Daily God Walk

Promises
Volume Four

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV). All other translations used will be credited using these abbreviations:
(KJV) – King James Version
(NKJV) – New King James Version
(TLB) – The Living Bible
(TM) – The Message
(AMP) – The Amplified Bible

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Have you considered hosting a Small Group Bible Study?

The Daily God Walk is written with a dual purpose. First it is a devotional tool that helps the reader grow in their walk of faith. But, a second purpose, is to be a tool to be used in leading a small group. For that purpose we offer a Study Guide Edition.

In the Study Guide Edition each devotion has a second page which has a dual purpose. It helps the reader deepen his faith walk and it gives material suitable for use in small groups Bible Studies.

The second page of each devotion in the Study Guide Edition

✓ There is a section that focuses on the message brought out in the devotion. This section is an excellent tool for beginning a discussion about the devotion.

✓ The message section is followed by an affirmation. The affirmation is good to be used in prayer and meditation. When we personalize the principle by affirming it in prayer it becomes a part of us.

✓ The reflection section provides some very good material for discussion. This section usually gets to the heart of what is being taught in the devotion and contains statements or questions which help stimulate discussion.

✓ Finally, there is a section where the reader can share their thoughts on the devotion. This section is a very good tool to help the reader begin to journal on a regular basis. It is also good for a person to record their comments and questions about the devotion so they can bring them out during the small group discussion time.

For more information on how to use the Daily God Walk in the small group setting visit the website below: www.dailygodwalk.org

Day One

Hope For A Prosperous Future

As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. - Isaiah 55:10-11

The prophet uses water as an example of the fruitfulness of God's word. Water is vital to the cycle of life, without it every living thing will die; with it, grass grows, trees bud and nourishment is made available for every living creature.

God's word is vital to the life-cycle of the spirit. God gives His word, and His word becomes hope and life to all who will hear it with their heart. God says, "When I speak it is not just empty words – it is my desire being expressed and I will accomplish the purposes of my desire."

God's word is like water in that it is the hope being offered, even when the effects are not seen immediately. Water goes into

the ground where the seed receives its life; the seed then begins to develop within itself; then at the right time the seed sprouts from the ground; and finally, in the right time there is a harvest.

Let God's word settle into your heart and grow so that your faith will abound.

Prayer: Lord, I tend to get a little impatient with your word – I want its life to be evident NOW. Grant me the grace to wait in faith for it to take root and grow. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: God's word is vital to the life-cycle of the spirit. God gives His word, and His word becomes hope and life to all who will hear it with their heart. Let God's word settle into your heart and grow so that your faith will abound.

Affirmation: God's word is food for my soul. As I take in His word my soul is nourished and my faith grows.

Reflection: Can you see how God's word is to our soul what water is to the earth? If you haven't already done it begin a plan of Bible reading which will encourage you in the faith.

Day Two

The Secret of Being Content

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. - Philippians 4:12-13

Have you ever had one of those days when you went out to start the car and the battery was dead, you had a flat tire, you ripped your pants while changing the tire and all of this was the best part of your day? Yep, we've all had those days.

Paul had many of those days. In other writings he recites being stoned and left for dead, beaten five times, shipwrecked and more: But Paul had learned to be content in whatever God brought his way and he knew that he could do anything through Christ who gives him strength.

We need to learn that life is going to give us a healthy dose of bad with the good and we must be prepared to be strong in our journey of faith. When we learn that it is only through His abiding presence that we

have strength to endure then we can be confident that no circumstance will be too difficult to handle.

We can do everything, endure everything, go through everything through him who gives us strength.

Prayer: Lord, remind me that I don't have to go through the valleys alone because you are right there beside me giving me the strength to carry on. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: When we learn that it is only through His abiding presence that we have strength to endure then we can be confident that no circumstance will be too difficult to handle. We can do everything, endure everything, go through everything through him who gives us strength.

Affirmation: I am convinced that I can endure everything through Him who gives me strength.

Reflection: Life is going to give us a healthy dose of bad along with the good. We all face that fact. How we deal with it will determine how fulfilled we are in life. How are you dealing with the difficulties of life?

Day Three

Hope in Times Of Grieving

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:12-13

Some years ago I was officiating at the funeral of a brother in my church. As the family was passing by the casket one of the brothers leaned close and said, "We do not grieve as those who have no hope." We who are in Christ have hope.

Much of the world lives with the awareness that this life is but a fleeting vapor, but they have no hope for what is to follow. We do! Jesus told His disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them so that where He was they would be also (John 14).

When I was a child my mother used to have a plaque in her bedroom which read, "Just one life, 'twill soon be past; Only what's done for Christ will last."

We know that death is but a passageway into the eternal presence of God. It is this hope of eternity in the presence of God that is the anchor for our soul.

We have no fear of death because our hope is in the life which is eternal in Christ Jesus.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the hope that is in Christ. Grant me the grace to continue faithful to the hope of the calling you have placed on my life and give me the courage to reach out to others and offer this hope. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: We know that death is but a passageway into the eternal presence of God. It is this hope of eternity in the presence of God that is the anchor for our soul. We have no fear of death because our hope is in the life which is eternal in Christ Jesus.

Affirmation: I have no fear of death because I have been given eternal hope through faith in Christ.

Reflection: At funerals, have you noticed the difference between families who had hope in Christ and those who had no hope beyond the grave? Give some thought to the hope you have in Christ. Has your hope freed you from the fear of death?

Day Four

Comfort From The Word Of God

Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall.

– 2 Timothy 3:16

Some mornings you just don't want to get out of bed. The burdens and cares of this life begin to feel too heavy and we don't want to face them. Well, maybe you haven't been there, but I have.

What do we do when we aren't able to keep our promise to pay a certain debt, or the car is in need of repair and there is no money to do it. Taxes need to be paid and I can't even afford to go to the Chiropractor to get a back adjustment.

Burdens! We all have them, but what makes the difference is how we handle them. The Word of God has promised, "Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you." God never meant for you and I to bear our burdens alone. In fact, I believe one of the primary purposes of burdens in this life is to teach us the sufficiency of the Lord.

It is a good practice every morning and evening to take all of your burdens to the Lord and trust him to intercede and sustain you through them all.

In the evening as you close your eyes take just a moment to lay your cares at his feet, then get a

good nights rest. In the morning take just a moment to remind yourself that you are trusting him with your burdens.

The Lord is blessed when we trust him with our burdens. Make a habit of blessing him with your burdens.

Prayer: OK Lord, I know I've been trying too hard in my own strength to handle all this stuff in my life; I surrender it all to you and trust you to sustain me through every trial. In your name, amen.

Message: It is a good practice every morning and evening to take all of your burdens to the Lord and trust him to intercede and sustain you through them all. The Lord is blessed when we trust him with our burdens. Make a habit of blessing him with your burdens.

Affirmation: I have consciously taken all of my worldly cares to the Lord and I am trusting him to take me through every trial.

Reflection: Trusting God when the pressure is on is easier said than done. If you haven't already begin the practice of taking your burdens to the Lord before you go to sleep at night and when you awaken remind yourself that you have given those burdens to him.

Day Five

God's Word Judges our Heart

The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

– Hebrews 4:12

The writer is trying to tell us that God's word will go straight to our heart and read it to us. Have you ever been reading a passage of Scripture and all at once you become aware that you are coming under conviction for something in your life? Or maybe the preacher is speaking to an entire congregation, but you feel like he is talking just to you.

That is the Word of God reading your heart and speaking to you about what he finds there. God's Word can search the hidden areas of our heart and discern things that we didn't even know were there. That's why we are instructed to search the Scripture to make sure that we understand their meaning, and not just what we would like them to say.

We need to keep our heart open as we look into the Word of God so that he can clean out anything that doesn't belong and put in everything that we need to live the way he desires us to live.

A sure way to keep our heart right with God is to do as David tells us in Psalm 119:11, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Hiding the Word of God in our hearts does not come easy and it will require discipline but it will keep us from sin and will continue to give us faith for the journey.

Prayer: Lord, you know my heart even better than I do. I ask that you open my heart to hear what your word would say to me. Give me the grace of a heart that is hungry for you. Reveal to me the very intent of my heart. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Hiding the Word of God in our hearts does not come easy and it will require discipline but it will keep us from sin and will continue to give us faith for the journey.

Affirmation: I have hidden God's word in my heart and His word gives me strength to live above sin.

Reflection: How is God's word sharper than a sword? How does it penetrate our heart? How do we know when God's word convicts us of sin? Live out Psalm 119:11 and hide God's word in your heart so you will not sin against him.

Day Six

The Power of Secret Prayers

When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your father, who is unseen. Then your Father who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. – Matthew 6:6

The context to what Jesus is teaching in this passage is that prayer should be to God and not to impress the world around us. That is why he says to go into a room and close the door so that the Lord alone hears your prayers.

There is another aspect to the idea of going into seclusion to pray. There are some things we pray about that are private, and even secret from the rest of the world. These prayers are so personal that we only want the Father to know them, so we close ourselves up and seek him in a secret place.

A song we used to sing had these words;

Shut in with God in a secret place,

There in the Spirit beholding His face,

Gaining new power to run in this race,

I long to be shut in with God.

Alone with Him, in a special place, we can pour out our hearts' deepest fears and plead for our greatest hopes. Power is found in a secret place of prayer.

Prayer: Thank you lord for making yourself available to me in the secret place. I ask you to hear my cry as I reach out to you and you alone. You hear what no one else hears and see what no one else sees. Grant me grace. In your name, amen.

Message: Alone with Him, in a special place, we can pour out our hearts' deepest fears and plead for our greatest hopes. Power is found in a secret place of prayer.

Affirmation: Alone with God in a secret place I can share my hearts deepest fears with the one who loves me most.

Reflection: Are there things in your life that are so personal you don't share them with anyone? You can trust God with those things. Share them with him in your secret place and trust him.

Day Seven

The Lord Will Defend You From The Enemy

Do not be terrified; do not be afraid of them. The Lord you God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, and in the desert. There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place. – Deuteronomy 1:29-31

Some time ago our ministry was in a very difficult position. We were in a contract for our facility that was very stressful and the people we were contracted to were very unscrupulous. I was looking for options one day and praying about the situation when the Lord very clearly spoke to my heart, "Stay with the deal."

It didn't make sense to stay with a bad deal when there were other options – but that was the word of the Lord for us. It wasn't easy, but we trusted him and he came through better than we could have hoped.

Like Israel we sometimes wander in a desert, not sure if we will ever make it out. And, just like Israel, God is going before us. He is fighting the enemy before us and preparing the way, even

before we get there. We must trust him to carry us through the roughest places just as a father would carry his son.

We seem to often go through the desert on our journey of faith, but the secret is to go through the desert without complaining or doubting. When we trust Him He will take us through. Trust him – He'll see you through.

Prayer: Lord, I know you are there fighting my battles for me. Give me the grace to trust you and to walk in faith instead of fear. Amen.

Message: Just like Israel, God is going before us. He is fighting the enemy before us and preparing the way, even before we get there. We must trust him to carry us through the roughest places just as a father would carry his son.

Affirmation: It is not easy going through tough places, but knowing God will carry me like a father carries a small child gives me faith to continue on.

Reflection: How do you face terrifying situations? How do you respond to "bad news" from your doctor? How do you feel when you realize you don't have enough money to make it through the month? Trust God in every situation. How do we do that?

Day Eight

A Deposit Guaranteeing Our Inheritance

You also were included in Christ when you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance unto the redemption of those who are God's possession.

– Ephesians 1:13-14

The term, "Old Testament" was given to the Word of God which gave us the Law of Moses, and history of Israel. The term, "New Testament" was given to the Law of Grace revealed through Christ.

First there was the "will" (or testament to his intentions) of God for Abraham and his descendants, Israel. He expresses in many places, beginning with Genesis 12, His intention to bless the world through the seed of Abraham.

Then He further revealed his will in the birth of Christ and the subsequent revelation of His purpose in being born. This is the New Testament, or, a new era of revealing His will.

This New Testament is very simple; God has sent Christ to secure for us the eternal gift of salvation. To seal the deal, so to speak, He gave

the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who believed. This indwelling presence of God has become the deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.

We who have believed in Christ have received an eternal inheritance. The indwelling Holy Spirit is our assurance which guarantees our inheritance.

Prayer: Thank you Father for Christ and what He accomplished. I also give thanks for the Holy Spirit which has become the seal of my inheritance. Your grace is sufficient. Amen.

Message: We who have believed in Christ have received an eternal inheritance. The indwelling Holy Spirit is our assurance which guarantees our inheritance

Affirmation: I know that God has prepared an eternal inheritance for me because His word tells me so and the Holy Spirit has been given me as a deposit, or assurance guaranteeing my inheritance.

Reflection: If the Old Testament was given as the "will" of God for Israel, then what was the purpose of the New Testament? How does the New Testament relate to the Old Testament?

Day Nine

God's Promises Are Absolute

As surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you... was not "Yes and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. – 2 Corinthians 1:18-20

When God makes a promise it is not a "maybe." His promises are "Yes." It is the nature of humanity to doubt and fall back on our own resources when we begin to waver in faith and to think that God is not going to be faithful to His promise. God never wavers.

God is not "Yes" today and "No" tomorrow. He did not promise healing yesterday and rescind it today. Jesus did not come to offer the ministry of being reconciled to God one day and take it back the next.

The promises of God are sure, and the message of salvation through Christ is as sure as God is faithful. We can rest in the fact that Christ is the "Yes" of God to the promise of salvation – And we are the "Amen" to His "Yes."

Not only are we secure in the promise of salvation through faith in Christ but we are secure in our hope for provision in this life.

Prayer: Lord, I tend to be impatient with your promises. It seems you never come through when I want, but it is always just in time, your time. Grant me the grace of patiently waiting for you promises to be fulfilled. May I be ever ready to be the "Amen" to your "Yes." In Jesus name, *AMEN*.

Message: The promises of God are sure, and the message of salvation through Christ is as sure as God is faithful. We can rest in the fact that Christ is the "Yes" of God to the promise of salvation – And we are the "Amen" to His "Yes."

Affirmation: My God is faithful. He will not rescind his promises. I am committed to His word and I will see His promises fulfilled.

Reflection: If God's promises are always "yes" then why is His answer sometimes "no?" Do some research on the promises of God and see if there are qualifiers on many of them.

Day Ten

Hold On – The Answer is Coming

Do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

– Hebrews 10:35-36

There has never been a time of more opportunity to be discouraged than now. Our country seems to be morally bankrupt; the economy is going bad; oil prices are up and down. We could give many more examples of reasons to become discouraged and feel like saying, "What's the use. There seems to be no security in this world."

Then we go back to God in prayer and get back into His word. There, before Him, we begin to realize that the source of our joy and comfort is not the circumstances of this life, but it comes from the promises of God and His faithfulness to those promises.

The circumstances say, "Give up," but the Word of God says, "Endure to the end." When we have endured in doing the will of God we will receive what He has promised.

The rich reward of a persevering confidence is well worth the cost of holding on through hard times.

This is a good day to reevaluate your attitude about the circumstances of your life – are you persevering in doing the will of God, or have you been thinking about surrendering to discouragement? Persevere, It's worth the effort.

Prayer: Lord, give me the ability to see the circumstances through your eyes and to hold on to the promise as I endure hardship and disappointment doing your will. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: When we go to God we begin to realize that the source of our joy and comfort is not the circumstances of this life, but it comes from the promises of God and His faithfulness to those promises.

Affirmation: I do not let the circumstances of life affect my confidence in God. Circumstances change, but God does not - He is faithful to his promises.

Reflection: How are your circumstances affecting your confidence in God? Are you confidently trusting God or are you just barely holding on?

Day Eleven

Wait Patiently for the Lord

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes... For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land. – Psalm 37:7,9

It is really hard to maintain a good attitude when the evil people around us are doing so well. We struggle just to keep a roof over our heads and to put food on the table, then we see people who are living free and loose doing whatever they very well please and they seem to have it all. It just doesn't seem fair.

Have you ever felt that way? I think we all have at one time or another. It is frustrating to see the seeming injustice of the ungodly being prosperous and while the righteous are suffering. But, there is one thing we must remember; what they have now is all they get and when it is gone their life is in shambles because the source of their hope has been destroyed.

The Hebrew word translated "hope in" is *kaw-vaw* and means "to bind together." We could say,

"Those who are bound to the Lord will inherit what He has promised."

Our hope must not be in what we have achieved or acquired – our hope must be in the Lord who is the All Sufficient One.

Our hope is in the one who holds eternity in the palm of his hand and offers it to those who will follow Him.

Prayer: Father, forgive me for being envious of the prosperity of the wicked. Grant me the grace of being content with your will. Amen.

Message: When we are blessed with the things which provide comfort in this life we say, "Thank you Lord," but our hope is not in those things. Our hope is in the one who holds eternity in the palm of his hand and offers it to those who will follow Him.

Affirmation: My focus is not on what others have achieved or are achieving. My focus is on Christ alone and I am bound to His will.

Reflection: How do you feel about those who are prospering while living such ungodly lives? What is the difference between the hope of the wicked and the hope of those whose trust is in God alone?

Day Twelve

Trust God For Straight Paths

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight. – 1 Peter 1:23-25

If we could be clear headed and have good judgment in all of our decisions we wouldn't need God or His word. But we aren't always clear headed and we don't always make sound choices; that is why we need Him.

Have you ever felt like you were making a good decision based on all the facts only to find out afterwards that you didn't have all of the facts and the facts you didn't know showed that your decision was not the right decision? I think we all have.

We try to make the best choices we can based upon the information we have, but our knowledge is limited, which causes many of our decisions to have limited effectiveness.

When we contrast what we know with what He knows we come to realize that trusting him fully is the only truly wise thing to do.

It is great comfort to know that when we trust Him with all our heart, and lean upon him, He will come through every time. As we submit our

finite knowledge to His infinite wisdom we find that He takes even the most difficult path and makes it workable for us.

Trust Him – He will make your paths straight, and in the process he will make your journey much more comfortable.

Prayer: Lord, sometimes I forget that you are the one who holds the universe in the palm of your hand and your wisdom is from eternity. Help me to submit my thoughts to you and grant me the grace to make wise decisions. In your name, amen

Message: It is great comfort to know that when we trust Him with all our heart, and lean upon him, He will come through every time. As we submit our finite knowledge to His infinite wisdom we find that He takes even the most difficult path and makes it workable for us.

Affirmation: I do trust the Lord with all my heart and I don't lean on my own understanding. I acknowledge Him in all ways and He directs my path.

Reflection: A mistake all of us have made is making a decision based on faulty, or incomplete, information. Can you remember such a time? How does trusting God protect us from making those mistakes?

Day Thirteen

The Church Is the Fullness Of Christ

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. – Colossians 2:9-10

Here is an interesting truth. We all accept that the fullness of God bodily was in Christ on the earth; but too few of us understand that the fullness of Christ, the fullness of God's manifestation for this age, is in the church, the body of Christ (and thus, the body of God).

Did you get that? The fullness of God dwelt in Christ and the fullness of Christ (who is God) dwells in believers. Because of the work of Christ and the kingdom message of being made a new creature, we are now to be the fullness of the manifestation of Christ/God In this age.

With that promise, and the reality that is in the spirit realm, we still do not live as if we are the manifestation of Christ in the world today. We continue to think in terms of human reason and expect to affect a spiritual result.

The entire New Testament is devoted to teaching us that we are "born again," we have become "a new creation," and we are "dead to the

flesh." That is what the entire New Testament is about, but I ask: Do we really believe it?

What would the church, the body of Christ, the manifest Christ, be like if we all came to the full realization of who we are? The devil wouldn't stand a chance and the world would have little influence over us if we fully realized who we are in Christ. Something to think about.

Prayer: My Father, I confess that I have not been living with the full knowledge of who I am in Christ. Grant me the grace of understanding and increase my faith. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: What would the church, the body of Christ, the manifest Christ, be like if we all came to the full realization of who we are? The devil wouldn't stand a chance and the world would have little influence over us if we fully realized who we are in Christ. Something to think about.

Affirmation: I am a Christ follower and as such I am a member of His body and I am a Christ manifestation to the world around me.

Reflection: Give some thought to what it means to be the fullness of Christ in the world today. How should that affect your life?

Day Fourteen

Putting Yesterday Behind Us

I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 3:12-14

We all have enough in our past to cause great doubt and concern if we focused on it. I can remember a time when I had sin in my life that kept me defeated. I tried all the time to live above the sin, but every day it became a focus point for me.

While I was focusing on overcoming my sin I was missing the point. The point was not what I had done, but what He had done – and the promise that was before me. When I learned to forget my yesterdays, and all their failures, I was able to focus on today and tomorrow in Christ Jesus.

When I was able to focus on Christ, and forget my failures, something miraculous began to happen. Reaching the goal and the prize for which God had called me became the purpose of my life and the old things, the failures, no longer had any power over me.

I think a problem which many of us have is that we don't have a sense of purpose to push us forward. Paul was expressing that he had set a goal to win the prize held out before him by Christ. He had a focus on the future.

Get a focus on the future and the past will not haunt you or control you. Forget yesterday, get a focus on the goal today and press forward toward the prize.

Prayer: Lord, I need grace to refocus. Help me to look at what you are doing in me rather than how I have failed to perform. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: A problem which many of us have is that we don't have a sense of purpose to push us forward. Paul was expressing that he had set a goal to win the prize held out before him by Christ. He had a focus on the future. Get a focus on the future and the past will not haunt you or control you.

Affirmation: This one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind me I am straining toward what is ahead. I press on toward the goal for which I have been called.

Reflection: It is critical that we focus, not on our failures, but upon the goal set before us. What things do you need to put behind you? What are some practical steps toward getting a focus on our hope in Christ?

Day Fifteen

Fellowship Makes Our Joy Complete

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. – 1 John 1:3-4

Fellowship, a word that is often used but seldom understood. We usually think of fellowship as getting together and sharing a time of relaxation, but this word means far more than that.

The Greek word used here is *koinonia*. This word implies communion, or sharing in common. Another form of the word means to be partaker as in a partner. It also implies a level of intimacy that is not common among acquaintances, or even among many of our friends.

When John speaks of this kind of fellowship he is telling us that God's desire for us is to be so intimate with him that we are partakers and share all that He has vested in Christ – the fellowship in the Body of Christ is to be a partnership with God. Just as Christ was the body of God on the earth so we are the body of Christ in the world.

That means we share in the intimacy, blessing, and relationship that is offered by the Father. That is why John spoke of this fellowship as making our joy complete.

There are two critical elements to *koinonia*. They are having close relationships with other believers and having an intimate relationship with God. When we are in right relationship God we will be in right relationship with others and the result of this is great joy.

Prayer: Father God, grant me the level of relationship with you that opens the doors of heaven and allows a new level of intimacy with you. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: There are two critical elements to *koinonia*. They are having close relationships with other believers and having an intimate relationship with God. When we are in right relationship God we will be in right relationship with others and the result of this is great joy.

Affirmation: I continue in fellowship with other members of the body of Christ and that gives me fellowship with Christ himself.

Reflection: How do you see fellowship with other believers helping us to be in closer relationship with Christ? Can you explain the meaning of *koinonia*?

Day Sixteen

Get it Right With Your Brother and God

Anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment... Anyone who says, "you fool" will be in danger of the fire of hell. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift.

– Matthew 5:22-24

Being in right relationship with people can be very complicated, or it can be pretty simple. It is complicated when we are trying to play the blame game; "I know I responded wrong, but it was because of the way you approached me," "Don't even bother to talk to me until you get your attitude straightened out" (that is code for, "until you are willing to admit that I am right").

Or, being in right relationship can be as simple as just saying, "You know, I'm not sure who is right or wrong, I just know I feel wrong when I feel this way, so please tell me what I have done wrong and I'll do my best to make it right."

Jesus said when you go to church to worship and the person in the pew in front of you has

hard feelings against you, or you have hard feelings against them, you're worship is not acceptable until you get a right heart about it and do everything you can to make it right with them.

The chances are that the person who has offended you also feels offended by you and the only way to get it right is to humbly approach the other person and ask what needs to be done to make it right. Try it, it works.

Prayer: Lord, I tend to want others to do for me what I am not willing to do for them. Grant me the grace of being willing to do whatever is necessary to be in right relationship. Amen.

Message: Being in right relationship can be as simple as just saying, "You know, I'm not sure who is right or wrong, I just know I feel wrong when I feel this way, so please tell me what I have done wrong and I'll do my best to make it right."

Affirmation: Being in right relationship with others is more important than being thought of as being right.

Reflection: It is very difficult to sincerely ask what can be done to make something right when you don't feel you have done wrong. Can you think of a time when you were placed in that situation? How did you handle it?

Day Seventeen

God is Our Confidence – Even in Disaster

Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared. – Proverbs 3:25-26

Quite a few years ago there was a sect of Christians that lived in Southern California and their prophets had predicted that California was going to have a great earthquake and most of the state would slide off into the ocean. The entire group of people moved to Arkansas to escape this horrible "wrath of God" that was coming to the West coast. About two years after they moved to Arkansas a bad storm came through and most of them were destroyed in a tornado.

We can't let fear chase us around the country. At some point we must turn it all over to God and say, "Lord, your will be done. I trust you to be my provider and my protector."

There is another passage which states that the rain falls on the just and unjust alike. What that means is there are natural events which happen; earthquakes, floods, fires, and all of these have very little to do with judgment. They are just natural events. God has promised to help us in those too, but there is no guarantee of avoiding them.

Our confidence must be in God's protection and not in our resources or ability to avert disaster.

Prayer: Lord, I tend to run from disaster in fear. Teach me to trust you, even when the circumstances seem ominous. I know you have promised to be my protector, but I tend to fall back on my own resources, then fear begins to rule. Grant me the grace to trust you even in the middle of the storm. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: There are natural events which happen; earthquakes, floods, fires, and all of these have very little to do with judgment. They are just natural events. God has promised to help us in those too, but there is no guarantee of avoiding them. Our confidence must be in God's protection and not in our resources or ability to avert disaster

Affirmation: I know that in this life I will have trials, but I am trusting God to keep me from being overcome by the tragedies happening around me.

Reflection: Give some thought to the idea of the faith required to trust God to carry us through tragedies compared with the faith that God will prevent tragedies from coming to us.

Day Eighteen

Our Confidence is in His Promise

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we asked of him.

– 1 John 5:13-15

There are many things that affect our confidence in God. We may have self-doubts that we carry over into our relationship with God. We may even have sin in our life that affects our confidence. Maybe we just don't know what His will is so we are afraid we may not be doing right.

God has given us two very real proofs of His love and affection for us. First, He has given us His word which is full of promises. Then He has given us His Spirit. 1 John 4:13 tells us, "We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit."

Here is something we need to pay attention to. "We know." That is, our confidence has been made complete by some tangible proof. Our knowing is not just faith alone but it is the evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit which gives

us that confidence. There is experiential reality in being filled with the Holy Spirit.

It is His Spirit in us that brings His word to life for us. We know He has saved us by the Holy Spirit He placed within us; we know the Word is true because the Holy Spirit gives us the confidence of its truth.

When you are low in confidence, reach out to Him. Ask Holy Spirit to renew your faith and give you confidence.

Prayer: Father God, grant me the gift of knowing your word to be true. Not that I just claim to believe it, but that I truly believe every promise and walk in the grace you provide. In Jesus name I pray, amen.

Message: "We know." That is, our confidence has been made complete by some tangible proof. Our knowing is not just faith alone but it is the evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit which gives us that confidence. There is experiential reality in being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Affirmation: My confidence is based upon God's word and he has confirmed his word by filling me with His Spirit and His Spirit gives me great assurance.

Reflection: Can you explain what is meant by the sentence, "It is His Spirit in us that brings His word to life for us?"

Day Nineteen

Add These Things To Our Faith

Make every effort to add to your faith goodness... knowledge... self-control... perseverance... godliness... 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 your Lord Jesus Christ. – 2 Peter 1:5-8

Faith itself is a virtue, but when you add the virtues mentioned above your faith becomes very productive and effective. In verse 8 he refers to having these virtues in "increasing measure." He is referring to a maturing faith which is transforming us with ever increasing glory into the image of God (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Many people begin their walk with God by making a profession of faith and asking the Lord to forgive their sins, then they spend the rest of their journey trying to keep from sinning, and then asking forgiveness for the new sins; it seems they are caught in an unending cycle. What is wrong?

They haven't added to their faith. Each of the virtues listed in this passage have to do with looking outside ourselves to purposes that are greater than ourselves. As long as we are focused

on our own forgiveness and our own salvation we will be weak in our faith – but once we begin to focus outside ourselves our faith becomes stronger and we are productive in our walk.

Open the door of your life and look outside – then let God use you in the kingdom of God.

Prayer: OK Lord. I'm guilty of focusing upon my own needs and desires while the needs of others are being neglected. Grant me the grace to look outside myself and allow you to use me for a higher purpose. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Each of the virtues listed in this passage have to do with looking outside ourselves to purposes that are greater than ourselves. As long as we are focused on our own forgiveness and our own salvation we will be weak in our faith – but once we begin to focus outside ourselves our faith becomes stronger and we are productive in our faith walk.

Affirmation: I am conscious of my need to add virtues to my faith. Therefore, I practice these virtues: Goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.

Reflection: Practice the affirmation every day.

Day Twenty

Keeping A Tight Rein On Our Tongue

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this; to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself form being polluted by the world. – James 1:26-27

Just about every sect of Christianity is very good about telling believers what to believe, how to live, what to do, where to go, etc., etc.; but all too often when they are finished talking they are just finished – because that's all they've got – just talk.

I really find it interesting that James put the admonishment to keep a rein on the tongue in the same paragraph in which he defines acceptable religion. Simply put it is "to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." Pretty simple stuff – at least until we try to live it.

What has become obvious to this writer is that James was telling believers that they need to be careful what they say because it is liable to come back and bite them if they don't take care of the most important things; widows, orphans and keeping free of worldly influence.

For far too many believers it has become more important to prove how other believers, who don't agree with all of their doctrine, are wrong than it is to do the work of pure religion. Think about it.

Prayer: Lord, It is easier for me to talk about how others aren't doing it right than for me to roll up my sleeves and do the work of pure religion myself. Give me the grace of pure religion. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: James put the admonishment to keep a rein on the tongue in the same paragraph in which he defines acceptable religion. Simply put it is "to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Affirmation: The Spirit of God in me calls me to care for the needy and those who can't care for themselves. When I do that I am not as easily polluted by the world.

Reflection: When James speaks of the orphans and widows is he really saying that we should care for all people who cannot care for themselves? How can we keep from being polluted by the world?

Day Twenty One

Do Not Conform But Be Transformed

Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. – Romans 12:1-2

There are two principles of worship and service being presented in this passage; submission and transformation.

We are first called to submit our bodies, and by extension, our entire being, as a living act of worship. That calls for us to sacrifice our identity and will to the greater good of his will.

The second principle Paul gives us is the principle of transformation. Up to the time of our conversion we were living in conformity to the natural world view. The way we thought, acted, reacted, planned and executed our life; all of this was according to a world view that revolved around ourselves. Paul says we must be transformed.

When we have presented ourselves as living sacrifices, and we have been transformed by the

renewing our minds, then we can know the will of God that is good and perfect.

We were born into a world opposed to the concept of submitting to a power greater than ourselves and we conformed to that world. God is calling us to submit ourselves to him as a sacrifice of worship and he will transform us into his will for us.

Prayer: Lord, I want to know your will, but I find it hard to submit myself as a living sacrifice. Grant me the grace of being willing to be transformed into a living sacrifice. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: We were born into a world opposed to the concept of submitting to a power greater than ourselves and we conformed to that world. God is calling us to submit ourselves to him as a sacrifice of worship and he will transform us into his will for us.

Affirmation: I have submitted my will to God and He is transforming me into His likeness and revealing His purposes for me.

Reflection: How were we conformed to the patterns of this world? How are we to be transformed? Think of some practical steps to take in being transformed.

Day Twenty Two

God's Word Can Be Trusted To Last

I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

– Matthew 5:18

In just the short time that I have been on this earth I have seen many changes in what science believes and in what history records, but not sentence has been changed in the Word of God.

I have maps of the world at the beginning of the 20th century – and what a difference between the world then and the world of this 21st century. The world changes, countries change, leaders change; but the Word of God does not change.

There were certain historical "facts" that were taught when I was very young that have had to be revised because of recent discoveries, but there has never been a discovery that invalidated anything the Word of God teaches.

What all of this means, and the meaning of what Jesus said, is simply this: The Word of God can be trusted to be true in any age and in any circumstance.

One old hymn declares, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand." There is no other rock of truth to base our life upon than the rock of Christ and the Word of God.

Jesus is the sure foundation and the Chief Cornerstone – Christ and his word is the solid rock we can trust.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the Word that is never changing. I have placed my hope for eternity in your eternal, never changing word. Amen.

Message: The Word of God can be trusted to be true in any age and in any circumstance. Jesus is the sure foundation and the Chief Cornerstone – Christ and his word is the solid rock we can trust.

Affirmation: I can trust God's word to be true and all of His promises stand up against the test of time.

Reflection: How can we know for sure that God's word is true and that he will be faithful to his word? Give some thought to the question of how the Bible stands up against scientific thought today.

Day Twenty Three

Live At Peace With Everyone

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. – Romans 12:17-18

These next three devotions are about dealing with difficult people. Today is about being at peace with everybody. That is a good idea, but how do you do that?

Two words of instruction are given in this passage; do not respond with evil and do what is right. What that means is that we are not to be influenced by how others act but we are to act out of a pure heart.

If our heart is humble before God and others then our response to the wrong others do to us will be the same as if the wrong had not been committed because we are not responding to the evil; we are acting out of a pure heart that is motivated by God's love.

Some say, "How can you respond like that? Don't you know what they did?" And that is a natural response – but we are not to respond in a natural way; we are to respond out of God's love. God doesn't pick and choose who he is going to love, and neither can we.

A really interesting result of responding to evil with kindness is that everyone else responds to your kindness instead of the other's evil. And not only do others respond to your kindness but the attitude of the person who treated you badly is also affected.

Prayer: Lord, you have asked for a big thing. It is not easy to respond with love when I have been treated badly. I really need your grace to act out of love rather than responding to evil. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: We are not to be influenced by how others act but we are to act out of a pure heart. If our heart is humble before God and others then our response to the wrong others do to us will be the same as if the wrong had not been committed because we are not responding to the evil; we are acting out of a pure heart that is motivated by God's love.

Affirmation: I am committed to responding to others from a pure heart and that means I must daily submit my will to God.

Reflection: Think about what this devotion says about responding to evil with kindness. How will that affect others around you and how will it affect the perpetrator?

Day Twenty Four

Trust God to Avenge Us

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

– Romans 12:19

Revenge! Oh, sweet revenge!

What a deception. There have been times when I have reacted to the deeds of others and taken my "justified" revenge out on them, and it wasn't sweet. All that I had when it was done was a bitter feeling inside.

God has told us over and over that we are to trust Him, love others, and he will fight our battles for us. It is not our job to make others do what is right, or to make them right the wrongs they have done. It is our job to love them. If we can't do that then we need to go back to the source of our love and get resupplied.

In this passage Paul writes, "leave room for God's wrath." When we assume the position of god and assert our own revenge, we act out of limited knowledge and finite ability. When we leave it up to God He will use the full resource of heaven and eternity to avenge evil.

Life is much simpler when we live “The Golden Rule” and do unto others as we would have them do unto us. When we do that we don’t have to keep score. It isn’t always easy, but it can be amusing to see how God keeps score.

Speaking of keeping score; people around you, particularly unbelievers are keeping track of the way you respond to difficult people. How do you score?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, teach me to love and not to seek revenge on those who mistreated me. Grant me the grace to love those who do evil against me and to trust you to avenge me. Amen.

Message: When we assume the position of god and assert our own revenge, we act out of limited knowledge and finite ability. When we leave it up to God He will use the full resource of heaven and eternity to avenge evil.

Affirmation: It is not easy to resist avenging evil on our own but I have learned to trust God to avenge me. He is much wiser and has more resources than me.

Reflection: Think of some examples of how you can apply "The Golden Rule" when responding to others. Should we "keep score" even when we are responding in the right way?

Day Twenty Five

Teaches Us How To Overcome Evil

If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.

– Romans 12:20-21

Any normal person is going to show kindness to their friends, but there is something abnormal about treating your enemies with kindness. In fact, we believe that if we give them kindness they will take advantage of us. That is the natural way of thinking.

God calls us to think in terms of the way of the kingdom of God rather than the way of man. When we live in kingdom reality our motivation comes from an entirely different perspective. Our motivation is love, which is others centered, rather than vindicating ourselves which is self-centered.

Paul concludes this teaching segment with, "Do not be overcome with evil." When we return kindness for evil we are breaking the cycle of evil producing evil. We start a new cycle of good producing good and then we have "overcome evil with good."

Are you ready for a challenge? The next time someone treats you badly or falsely accuses you look them right in the eye and sincerely apologize saying something like, “I didn’t realize I had offended you, what can I do to make it right?”

Try it – you might be surprised at the response you get.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for thinking of all the bad things I could to those who have mistreated me. Grant me the grace of your love so that I will return kindness to those who have not treated me well. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: When we live in kingdom reality our motivation comes from an entirely different perspective. Our motivation is love, which is others centered, rather than vindicating ourselves which is self-centered.

Affirmation: My response to evil is motivated by God's love. That is why I will overcome to evil with kindness.

Reflection: It is easy to talk about taking the high road, but it is much more difficult to do, particularly when you are being falsely accused. What would be a good way to return kindness to someone who falsely accuses you?

Day Twenty Six

Crossing Over From Death to Life

I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. – John 5:24

Born into a world filled with decaying and dyeing things we were destined for the same fate. Then Jesus came to change it all.

This very interesting passage says three things that I want to point out. First, that Jesus was sent with a specific objective. That is, Jesus was sent to bring people from death and dyeing to hope and eternal life. The words he spoke were from eternity. He said, "I did not speak of my own accord but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it."

The second word to notice is this; "whoever *hears* my word." God is speaking through Christ and is presenting the way to eternal life. In order for us to receive his blessing we must first "*hear*."

Finally, Jesus continues, "... and *believes* him who sent me has eternal life." Hearing leads to understanding and understanding leads to believing. When we believe we release the eternal

life that is contained in the words of promise spoken by Jesus.

Hearing and believing the words of Christ calls us to step out in faith and commit ourselves to His word. When His word combines with our faith the spark of eternity is lit in us and He gives us eternal life.

Prayer: Father, I thank you for the words of life spoken by Jesus. Grant me the grace to live in faith and trust you for eternal life. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Hearing and believing the words of Christ calls us to step out in faith and commit ourselves to His word. When His word combines with our faith the spark of eternity is lit in us and He gives us eternal life.

Affirmation: I have heard His word and I have believed in Jesus, the Christ and I have crossed over from death to life.

Reflection: Take some time to reflect on the three things that are said about receiving eternal life in our Scripture passage: 1) Jesus was sent from God; 2) He speaks to those who will hear; 3) Those who hear and believe cross over into eternal life.

Day Twenty Seven

We Have Hope In Times Of Sorrow

A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

– John 16:21-22

No one will claim that there is joy and comfort in pain, but most of us will agree that those things that have given us the most joy and comfort have come at great cost and pain. Jesus uses the example of the birth of a child – there is no joy in the delivery itself, but just moments afterward there is great joy and peace.

In this passage Jesus was addressing the fact that he would soon be leaving the disciples and they were sad. Most of us can relate, remembering a time when we too were facing an eminent loss and were saddened.

I clearly remember the day my father died even though it was over 40 years ago. I remember who was in the room and I remember his last words as well as my words to him as he passed from this life to the next. There was great sorrow that day, but there was also hope.

Jesus was reminding his disciples that their joy was not in his departure, but it was in the hope of his return. He was telling them that pain for a short time was necessary to release the eternal joy that would come.

Endure the pain and receive the joy.

Prayer: Lord, I do not look forward to suffering, but I do look past the suffering to the promised joy. Grant me the grace to endure the suffering that I might participate in the joy. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Jesus was reminding his disciples that their joy was not in his departure, but it was in the hope of his return. He was telling them that pain for a short time was necessary to release the eternal joy that would come.

Affirmation: We are not promised to free of grief in this life but we are promised great joy if will continue in faith through the times of grief.

Reflection: It is interesting that Jesus would use the analogy of the pain of birth to give hope in the pain of his leaving the disciples. Has there been a time in your life when you were going through great difficulty but you continued in faith and then came time of great joy?

Day Twenty Eight

The Word Of Jesus Is Our Peace

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts... Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

– Colossians 3:15-17

Christ himself is the word of God incarnate and His words are the very words of God. When the words of Christ (God) dwell in us then there is a peace that makes our lives rich and full of His joy.

There is a concept introduced here that should present a model for our life. It is this; "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

That line of instruction means many things to us, but probably the most important thing it means to us is that we should not do anything that we could not imagine Jesus doing. Remember the *WWJD* bracelets a few years ago?

There are some places that it just would not be appropriate to say, "I am going there in the name of the Lord." There are some activities that we just could not say, "I am doing this in the name of the Lord." There are some words we use that we just can not say, "I am saying this in the name of the Lord."

If our peace comes from the Word of God, both the living (Jesus) and the written, then we should live so that all we do or speak can carry the blessing of the name of the Lord Jesus.

It may be time to do a little self-examination and ask yourself concerning the things you do, the places you go and the things you say, "WWJD" (What Would Jesus Do).

Prayer: Lord, grant me the grace of a life which carries the blessing of the name of the Lord in all that I do or say. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Our peace comes from the Word of God, both the living (Jesus) and the written, therefore we should live so that all we do or speak can carry the blessing of the name of the Lord Jesus.

Affirmation: In everything I do and say I first consider if this is what Jesus would have me say or do.

Reflection: It might be a good time to examine your daily walk to see if you are able to do all that you do in the name of the Lord. Considering the places you go, the things you do, and the things you say, can you say with confidence, "This is what Jesus would do?"

Day Twenty Nine

Knowledge Of Him Releases Divine Power

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. – 2 Peter 1:3

Some people have only learned that there is salvation from punishment through faith in the blood of Christ, but there is so much more to be learned from the word of God that affects our quality of life. We call those folks "fire escape Christians" – they only know enough about God to escape judgment.

Peter tells us that divine power is released to us through knowledge of Him and His word. That divine power enables us to live in such a way that his glory and goodness is seen in us.

One reason why so many "fire escape Christians" have such a problem living in a way that others recognize the Christ in them is that they are full of all sorts of knowledge, but they know very little about what God has prepared to be released through them.

We know so much about our jobs, our hobbies, our sports, and we know so little about the God of glory who has released his divine power to

those who will make the effort to increase their knowledge of him.

Knowledge of Him releases His glory and goodness in our life. Divine Power is released in us through knowing Him. Get the picture? Get to know him and gain divine power!

Prayer: Lord, fill my heart with a desire to know you more. I ask that your word become a priority in my life and that I gain a knowledge of you that will release divine power to live worthy of the calling of Christ Jesus. In Jesus name, amen.

Message: Knowledge of Him releases His glory and goodness in our life. Divine Power is released in us through knowing Him. Get the picture? Get to know him and gain divine power!

Affirmation: As my knowledge of Him increases my relationship with him deepens, my faith grows and His power, glory and goodness is released in my life.

Reflection: It would be good to take an inventory of your knowledge base. Do you know more about your job, your hobbies, sports and politics than you do about God? Here is a quick test: How many statistics can you quote about your favorite team or player? How man Scripture passages can you quote? Just asking.

Day Thirty

God Is Present In Our Time Of Need

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes, with your right hand you save me. – Psalm 138:7

Many years ago our family was going through a time of horrendous trial. I had gone through open heart surgery and five weeks later I had another heart attack. My wife had been diagnosed with breast cancer and our 11 year old son had been falsely accused of a horrible crime.

Many nights we would lay in bed holding hands, crying and pray ourselves to sleep. In those dark days all we had to hold on to was the word of God and His faithfulness to His word.

I have known people who have faced a similar time in their life and in the midst of the trial they gave in and said, "What's the use?" There were times we felt that way, but by the grace of God we held firm and trusted His faithfulness.

In time My wife was healed of the cancer, our son was vindicated and now, many years later, my heart is being restored.

I can say with David; Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes and with your right hand you save me." Hallelujah!

Take heart my friend. When walking through the valley of trouble do not despair for God is going through the valley with you and that is our guarantee that in His time we will come out on the other side whole and well.

Prayer: Father, I am grateful that you have shown yourself to be faithful. I know that regardless of how difficult the trial I can trust you to bring me through. Thank You. Amen.

Message: When walking through the valley of trouble do not despair for God is going through the valley with you and that is our guarantee that in His time we will come out on the other side whole and well.

Affirmation: When I am walking in the valley I have the confidence of knowing that He is walking through the valley with me and he will bring me safely through it.

Reflection: Have you gone through times of difficulty? Did you turn to Jesus for your strength, or did you try to make it on your own? How can you be prepared to make it through tough times and keep your faith intact?