenly Father,

I pray for each reader to be healthy spiritually and in right relationship with you, God. I ask for each one to flourish in the purpose and work you have planned for them, and that you would grant physical health and mental well-being to those who love and serve you, Lord.

When our health fails and it's out of our control, give us the ability to trust your purpose and plan for our lives. In seasons of good health, may we be quick to give you the praise you deserve.

Help us to live as the self-controlled people you say we can be through the power of Christ. Forgive us for any laziness we have allowed to creep into our lives, causing our minds and bodies to hinder our ability to serve you fully.

Bless them, God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



“How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony!
For harmony is as precious as the anointing oil that was poured over Aaron’s head,
that ran down his beard and onto the border of his robe.
Harmony is as refreshing as the dew from Mount Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion.
And there the LORD has pronounced his blessing, even life everlasting.” —Psalm 133 NLT

BIND US TOGETHER IN UNITY, GOD.



Father,

I am saddened by the disdain being shown for your Church today. The divisive nature of the world has made its way into the hearts and minds of many of your people.

Community is hard, God.

We are fickle people with fleeting affections and unrealistic expectations of others. We are all in-process. We all need your Spirit to function as intended.

Many view your Church with bitterness instead of love. Rather than viewing other believers as family, we form "camps", replicating our own images.

Forgive us, God.

Conform us to the image of your Son. Teach us the humility of Christ. There is beauty in community because you designed it.

You are the foundation we are built upon.

- Give us grace for each other's faults.
- Help us to care for one another deeply.
- Remove any barriers to loving our neighbors.
- Help us to be for others what we long to receive.
- Remove our misconceptions of perfection.
- Help us to join together in worship of you and not ourselves.
- Hold us accountable for sin, ready to forgive.

Psalm 133 stirs us to a greater vision you have for your people. Unity is good and pleasant—both right and desirable. Without it, we will never flourish as your kingdom-building people. We have one purpose and name though we each serve in unique ways.

Refresh us, God.

Bring life and blessings to us as we worship in unison today.

You are our greater priest, and all who receive your forgiveness are one in Christ.

I love you, God, therefore I love your Church.

I grieve the failings of man—even my own. We can't fulfill the greatest commands given to love you first and then love others while hating the people you died for.

Grow us in kindness, purity, grace, and humility so we can encourage, not hurt; bear fruit, not squelch it; unite, not divide.

In Jesus' holy name,

Amen.

"There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

—Ephesians 4:4-6

CONSIDER

SPREAD YOUR PROTECTION OVER YOUR PEOPLE, GOD.

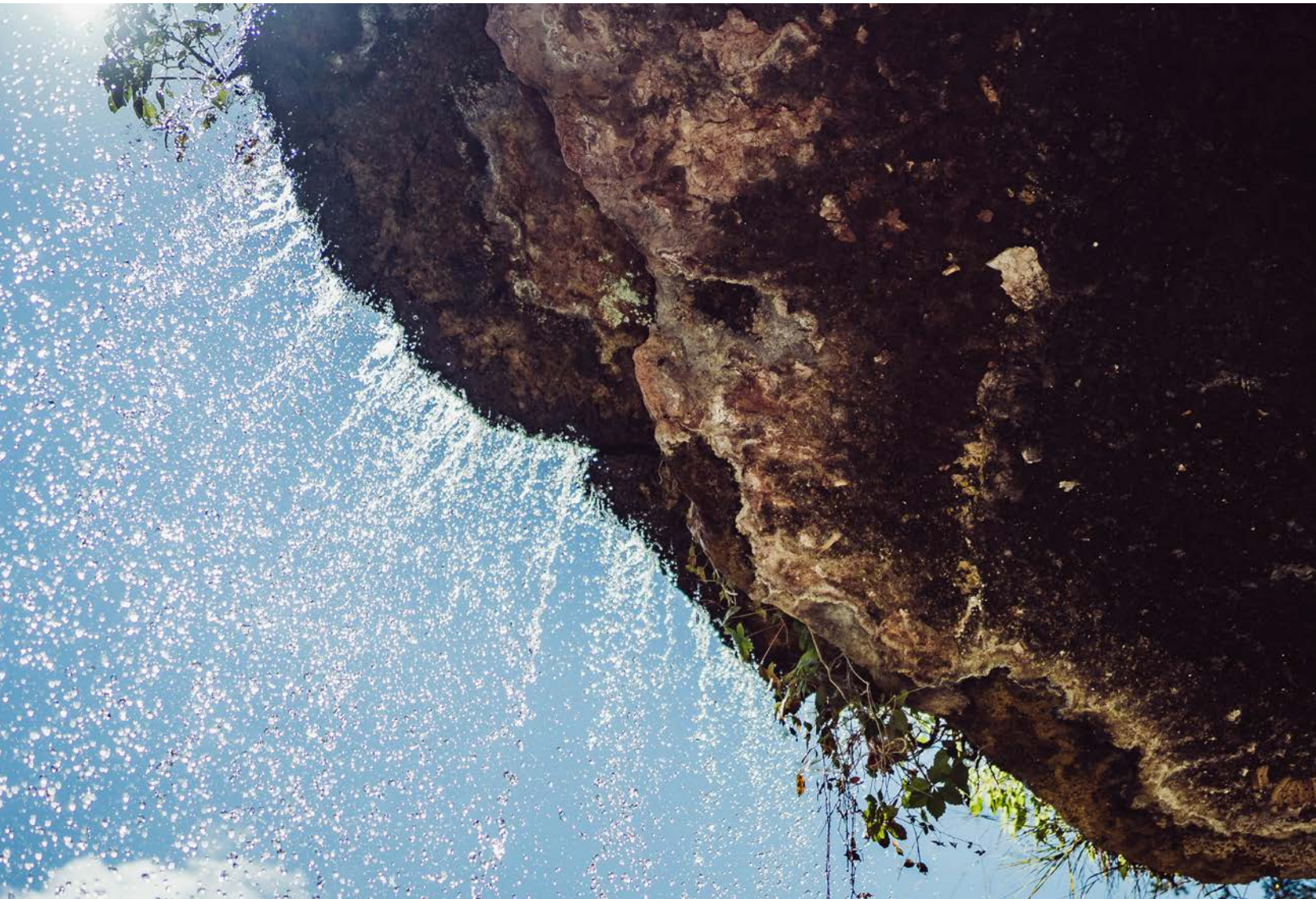
Father God,

Please spread your protection over all who love your name. Fill them with joy.
Pour your blessings upon them. Surround them with your shield of love—for
you bless the godly.

Fill us with lives of unending praise.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



Cover us...

"But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them sing joyful praises forever. Spread your protection over them, that all who love your name may be filled with joy. For you bless the godly, O LORD; you surround them with your shield of love."

Psalm 5:11,12 NLT

May we take refuge and sing joyful praises, for God is with us.

with your steadfast love.

KEEP OUR MINDS ON YOU, GOD.

Paul prayed this over the Colossians, and today I pray it over all of you who are pursuing the wonder and hope of Christ.

"we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, **FOR ALL ENDURANCE AND PATIENCE WITH JOY**, giving thanks to the Father, who has **QUALIFIED** you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." —Colossians 1:9b-14

- Look at the bolded words: when you are weary, Christ gives us the power to endure, have patience, and live with joy!

If you ever doubt your place, He has qualified you to share in His inheritance. Qualified to run the race set before us. Qualified to bear fruit and walk worthy. Believe it and pursue it boldly today!

And give thanks that He has moved those who trust Him from darkness to light. We live in the light even as darkness surrounds us. If we can't get excited about being a part of an unshakable, light-filled, forever Kingdom, we may need a new heart.

I pray you will remember and praise Him for it today...right in this moment.

Father God,

Keep our minds firmly planted in truth and fixed on you. We long to experience your perfect peace but find ourselves so distracted in this life. Help us to walk worthy and find strength through spending time in your presence. Increase our desire to be with you through reading your written words to us. Increase our prayer lives and transform us by the renewing of our minds. We believe you will equip and qualify us to endure with patience and joy. We love you.

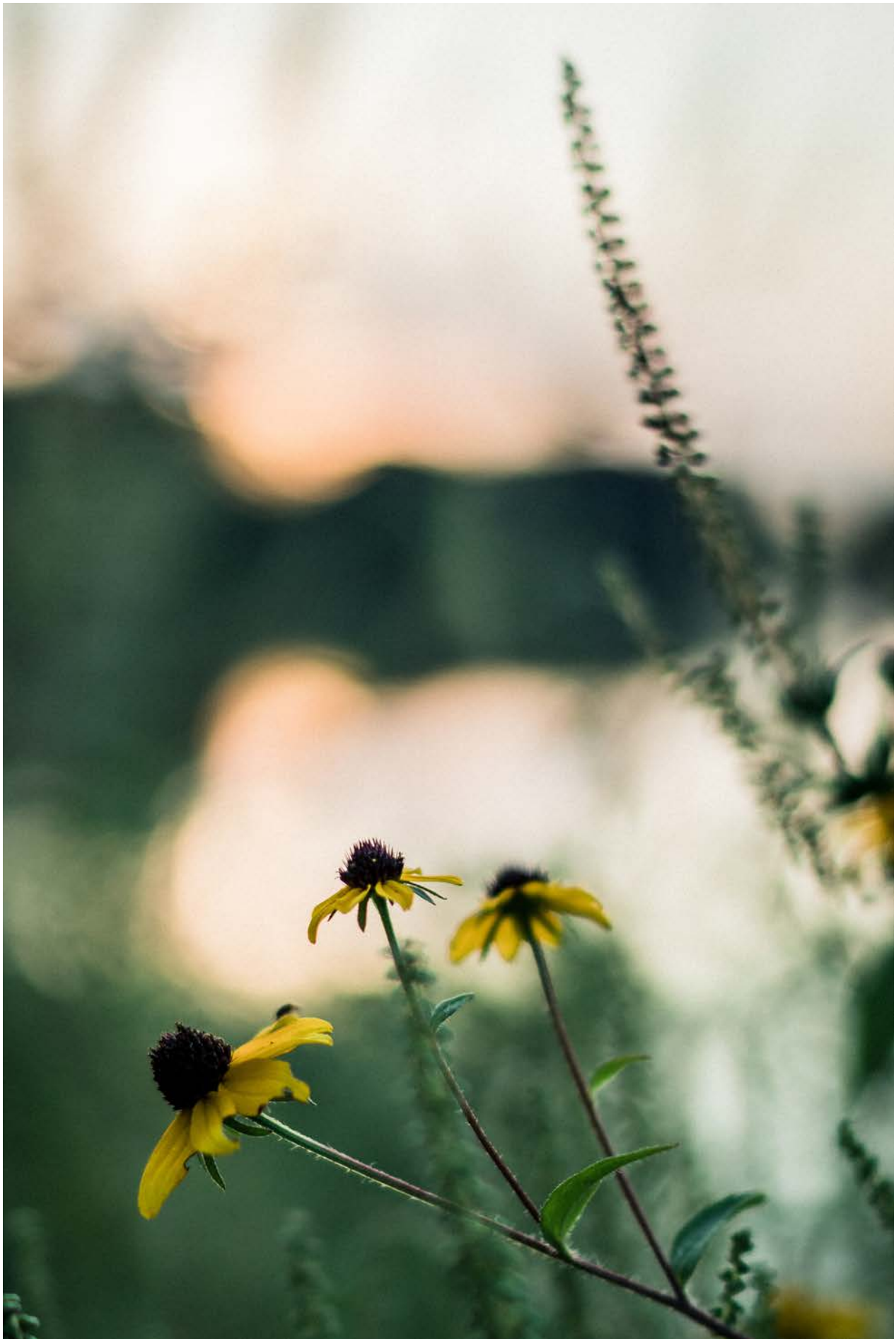
In Jesus' name,

Amen.



"You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you." —Isaiah 26:3

CONSIDER



MAY WE HUMBLY ACCEPT YOUR IMPLANTED WORD, GOD.

“So, get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.”
James 1:21 NLT

Do you want to be renewed?

As believers, we have been made new in Christ. We have the ability to grow in godliness where once we were dead. Because of the indwelling Spirit, we can have renewed minds and fruitful lives through the power of God's word.

To receive salvation, we had to listen, hear, and believe the Word. And to grow in His likeness, we must keep listening, hearing, and putting our faith in the truth taught through Scripture.

Faith acts.

My prayer for us is to receive the word planted in our hearts. The KJV says the "engrafted word"—which means it is deeply rooted and incorporated into our hearts and minds.

It used to be foreign to us, but now, the word of God is planted deep and becomes a natural part of our new identity in Christ.

The Holy Spirit uses the implanted word to produce fruit in us. It mixes with our faith and renews us from the inside out. The word of God is quick, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and brings every motive to light, every sin to our awareness, and brings all our thoughts captive to obedience.

I pray that we would make every effort to seek time for Bible reading and study. To be doers of

the word and surrender to the Spirit's guidance in our lives. The word has the power to give victory over sin, restore our joy, refresh our weary souls, and lead us to deeper relationship with Christ. This leads to finding true, lasting rest and peace.

Who wouldn't want to experience these things?

God,

Help us to be active listeners.

Let the word dwell in us richly, renewing our minds.

Give us the discipline we need to be faithful to the spiritual practices required to be healthy and whole.

Your ways lead to life.

May we faithfully walk in them daily.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Colossians 3:16:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."



MAKE YOUR PATH KNOWN TO US, GOD.

Father God,

Help us to know your ways. Not our own. Not someone else's. And definitely not the world's.

With so many competing thoughts and narratives, show us the right path to follow.
Reveal yourself to us through your word and help us to yield where the Spirit leads.

Teach us, God.

We are listening.

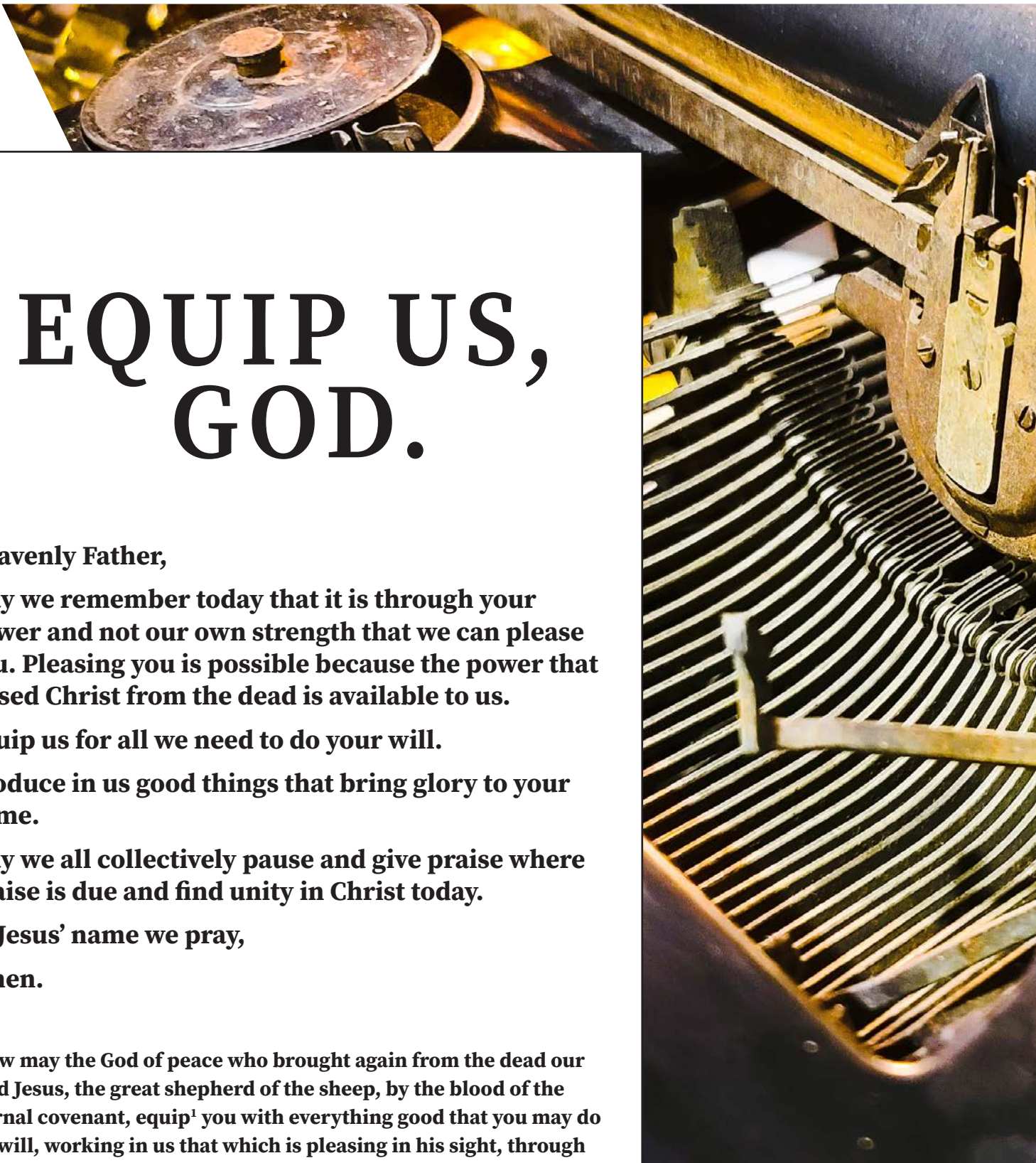
Give us feet that follow you wherever you lead.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



“Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow.” Psalm 25:4 NLT



EQUIP US, GOD.

Heavenly Father,

May we remember today that it is through your power and not our own strength that we can please you. Pleasing you is possible because the power that raised Christ from the dead is available to us.

Equip us for all we need to do your will.

Produce in us good things that bring glory to your name.

May we all collectively pause and give praise where praise is due and find unity in Christ today.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip¹ you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

— Hebrews 13:20-21

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g2675/kjv/tr/0-1/>



katartizō: to strengthen, perfect, complete,
make one what he ought to be¹

CONSIDER

HELP US TO LIVE AS YOUR "GOOD NEWS" PEOPLE TODAY, GOD.

*Heavenly
Father,*

We need you, God.

Remind us daily of the good news of the gospel and how that shapes our lives. Let no one turn from Christ because of seeing a distorted view in us. Revive us in truth and increase our joy so it radiates to the world even in our earthly trials and loss.

Constantly remind us of the joy of knowing you. Restore our hope and draw us back to what we first learned.

You are good news, God. Our first love.
The light of the world.

Help us to live as your "good news" people today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



A familiar passage in Luke 2 tells us that an angel appeared to the shepherds, announcing the good news of Christ.

The good news was that a Savior was born to redeem ALL people from their sins. This news brought great joy!

My husband and I were listening to Andy Stanley's podcast on our drive home from Chicago recently and Andy questioned why so many walk away from faith if this is truly good news. And he concluded that many believers have distorted the gospel and failed to live as "personified" reflections of what

we claim Christ has done in our lives.

I would agree, because there is nothing but beauty in Christ.

The good news is not only for the moment of surrender to Christ. It then becomes our identity and purpose.

So, our lives should look like "good news" in how we love our neighbors. The gospel doesn't leave room for hate for *anyone*. It requires us to love and serve our enemies too. It's a tall order only made possible through the Spirit in us. We become imitators of Christ and His ways.

Our lives should also look like good news to our siblings in Christ. We all should be rejoicing in truth, encouraging one another to hold fast to the good news.

Humanly, it's hard to wait for the fulfillment of a promise. It's hard to deny our flesh daily and pursue the holiness of God. And in a world of things opposed to the light of Christ, sometimes it's challenging to see the good news lived out. We easily forget the joy of knowing Christ in our daily lives, allowing discouragement to set in. Let's live like we have good news!

“And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been prophesied concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.”

Luke 2:8-20



Let us Worship and Bow Down, God.

“Come, let us worship and bow down.
Let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”

—PSALM 95:6 NLT

Father God,

In the midst of all the festivities and fun of our Christian celebrations, may we never worship our celebrations more than you, God.

Remind us to worship you in both spirit and truth.

As we sing, "Come, let us adore Him" and "Silent Night," may the themes be postures of our hearts and not merely words on our tongues.

Remind us that every good and perfect gift comes from your hand, God.

You made us and we are yours—we don't belong to the world.

The enemy longs to distract and busy us with a false purpose that denies the glory due Christ for His sacrifice.

Help us discern the best ways to honor you in our traditions and fun, God.

Lead us to true worship, unencumbered by the cultural expectations of our day.

Let us come and bow down with humility and love just as the wise men and shepherds did so long ago.

Rid us of anything that puffs itself up in us, diminishing the adoration you deserve.

You are the reason, God.

Be glorified through our offerings of praise.

May each offering be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

LET US HOLD FIRMLY TO WHAT WE BELIEVE, GOD.

“So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe.”
Hebrews 4:14 NLT



Context:

Hebrews 4 discusses the promised rest for God's people. Though we have eternal, soul rest in Christ, we can miss experiencing and benefitting from His rest in our daily living. The Israelites knew the consequences of failing to enter the promised land God had led them to. They didn't cease to be His people or lose His love, but they did miss out on abundant living, instead wandering aimlessly until they died in the wilderness.

There is a warning in this passage to live in obedience lest we fall.

And then immediately after this in verse twelve, the

familiar passage about God's word being alive and powerful follows. God is giving us the blueprints for obedience—to read and study the words He left for us in written form. Scripture is sharp and cuts through our deepest hidden motives and desires and calls us back to truth. Nothing is hidden from God and being in His presence is how we fight to hold firmly to what we believe as revealed in His word.

Because of this, since Christ is now our great high priest, the One who understands what it is like to live in human flesh and battle Satan and sin, we are commanded to hold firmly to what we first learned of Christ.

Only through clinging to Him and abiding in truth, is this possible.

Father,

Thank you for the gift of Scripture. Thank you that it is alive and active and working in those who treasure it. May it penetrate our hard hearts and uncover anything that displeases you. Thank you for becoming our high priest who offers grace and help to all who call on your name. Let us hold firmly to what we believe and live it faithfully before men.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.



SATISFY US IN THE MORNING, GOD.

“Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.”

Psalm 90:14

The Hebrew word for satisfy, according to the Strong's concordance, means to “fill to satisfaction.”

Scholars say that Psalm 90 is the oldest song written by Moses.

Moses had witnessed God provide manna for the people daily as they wandered in the wilderness. He asked God to also give them spiritual bread in the form of wisdom. Moses knew the manna was a sign of God's faithful love to an unfaithful generation. As their leader, he prayed for God to continue showing favor and grace to them.

In the New Testament, Jesus is called the Bread of Life. He is our manna from Heaven that satisfies our souls and our great need for salvation. Christ is our daily bread, and we need to be faithful to read the Bible to be filled with the knowledge of His kindness towards us.

In John 6:22-23, Jesus said, “My father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Psalm 90:14 is Moses' prayer for God to show His steadfast love to the Israelites every morning so they would be satisfied in Him. Today, God's love is revealed in Christ and satisfies all who believe on Him.

But, because of our failure to live in the light of His love, we don't always remember and experience the fullness of Christ as intended.

Father,

Just as Moses did long, long ago, we offer a request to be filled with the knowledge of your
steadfast love.

Fill us to overflowing.

May we rise early to seek you and spend time in your presence. Christ is our daily bread, and we long to be satisfied in Him. Thank you for giving redemption through your son and being the bread of life. Help us to never take your provision and love for granted. Satisfy us each morning
with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.





Hebrews 13:15 NLT
"Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name."

Father God,

With awe and reverence, we worship you this day. May it be a continual offering through every moment of our lives. I ask that you give us the strength we need to stand firm in a hostile world where your name is often demeaned among men. Forgive us when we are guilty in any way of lowering the high praise you deserve.

Thank you for sending Christ to incur the wrath we deserved. For that, our lives are yours. We want to continually have your praise on our lips and your song in our hearts. Let us not forget, God.

May we not eat our food this week without acknowledging your great provision. May those we eat with know the power of your name is on our hearts and tongues. Thank you for continually loving us when we don't deserve it.

Consider our sacrifices of praise today. May they be a beautiful sound to your ear.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

LET US CONTINUALLY OFFER UP PRAISE TO YOUR NAME, GOD.

Anytime a verse begins with therefore, it's important to look back for what it's there for.

In this case, verse fourteen reminds us that this world is not our home; we are looking forward with hope for a home yet to come—one where the physical presence of God will rule and reign, making all things new.

In light of this amazing truth, we are told to offer, through Jesus, a continual sacrifice of praise to God. As Christ was our sacrifice for all time, our gratitude should be shown in new ways—primarily to boldly proclaim His name and our relationship to our Father to the world. And then by expressing that love to others as verse sixteen commands.

A key word here is continual. This is not a one-day-a-year offering. It is who we are now as God's people. We are to always be giving thanks to His name, doing good, sharing with those in need, and acknowledging His grace of redemption through faith in Christ.



As we seek to remember the resurrection each Sunday, Jesus, may we be stirred to remember the gift of our first love. It's easy to forget in our coming and going to live out the faith we profess.

When someone asks us about the joy and hope within, may we never neglect to speak your name.

If no one sees any cause for joy in us, may we return to what we first learned and repent of our unfaithfulness.

When we talk about our spiritual practices, may our neighbors understand the why for what we do.

Help us to never deny your name. Help us to worship through it all.

Fill us with an unquenchable desire to know you through hearing the Word of God. Teach us to desire time in the Scriptures, God. It is profitable and living, and we need it daily.

Thank you, Jesus, for humbly coming in human form so that you could relate to us in our broken humanity—yet without sin. Thank you for being the lamb to take away the sins of the world. Help us to grow in the knowledge and understanding of our great High Priest.

Give us grace to hold fast in belief, living in confident hope until we see you coming again.

We praise you for hearing our prayers through our faith in Christ.

✧ Visit terriprahl.com/subscribe to receive access to my free resource library. ✧

MAY WE NEVER FORGET OUR FIRST LOVE, GOD.




“But I have this complaint against you. You don’t love me or each other as you did at first!”

—Revelation 2:4 NLT

“And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”

—Matthew 22:37

Spend a few minutes remembering the time you gave your life to Christ. Reflect on how your life has changed since that moment. Are you still in awe of the love you received through knowing Christ? Are you loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind? In what ways are you seeking to grow in the knowledge of God through Scripture and prayer? If you are not sure if you are new in Christ, I would love to talk with you.  terriprahl@gmail.com.

In Jesus’ precious name,

Amen.

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NOTES:

I use blueletterbible.com to look up the original meanings of words as I study Scripture. It is easy to use. You type in a verse, choose KJV Strong's, and it adds the links to the verses you chose. You don't have to be a scholar to go deeper in Bible study.


I also use biblehub.com and a Life Application study bible with commentary and notes to help with hard to understand passages.

The ESV version is a very readable translation.

Talking to God about what you are reading is the best place to start! This makes it personal.



Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth (John 17:17).



I share these personal prayers as a way to encourage other believers to be set apart by truth. I hope it models how to truly abide in Christ through the Scriptures.

I believe it honors God to speak His words—His truth—over our lives in order to grow into the likeness of Christ.

Consider beginning a habit of not only reading Scripture, but verbalizing the truth in practical ways. God desires for us to be doers of the Word. I think it pleases Him greatly to hear His children offering prayers of praise, petition, and repentance that reflect His heart through the written word.



Consider using the Scriptures to guide your prayers.

Prayer is a mysterious gift. If it is hard for you, consider using His own words to reflect the intents of your heart. The Spirit takes our offering and makes it a beautiful aroma before the Father. Christ intercedes on our behalf, so there is no fear of getting it wrong.

I pray that you will grow to taste and see that the Lord is good!

Be blessed, friends.

—Terri Prah