



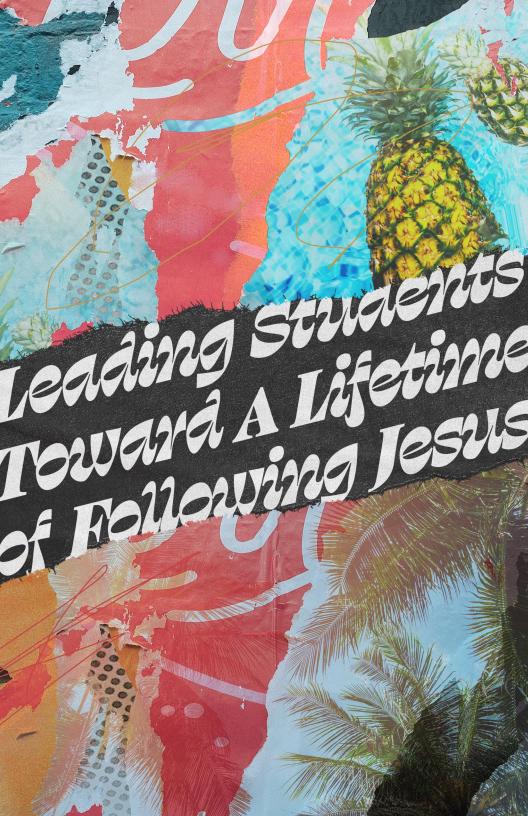
#### THIS SUMMER IS ABOUT TO BE THE SUMMER OF A LIFETIME!

We are all about leading students toward a lifetime of following Jesus and we know that life starts now. We want this summer to be filled with fun and excitement and memories and so much more! And we also want this summer to be filled with time spent with Jesus and spent in God's Word.

That's why we're so excited about this devotional guide. Over the next 100 Days, we are going to journey together through God's Word. These verses are some of the most searched-for verses in the Bible, many of them feel familiar to us, but we want to take some time to read them with fresh eyes this summer. Over these 100 Days, we are going to read from parts of the entire Bible. Think of this as like a summer crash course hitting some major highlights of the whole story of God's Word.

And we haven't even gotten to the best part—every single one of these devotionals was written entirely by FSM students! That's right. We are so excited about this project because it was assembled completely by students for students. We pray it is an encouragement in your faith this summer, and we pray that it helps you have the summer of a lifetime!

-The FSM Staff



# PHILIPPIANS 1:6 ESV

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

The devil is always trying to make us lose faith in God and His promises, and he's really good at getting in our heads and manipulating our emotions. In Philippians 1:6, Paul reassures us that no matter how we feel or what we think, if God has started working in us, He will NEVER stop. My walk with Christ has always been something that I overthink. I tend to dwell too much on whether or not I'm good enough to be a Christian, if I'm living out my faith the way I'm supposed to, if God could really love me as much as He says He does, etc., and it has distanced me from God more often than I'd like to admit. But the truth is, God has already taken care of everything. Jesus died and rose and conquered sin and death! He knew every sin I would ever commit and died for them all. He promises that once He has started working in someone He'll never stop, He'll never give up. Even when I can't feel Him, even when I doubt, even when I mess up, He's still there, working inside me. Nothing we do can change His love and his plan for us. We can have confidence and find peace in that promise. He has a plan for every one of us, all we have to do is have faith in it. He'll take care of the rest. Pretty incredible, isn't it?

Take time today to reflect on all the work that God has already done in your life and rest in the knowledge that he will never stop working in you, by His Spirit, to transform you more into the image of His Son.

> WRITTEN BY Ann Freeman



# **JOHN 10:10** ESV

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

This verse means that the devil only comes around to distract you from what is really important. In this passage Jesus is saying that the devil is doing bad things and Jesus came to save us from our sin. I think it is cool that God sent his own son to save us even though we are nowhere near perfect. I have seen this in my own life because He can save and meet us where we are. I hope that this motivates you to grow closer to God today!

Take time to reflect on ways that the devil may have been distracting you from God's abundant life recently. Pray to God and ask him to help you overcome or reject those things so that you can live the abundant life today.



# PROVERBS 3:5-6 ESV

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

This verse is Solomon talking about the wise and the living. As Christians, we can't just declare that we trust in God; We have to act on that decision too. You learn to trust God through every situation and all of the ups and downs presented in your life, and you further have to understand that God is there to take it all into his hands. Sometimes people may say they trust in G but still rely on their wisdom instead of FULLY trusting with ALL their hearts to Him. When you give your whole heart and trust to God, the path of your life will be more joyous and filled with light. Sometimes it's hard to put all of your trust in God. At this time last year, there was a point where I was very overwhelmed with the things going on in my life. I kept telling myself that I could do it on my own, and it would all work itself out, and I would stay very closed off, trying to fight my battles on my own. Finally, at one of our services, the topic of "Trusting in GOD" was presented. That service spoke very loud to me due to my personal experiences at the time, and it made me realize that's exactly what I needed to do... give all my trust in the LORD that HE will guide me in the right direction. That is exactly what I did, and my heart started feeling more joy and happiness. There are always going to be problems in our lives. When these problems happen, it might make us wonder how we can trust God when it seems like nothing is going right for us. But when you give your whole heart to GOD and TRUST that he will guide you in the right ways... he will. You will come out of any situation feeling better, knowing you always have him with you.

Next time you are feeling down, talk to GOD and have no doubt that he is with you.



#### **PSALM 1** ESV

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

This chapter to me means that we should strive for true righteousness and wholeness through God. In this passage, the Psalmist is saying that the person who walks in righteousness shall be blessed, but the person who walks in the ways of this world will face destruction. Ultimately the Psalmist is saying that true fulfillment is found only through God. I think it is so cool that God is patient, loving, and wants what is best for us. I know that I have seen God exhibit these characteristics in my life because He has continued to guide me and hold my hand. He has also continued to show patience for me even during times I may have been impatient with Him. God does not want to limit us or make us feel as though we are being controlled, but he emphasizes the importance of righteousness purposefully so that we can be protected and walk with Him. I hope this encourages you today!

What would it look like for your life to be "like a tree planted by streams of water"? How can you begin to reflect the life of the righteous person in Psalm 1?

WRITTEN BY Ava Walker



# ISAIAH 26:3 ESV

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

This is one of my favorite verses because it describes how God gives us peace, even if the world around us is full of conflict. This verse is telling us that when we trust God and put Him first, we don't need to worry about the things of this world, since they are temporary. Whenever I am anxious about something, I can often feel the peace of God as I realize that He is in control and I have nothing to fear. I'm so thankful that we have a God of peace, who is our Rock and fortress no matter the circumstances

Take some time now to reflect over what might be giving you anxiety or worry today and practice giving it to God in prayer.

> WRITTEN BY Ally Hamaker



#### MATTHEW 5:16 ESV

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

This verse is really important because it talks about how we are supposed to be lights for others. In the verse before, Jesus talks about not hiding your light, because it will, "give light to all who are in the house." God made us to be hearers and doers of his Word (James 1:22). We have Jesus' light inside of us, we just have to be proud and let it shine so we can give light to all of those around us. This is important to me because sometimes, I don't want to be different. I'm afraid of what others may think of me, but that's not what's important. God loves you and made you so you can be yourself and show his light to everyone around you!

In what ways can you be a "light" today? How can you shine a light on the gospel in your day-to-day actions this week?

WRITTEN BY Ada Peeples



## EPHESIANS 4:32 ESV

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

This verse outlines how we should treat others. We should treat people just as Jesus treated us which is in a kind, compassionate and forgiving way. It also reminds me of the very popular WWJD bracelets. So many people wear those and this is a verse that supports what Jesus would do—He is kind, compassionate, and forgiving so we should be too! Take a second and stop and reread that. Jesus is kind, compassionate, and forgiving to you. He has demonstrated his kindness and compassion and forgiveness to you directly, and now you get reflect those same characteristics to others! I hope this verse can serve as a reminder to you on how to treat others. Jesus should be the example of how we love and treat other people!

Is there anyone in your life that you do not treat in a way outlined in this verse? How can you extend these traits to them?

> WRITTEN BY Emily Braunfisch



## MICAH 6:8 ESV

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

This verse means that as Christians, the best thing for us is to walk humbly (no pride) with God by seeking Him through the Scriptures and letting Him guide us in our daily life and decisions. In this passage, Micah, the prophet, is telling us that building our foundation with God actually helps us love kindness and do justice. I think it is so cool that with God working in our lives, we have the power to show kindness to everyone around us and to do right by others, especially caring for widows, orphans, and the poor. I know that I have seen God's goodness and kindness in my life by giving me a loving family and group of friends, plus so much more! I hope this encourages you today!



Praying that you have a GOOD day by walking humbly with God, loving kindness and doing justice!

# ROMANS 8:38-39 ESV

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In our world today, it feels like there are so many things fighting against us, especially as Christians. These verses are a beautiful reminder to us as Christians that no matter the trials and tribulations, God's love and promises to us are the ultimate victory. How comforting is it that we can look at anything, the good or the bad, and know that the Lord is using everything for His glory! The last part of this verse is very reassuring as well. Nothing will be able to separate us from God's love. Even if we face trials and don't do everything right, His love is always there to pick us back up for those who truly turn to Him. Live in His ultimate victory today!

Go out in confidence to a world that may seem against you. In Him, you have the ultimate assurance that eternal life and love waits for you in heaven, so spread the truth, even in the face of fear.



## PROVERBS 17:17 ESV

#### A friend loves at all times; a brother is born for adversity.

This verse has held a special place in my heart for the last 3 years, because it was the remembrance verse of the passing of my cousin Clay. The author of Proverbs is suggesting that the friend and the brother are the same person, and that we as friends "level up" to a close, brotherly standard when we are the person who is supportive, understanding, and patient with our friends through their adversities. Whether you know someone going through a loss of a family member, health problems, trouble at home, problems with grades, or literally anything that is stressful or sorrowful, I pray that you would be the friend, brother, or sister who wouldn't walk away. Stay when it's emotionally uncomfortable. Check up on your friends, share their burdens, and be diligent about it. It doesn't have to be awkward or prying. Just ask if there's anything you can do for or pray for them about. General prayers for the unspoken requests should be our go-to response for anyone we see hurting. However, if you are the one feeling socially isolated, stressed, tempted, or weighed down by the responsibilities and pressure of being who you are, you always have a friend. It's not cheesy or cliche, because our friendship with Jesus is so incredibly genuine! Know that Jesus is right there with you and wants to help you if you only let him.

Who can you be a committed friend to today? Who do you know that needs some encouragement? Take time right now to pray for them and then send them an encouraging text or even a letter!

WRITTEN BY Claire Chapman



## HEBREWS 4:12 ESV

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.

God wants us to live by His word. He not only wants us to live by his word, but he wants his word to live out in our lives. When we live by God's word, it gives us the power to overcome sin, have clean thoughts, and focus our hearts on the Father.

How are you allowing God's word to change your life?



## LUKE 24:27 ESV

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Ever felt hopeless or like you have no meaning? That is probably how the disciples felt after Jesus was crucified. They didn't know where to turn or what to do next, but little did they know... this was just the beginning. If you feel like you are lost and don't know where to go, look for Jesus. He wants to lead your life and give you purpose. Trust that he has the perfect plan for you!

How can you trust God's plan for your life?



# **JOSHUA 1:9** ESV

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

This verse is encouraging because it reminds us to rely on Him because nothing is impossible for God. For some historical context: Joshua is about to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land after the death of Moses. God is reassuring Joshua that he is not alone and if they trust Him then they will succeed. The author is telling us the same! While I was in junior high, during COVID, my mental health suffered. I will admit that during the process I didn't want to lean on God, so I spent two years struggling even more because I refused to give my problem to Him. Now I am slowly learning to lean on Him. God is giving me the courage to be real about my emotions and how I deal with my mental health. I encourage all of you to rely on God when you are weak. Even if it is just a devotion a day or remembering to acknowledge his presence because a little effort will build into a passion for God!

Is there an area of your life where you are frightened or dismayed or discouraged? Cry out to God right now and remember that he is with you wherever you go and because he is strong and he is with you, you can have courage.

> WRITTEN BY Bailee Jeffus



#### HEBREWS 4:16 ESV

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

This verse means that we can approach God with confidence knowing that we'll receive mercy and grace to help us in tough times. I am thankful that we have a God who is here to help us through the ups and downs in our lives and that He understands our pain. I know that I saw God move whenever Paxton, my brother, was physically fighting for his life to get back to us; however God had other plans. After Paxton passed away, I found it hard to trust God because the situation made it feel like God had broken our relationship, and I wanted to turn away from him. But I couldn't. In the past few months, many people have helped my family through our grief and I started to grow closer to God after Winterchill. He has taught me how to draw near when I've needed him and I know even at my lowest point he is still accessible. I hope that this encourages you to never stop praying and trusting Him, because He is the only One who truly understands your pain.

In what way do you need God's mercy and grace today? Take time to draw near to Him right now in prayer.



## 1 TIMOTHY 4:12 ESV

Let no one despise you for your youth but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.

Many times, young believers feel unqualified to serve the Kingdom. This feeling of inadequacy could come from countless sources. But specifically, it might come from your age. I believe that the devil uses this feeling of disqualification because of our age to discourage us from serving the Kingdom. The beautiful thing is that we are all created equally and are unified through the grace of God. So, age does not mean superiority in the family of believers. As we continue in our lives, we need to remember what Paul tells us. We need to remember that the Lord can use our lives to glorify him and expand his Kingdom! Even as high-schoolers or junior highers, we are called to set an example to others in the way we talk, act, love, pursue and exhibit our faith, and how we keep ourselves pure. We are not second-class citizens in the kingdom, by God's grace, we can lead the way in showing others what it looks like to follow Jesus!

Begin to reflect on what areas you have used your age as an excuse to not set an example to the believers. Ask God to reveal those areas in your life and ask Him to work in you, and through you.



#### ROMANS 12:2 ESV

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

This verse is one of my absolute favorites, and it has stuck with me for a while now. It encourages us to keep our faith in Him, and not in the world. I love how God empowers us to keep a clear mind and clean heart through Paul's wise words. God really spoke to me through this verse by showing it to me a few months before I was put into a very hard environment, one that makes it challenging to publicly follow Jesus. I really hope this encourages you to step into God's love and trust Him to give you peace and faith to follow Him!

Take time to dwell over this verse and ask yourself if you think you have been transformed in the renewing of your mind. Then, ask God for an abundance of peace and faith in tribulation!

WRITTEN BY Hannah Greeson



## ROMANS 10:9-10 ESV

...because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

This verse to me means that you don't have to keep trying to win approval from God and earn your way to heaven—all you have to do is believe in your heart and confess with your mouth. I like that Paul shares this because sometimes you feel pressured to do things to sort of "win God over" and although it is great when you do good things, they aren't what makes you saved. This makes me feel peace in my heart knowing that I am loved by God regardless of what I do. It is only by his power and grace that I am saved!

Who in your life can you share this message with? Do you know someone who you can begin praying for that they will one day soon confess Jesus as their savior?

#### WRITTEN BY Gunner Pruett



#### JAMES 5:16 ESV

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

This verse means a lot to me because it says that we should confess our sins to each other. Not a lot of people have the courage to do this. Maybe you are too shy to share, or you think people will judge you for who you are after you share. That's okay, God is there with you and he is there to listen. God says to pray for each other through these hard trials and tribulations. No matter how you think people will react, I have one thing to say, share. Sharing your sin is like getting rid of a burden that has been weighing you down for a long time. This passage also says that the prayer of a righteous person is strong and effective, so seek for many righteous people in your life, and they will pray for you and your sins. God has used this very verse in my life countless times. Many of my sins have been too hard to bear, so I shared them with my family and pastors, and their prayers have changed the course of my life. I leave you with this, know that if you ask for prayers, people will respond with strong, righteous, and effective prayers. I hope this encourages you to let go of sins that you have been holding in and share them with others.

Take a moment to reflect right now, is there a sin that you've been hiding? Something that keeps tripping you up that you wish God would heal in you? First, pray to God about it and then reach out to a trusted friend or maybe your D-Group leader and confess it and ask for their prayers! Then walk in the peace and freedom of God's forgiveness!

WRITTEN BY Grayson Younkman



# PSALM 103:1 ESV

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Have you ever wanted to do something so badly that you just were bursting at the seams to do it? That's the way we should be when we have the opportunity to worship God! When we walk into God's presence, all that matters should be blessing who he is! He has given us so much; in response, we get to bless His name!

How can you bless the Lord today?



# EPHESIANS 6:12-13 ESV

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Ephesians 6:12-20 is a passage I find very impactful because God calls us his army, he declares us worthy of fighting for him. In this verse, Paul is telling us that the Lord wants us to speak the truth of God boldly for he is our armor and protection from evil. And that our fight is not with those around us but rather with the struggles of temptation and sin. Personally, I think it's so great God already considers us a part of his army, as if it isn't a question, we are still worthy to him no matter what we could ever do. The Lord has worked in so many ways throughout my life. When I get knocked down he always allows me to be the bigger person and fight with his word for those who've hurt me instead of retaliating in my grief. I truly hope his armor has been as thick in your life as it's been in mine!

Have you experienced the warfare the Paul describes here in Ephesians 6? How has God's armor protected you in that battle? Be encouraged today to put on the full armor of God and pray for his strength.



# EPHESIANS 5:15-16 ESV

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil.

The first time I read this verse, it appeared to me to be a warning against spending your time poorly; however, after reflection, I decided it would be better taken as an encouragement. We have a limited amount of time, and every moment is an opportunity. "The day is evil" doesn't mean we should act like vampires and hide in the dark, it means that we live in a sinful world. We are given the opportunity to show God's love to a world that is otherwise left in the dark. If we earnestly seek to serve the Lord, he will provide us with opportunities to serve and love, look for these as you go throughout your day.

As you go throughout your day today, look for at least one specific way you can show God's love to someone around you!

> WRITTEN BY Ethan Keller



## GALATIANS 2:20 ESV

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

When Jesus died on the cross, He buried the penalty of sin with Him. Jesus bore the punishment we deserve for our fleshly desires, and because of this, we now have a new life in Christ. Our old life of sin is dead, and we can walk in the new fruitful life we have in Christ. We can only live on the solid foundation of God's truth; our own desires will fail us every single time. Jesus says in John 14 that He is the only way. Trust today that because Jesus was gracious and loving enough to take on the fleshly desires of the world that if you would believe that is so, you can walk in the abundant new life that God has for you, and to glorify Him through your words, thoughts, and actions to yourself and others.



What is one way that I can show the love Jesus showed me on the cross to someone today?



## PROVERBS 4:23 ESV

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

This verse has taught me a lot about what I shouldn't take from the world, like thoughts, words, and emotions, and instead what to replace them with from God and His Word. In this verse, we are told that we should guard what we accept to be true in our hearts, in case it is misleading or untrue, because it affects our life in everything we do. I think it is so cool that God is protective of us and our hearts, knowing that it affects our lives and others. I know that I have seen God protect me because of the way He steers me to what is good and of Him, instead of what is questionable and of the world. I hope this encourages you today!

Pray to God to help Him guard your heart. Spend more time with Him daily and try to be aware of how the world around you affects you and your spiritual values.

> WRITTEN BY Lucy Coon



#### ISAIAH 43:19 ESV

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Every year, I am amazed at how quickly spring arrives. Trees, which have been bare and dead for months, slowly begin to flower. If you aren't paying attention, it's easy to miss the small green buds cropping up on the formerly dead branches. You blink, and all of a sudden, Arkansas is in full bloom. This always serves as a reminder to me of God's good timing and plan. It may take rain to bring it about, but He is always working for our good and His glory in ways that are impossible to anticipate. In Isaiah 43:19, God proclaims to His people "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." I experienced this in my own life recently when I went on a mission trip with my school. Originally destined for Peru, political turmoil rendered the trip too dangerous. However, God provided for our team, rerouting us to Mexico. What at first seemed to be a mistake and a disappointment turned out to be an incredible blessing for all of us. I would not trade the relationships built there, the lessons learned, and the prayers answered for anything. God's plan was higher and better than any of us could have imagined.

I would like to encourage you today to look around for God's plan in your own life. While it may be confusing at times, I promise that He is always working and that His plans are always good. Pray for the eyes to His magnificent handiwork around you. He is making a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert — you don't want to miss it!

WRITTEN BY Avery Walker



# 1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 ESV

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

God calls us to be strong in our faith no matter what's going on in the world. Serving and coming to church to serve God's purpose can be difficult at times and being busy is not uncommon especially for teenagers at our age. Sometimes we have a lot going on in our lives with school, relationships, jobs, sports, and a host of other time-consuming activities. Distractions and temptations to ignore the Lord are everywhere and it's very easy to get sidetracked and ignore the Lord's calling. Make sure that you make time for the Lord's work (serving, attending church, spreading the gospel, etc.). And know that even in the busiest times of our lives when it seems like God's work for you is not fruitful, He has a plan and is still moving in you, even when you feel like He's not.

What is one way that you can "abound" in the work of the Lord today? Is there something you feel the Lord has been calling you to do recently that you've been putting off? Decide that today is the day!

Lucy Catherine Carter



## EPHESIANS 5:1 ESV

Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children.

This verse is a great reminder for everyone. In this passage, Paul is saying that because God made us in his image, we should strive to be like Him. It's interesting that Paul expresses this. It's such a common thought, but it's so good to remember. As we are obedient to our parents and see them as a good example, we should do the same for God. He is, in fact, our creator and the best example for us to follow. This is a challenge for me because I tend to want to do things my way and I want control. However, I've realized over time that following God and His word has been so much better for me than what I did before. It continues to be a challenge, but I encourage you to strive for this.

Take some time right now to reflect on God's character. What is one way that you want to imitate that character in your life today? Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you live that out!

WRITTEN BY Loren Kim



## **REVELATION 21:1-4** ESV

Then I saw a new heaven and earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

John is saying that one day, the last day, the border between Heaven and Earth will pass away. Heaven will be on earth and the earth as we know it now will be changed completely. God will dwell with man for eternity and clear the world, and its inhabitants, of all iniquities. I find it so reassuring that God makes a promise like that to us! I think we can bring a little bit of that Heaven to earth by spreading the gospel and being a tangible presence of Jesus for others by meeting the needs of our community. I believe I saw some of Heaven on Earth in the days after the tornado tore through Little Rock. There were so many people out helping in any way they could and just showing God's love even though it was such a challenging time! And just like after the tornado, as people's tears were being wiped away by family members, loved ones, and even—in some cases—strangers, one day God promises that he will wipe away every tear ever shed over wrongdoing and wickedness. And that's good news!

Today, ask yourself how you can bring a little of Heaven to those around you! Do a kind thing for someone today!



## MARK 10:45 ESV

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

This verse means so much to me. In this passage, Jesus is saying that he came to earth to serve us and pay for our sins. I think it is so cool that God is so loving and caring with us and is so selfless. I know that I have seen God be the lamb at the alter in my life because when I feel like I mess up I can always give it to God and know he has already sent Jesus to pay for the sin I just committed. I hope this encourages you today!

Who can you serve today? Are you going on a mission trip this summer or have you already been on one? What was that serving experience like? Take some time now to reflect on how you can be a Christlike servant to those around you in the coming days, weeks and months.



## ESTHER 4:13-14 ESV

Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

I think a lot of times in our lives, we can fall into a pattern of living each day like we're only half alive. I know for me personally I can categorize days in my life as either meaningful or insignificant. Or big events in my life as bad or good. Lots of times, I just let life get mundane and dull by forgetting that the very fact that I'm alive is a miracle in and of itself. In Esther 4:13-14, Esther learns from her uncle that her people are in danger and that if she stays quiet, blends in, and lives like everyone else then there is no hope for them. He also throws out this one phrase that has become a motto in my life; perhaps this is the moment for which you have been created. Why do we let ourselves fall into a boring pattern of life when this is the day that God has given us to live? Each moment is a moment that he hand-picked and this second could be the very reason you were created. I have had experiences in my life that have been so hard and so unbearable that I can't see how God can even have a reason behind it in my life. However, when I've stepped back and looked at his bigger picture, I've seen areas that he has used me to specifically impact others and grow my faith through things that I found difficult. What we see as worthless, he sees full of worth and purpose. So let your life be a bold reflection everyday of who created you, loves you, and made you for a reason. Because perhaps this is the moment for which you have been created.

What are some areas in your life that you need to see through God's eyes? Where have you forgotten to live for the glory of God?

> WRITTEN BY Lauren Walker



## HEBREWS 10:24-25 ESV

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

The writer of Hebrews is telling us how to be a good friend. We should motivate our friends towards good works. This could look like serving with your friends or encouraging a friend to make a good decision. This verse also says to not neglect meeting together (even over the summer!) We need to spiritually connect with our friends and talk about Jesus because it is encouraging to our souls.



How can you encourage and motivate your friends this week?

WRITTEN BY Kylie Martin



## 1 PETER 5:7 ESV

Casting all your anxieties on Him because He cares for you.

Many people read over this scripture and don't pay attention to the first word, "casting." When Peter wrote this verse, he could have just said "cast," but he didn't. If you look at the verse before, it states, "Humble yourselves therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you" (1 Peter 5:6). We cannot just cast our anxieties on the Lord without first humbling ourselves. I don't know about you, but it's hard to admit anxiety and cast it away. The word "cast" means: to throw out, shed, or register. In our pride, we have a hard time admitting that we have anxiety and fear and a much harder time sharing that with others. That is why God calls us to humble ourselves and then cast these anxieties on Him. See how he doesn't just tell us to cast them out? Because eventually, they will come crawling back. Instead, he says to cast them on Him. Because God is the only one who can bring long-term peace! Peter doesn't just call us to cast our anxiety one time, he uses the present participle of the verb "cast," indicating an ongoing action. Basically, that means we must be continually casting our anxieties and worries on Him. God is the only one who can calm the storm and bring peace to our troubled hearts.

What is keeping you from casting your anxieties on the Lord? What are some ways for you to be continually casting your anxieties on the Lord?

> WRITTEN BY Kailyn Jones



#### RUTH 1:16-17 ESV

But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

In this passage, Ruth is not bound by the law or her culture (she is a Moabite) to follow Naomi to her homeland; however, due to her loyalty, Ruth is willing to leave everything behind in order to follow her motherin-law. The type of loyalty Ruth displayed in these verses is the same type of loyalty that we are called to follow the Lord. In life we often allow our current circumstances to dictate when and to what extent we follow God, when in reality everything should take second place to the Lord's calling on your life. Carefully listen and follow God's plan for your life with the same devotion Ruth followed Naomi.

Reflect on your life and ask the question "what earthly barriers are keeping you from wholeheartedly following Jesus?" What is one practical step you can take towards lowering or removing that barrier?

# JOB 38:4-5 ESV

#### Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?

In my opinion, Job 38-40 is the most awe-inspiring passage in the Bible, and I strongly encourage you to read the whole passage to get a true sense of God's overwhelming power. Today, we will focus on Job 38:4-5 and Job 40:1-5. "Brace yourself like a man... Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?" (Job 38:3-4) God questions, Job revealing how comparatively little "the greatest man among all the peoples of the east" (Job 1:3) actually knew. Job was not alive when God "laid the earth's foundations," and God is the only one who has measured the earth. After being confronted by the overwhelming greatness of God, Job replies, "I am unworthy-how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth," (Job 40:4). Job realizes that nothing he can say will defend him. This position, one of complete humility, is one all people should accept, and one all people will one day realize when they bow before the throne. We as humans are not worthy to even have God speak to us, for we are nothing compared to His overwhelming knowledge and power. And yet God, the same God who sends lightning bolts on their way (Job 38:35), the same God clothes himself with glory, splendor, honor and majesty (Job 40:10), the same God, sent His Son to die, for you and me, that we would no longer be separated from him, but could live with Him for eternity.

Take some time today to look out at the world around you and marvel at the greatness and the power of God. Consider the demonstrations of his power that God lays out in Job 38. Recognize what a mighty and awesome God he is, and then take time to celebrate that this awesome and powerful God wants to know YOU and have a personal relationship with YOU!

### COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 ESV

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Yep, you read it right: whatever you do. In this passage, Paul is giving specific instructions to different parts of a household, and this verse is part of Paul's directions towards bond-servants. However, the words are relevant for us too because the Bible says that we are servants of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:1). Paul reminds us that we aren't working just for earthly pursuits, but we are working for Jesus, and we'll be rewarded in heaven for the good work we do here on earth. God created mankind for the intention of ruling and subduing the earth. God gave Adam and Eve dominion over what He had made, and by enjoying it, taking initiation with it, and working hard on it, they were reflecting the image of God. The same is true for us. When I am a hard worker and a good ambassador with the things God has trusted me with—like schoolwork, or my room, or my relationships with my family or friends-it feels good to know I did my best, but it's also encouraging to remember that God is glorified. Whenever I take my dog out, or lead a worship song, or make my bed, I have to remember that I'm doing it for Him, which changes how I go about it. God has done so much for me, so I want to do my best for Him, in every aspect of my life, whatever I do.

Ask yourself: "Am I working for the Lord? Or am I working to please myself, or for what others think?" As you go about your day, whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability, and know that you're working for Jesus. Praise Him by doing good. Remember that He is proud of you!

WRITTEN BY Olivia Lessel



### **JAMES 1:19-20** ESV

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

In the current age it can be easy to quickly state our opinion at every chance; however, when other people try to tell us their opinions, we quickly shut them down and tell them that they're wrong. We think that our opinion is the only feasible answer, and if they don't agree with us we get angry. This is what culture tells us to do, but what does God tell us to do? God tells us to "be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..." What does this mean? It means that if someone doesn't agree with us we should listen to their side of the argument instead of immediately telling them they're wrong. After all, we don't go around telling non-believers that they're going to hell! We should think about what the Bible says and try to provide the best answer, even if it means admitting that we're wrong. Instead of immediately getting angry at others we are called to lovingly share the truth with them (Ephesians 4:15).

In what area of your life do you tend to be quick to speak and quick to anger? What are some ways that you can put the idea of James 1:19-20 into practice?

## LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23 ESV

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

This verse is not a unique verse in the bible. After all, there are hundreds of verses in the bible that talk about the faithfulness of God and His mercy. The number of verses that say things like this verse has largely desensitized us to these verses, after all, familiarity breeds contempt. I'm sure a lot of you would simply gloss over this verse and think that you get the gist, I know I would. Here's my challenge to you: Don't. Instead, try to dwell on this verse without thinking of any other verses that say similar things. God has endless mercy and compassion for you and that mercy and compassion is continually renewed.

What in your life is so familiar that you take it for granted? Try to realize how important that thing is to you and how bad it would be if that thing was removed. Lastly, always remember that God is willing to forgive you and he accepts that you will make mistakes and is willing to forgive those mistakes. Most importantly don't abuse this mercy but recognize it as an opportunity to draw closer to God each day.



### EXODUS 3:13-15 ESV

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' What shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations."

This verse is really cool to me for many reasons. For one thing, God is telling us who He is. He is telling us that He is the one true God who will be there forever. In our YHWH series, we discussed how God didn't just have love, joy, and other things but instead he was those things. This is God showing us how he is constant and trustworthy. I find it really cool that God tells us one of His most true names and wants us to trust him when we really don't deserve it. At this point in the Bible, God's people have doubted Him so much and yet still here He is showing them how much He wants them to know Him. I know that I have seen God's desire for us to know Him in my life because He has given me opportunity after opportunity to share his word to others. Recently, one of my friends came to me asking why I love going to church so much and what God really does. I found it the perfect opportunity to share His word with her. He wants each and every one of us to spread His word so that we can all have a share of the inheritance He has for His children. I hope this encourages you as you go through your day!

Where are some places you think God wants you to spread his word? How can you take one action step with that today?

### **REVELATION 4:1-8** ESV

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

In these verses, John is describing a vision he had of the day when Jesus will return. It is an amazing thing to think about, this epic vision of incredible detail and beauty. Jesus sits on a magnificent throne, described as having an appearance of "carnelian and jasper". Around the throne, the rainbow, God's symbol that he will never break his promises. The twenty four elders and twenty four thrones are sometimes believed to be the 12 patriarchal leaders of Israel and the 12 apostles. The most thought provoking in my opinion were the four living creatures. All of these praise God, naming him the one who was and is and is to come. It is a very moving image, showing us how God should be praised.

WRITTEN BY Max Carter



## 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20 ESV

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

This verse really highlights God's sovereignty and faithfulness towards us as believers. Paul wrote this verse to encourage and strengthen the church at Corinth in a time of hardship and upheaval. Though we may feel forsaken, forgotten or misunderstood, God's promises never fail. This verse has really stood out to me over the past few years as I changed schools for the sixth and seventh time. No matter how frustrated or trapped I may feel, God promises to be with us always and work everything out for good. As believers we can say "Amen" with exceeding joy knowing that God's got a purpose in everything we go through.

Take some time now to write down a few of God's promises. Search the Scriptures for God's promises and consider how he has kept each one of them for you. Rejoice in God's faithfulness!

WRITTEN BY Mattie Henry



#### PSALM 34:8 ESV

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.* 

To me, this passage means that when you go to the Lord and trust and seek him instead of others, you will find that power comes from him. In this passage, David is saying that if you go to the Lord, satisfaction will come from him. When you trust in him, you will learn about God's protection and love. It is so cool that God is always there to provide for us and protect us. When you rely on God, you'll find that HIS will is better than ours. Within this passage, we learn about thanksgiving in God's protection and his care for those who trust in him. "Tasting and seeing" God's goodness is a metaphor for personal experience with the Lord. I've "tasted" the Lord's goodness through the way he guides me through my battles. For example, the lessons I have learned from friendships and relationships. I hope this encourages you to seek a personal relationship with the Lord through prayer and time in his Word!

How have you "tasted and seen" that God is good through personal experience? Reflect on that now and rejoice in God's goodness! Are there areas of your life where you are tempted to find goodness and satisfaction apart from God? Acknowledge that and ask for his forgiveness.



## JOHN 9:3 ESV

Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."

We live in a world full of broken and hurting people that need Jesus. In this passage, we see a man who was born blind and needed something much more than himself. Then comes Jesus. Jesus came in and changed this man's life in more ways than just his sight. And the same way that Jesus changed this man, he wants to change your life too. Jesus has so much to offer you; He is just waiting for you.

Have you been changed by Jesus? If not, what are you waiting on?



### 1 JOHN 4:16 ESV

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

This verse means to me that when we love others, we are truly living in step with God. God's love never fails. God is love and as his followers, we are meant not only to experience that love for ourselves, but also share that love with others. We are able to do this because God showed his love to us. God cares so much about us that he's willing to do anything—even go to the cross to rescue us from our sins. This is the greatest demonstration of what it means to love. Jesus said that true love looked like laying your life down for your friends, and that's exactly what he did for us.

Have you been walking in love recently? Is your life a demonstration of God's love for others? Take some time now to consider who you could intentionally demonstrate God's love to today.

WRITTEN BY Maggie James



### ROMANS 3:23-24 ESV

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

This verse means to me that no matter how many times we sin, God will always have an unconditional love for us. In this passage Paul is telling us that yes, we are all sinners, yes we have all sinned, but it is okay because God has sent his one and only son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. I think that it is so cool that God is so loving with us. I know I have seen God's unconditional love in my life because when I was younger, I had bad friends but now listening through the word of God it has helped me find better people in my life and God's path that he has made for me. I hope this encourages you today!



With this in mind, what things do you need to do to find yourself closer to God?

WRITTEN BY Bobby Pugh



## ACTS 1:8 ESV

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

In the rest of Acts, we see Paul being obedient to the call that Jesus gave them in the beginning of Acts. He leaves his home in Tarsus to respond and he goes throughout the regions and shares the good news of Christ. These words that Jesus gives in the beginning of Acts are some of His last. These words held a lot of power and authority throughout the rest of the disciples' lives. These words should apply to our lives now. The power they held then can be the same now. Jesus is urging the disciples to continue his work that he did on earth and spread His life to the rest of the World. Our call from Jesus is to Go. We are called to Go and share. There are so many opportunities and people that want to hear that have never heard. Each one of us is a vessel for the Gospel. We have the power from the Holy Spirit to have confidence to step into conversations sharing the Gospel. Jesus calls us to go whether that be locally, nationally or globally. GO and spread it!!

I encourage you to continue to read Acts to see the faithfulness of the Spirit and the power He gives us to share the Gospel and serve others!!



### GALATIANS 6:9 ESV

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

Have you ever thought about giving up? For me, it was when I was on a mission trip recently and we were sharing the gospel with people in the streets and we were facing so much rejection. We were cussed at, spat at, and at best, we were ignored. I was ready to give up because no one would listen, but my friend said to me, "Would you rather jeopardize someone's eternity for five minutes of being uncomfortable?" And I keep thinking about how even though no one would listen to us then, God would send someone after us to do good for those people. Sometimes when you do something good like serving or even doing something in general, you may want to give up. That last part of the verse says, "for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." If we don't give up, good will come out of it. So, maybe the next time you are thinking about giving up on some good work you've been doing, think about Galatians 6:9 and don't.

Is there an area of your life where you've recently seen God produce good fruit after a long time of working on it? Reflect on this today and the next time you are tempted to give up on some good work, remember this area of fruit God produced in you and keep going!



#### PSALM 46 ESV

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth!" The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 46 starts off by saying "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." He gives us shelter and gives us strength, and will always be there for us, especially when we go through a rough patch. When everything feels twisted and upside down, he is the home plate that remains the same, always there to give us a helping hand. A pat on the back. Because God will always be there, we can forever praise his name with no fear. Psalm 46:5 says, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved." When we have God living inside of us, we do not have to be moved and shaken up when we go through a fearsome time. God will continually show up when you are going through your toughest time, and on your best days, you just have to open your eyes and see. Take refuge in Him and know that he will help you no matter how bad your situation may be.

So, how will you take refuge in Jesus, instead of falling into fear?

WRITTEN BY Savannah Shelley



### 1 PETER 5:8 ESV

Be alert and sober mind. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

It seems to me that the times when I am most vulnerable and open to God's Word are the exact times when the devil takes his opportunity to shake my faith through spiritual warfare. No matter the temptation, the anxiety, or the insecurity, we must stand strong in God's Word because it is our refuge against the devil's attacks and we can be confident in it. In this passage, Peter is talking about standing strong and being aware of the calling of God and the support systems that God has placed in our daily lives. As Christians, we need to be spiritually vigilant and watch for attacks from the devil; our great enemy. Peter uses a lion to demonstrate Satan's threat; prowling around seeking to devour someone. Satan hopes that believers will fall deep into sin. Even though we are threatened to be devoured by the devil; we can have complete assurance of God's power. In fact, in the very next verse, Peter tells us that we can resist him. How? By continuing to be open to God's Word and trust in its power.

Do you find yourself not accepting the calling God is giving you? If so, what is one step you can take toward that calling today?



#### ROMANS 6:23 ESV

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We all, as sinners, deserve death—separation from God forever—and because all have sinned, we should not be surprised when others sin, but since we share in the same struggle, our hearts should break and lead us to humility and prayer for them. But with God's gift, Jesus Christ, we have a second chance. A chance to repent. A chance to run back to the Lord from our sinful behavior. A second chance to love Him, because He first loved us. Jesus took all of God's wrath on at once, for us, so that we could have a chance to spend eternity with Him not by our good works but by His. In order to accept his gift, we have to understand that he gave his life for us while we were sinners and that we don't earn it because he earned it for us.

Have you received this free gift of God? If you have, in what ways have you recently been tempted to try to earn God's love and affection? How can you rest in knowing that it is a gift freely given?

written by Ryen Jones



## 1 PETER 4:8 ESV

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

This verse really shows how we can love others as God loved us first. Jesus covered our sins by loving us enough to die on the cross and we can do the same for the people around us. This verse came at a very timely period in many of our lives. While writing this, just a few days ago Central Arkansas went through a devastating tornado. The deep love our community needs is being met with open minds and loving hearts. This really changed my perspective about love, and I hope you feel the same way!

What can you do to love someone around you today?





## 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 ESV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

This verse is truly encouraging. After accepting Christ into your life, you are called a child of the King. That is an encouragement to allow God to transform you into an identity you can truly rejoice in. Before Christ, I used to be selfish, unmotivated, lost, & did not have any help to change those things. Through Jesus, I now strive to be selfless and motivated, & He guides me every step of the way. I found my true identity in Him. I am no longer who I used to be because of God's grace, & that is something worth celebrating! There should be change in your life after Christ becomes your biggest priority.

Take some time to reflect, maybe even journal on the following question: In what specific ways has God changed you?

Reagan McCartney



#### GENESIS 12:1-3 ESV

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

In this chapter an account is given of the call of Abram to depart from his own country, with a promise of a divine blessing found in Genesis 12:1-3. In these verses, we see that God made a choice of Abram, and singled him out from among his people, that he might reserve a people for himself, among whom his true worship might be maintained till the coming of Christ. I know that I have seen God be very gracious and kind to me in my life. He has never left me through all of the challenges in my life. He has always had His hand on me whatever the situation/circumstance was. He does this to make His name great. Let us remember that God does not and will never change His mind or back out on His promises. When Jesus takes control of our lives, we become part of God's family forever and also inherit the same divine blessing found in these verses. No matter how messy our lives get or how troubled our hearts are, God does not abandon us. I hope this encourages you today!

God says His love is unshakable, how does that make you feel? Does it affect how you interact with Him? Spend some time in prayer and tell God how you feel.



#### JEREMIAH 29:11 ESV

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

This verse means that God has got me. In this passage, Jeremiah is saying God has a life for me, he knows every move I will make and mistake I will make but he has a plan for me. I am a servant of God, and because of that he will use me in his way to help prepare his way. Because I know he has a plan for me I can rest in fact that I am here for a reason, I am wanted and I have a purpose. And so do you! One way I know for a fact this is true was when one of my best friends got hurt. I normally hang out with this best friend at youth but because she was hurt she wasn't there. When I went to youth that coming Sunday one of my other best friends was there. God gave me comfort and happiness by bringing one of my best friends to youth when I was feeling down. Just this little moment alone shows that God shows up for me during the little moments and the big life moments. I hope you know you are here on this Earth for a reason and that God has got you always!

How have you seen God show up for you?

WRITTEN BY Vivian Huff



### COLOSSIANS 4:2 ESV

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

I love the practical verses. It's like God is handing us a guide to living a happy, fulfilled, full and authentic life! First, he says to pray. Prayer is so important to me, because I literally don't know how I'd survive without it. When I'm really struggling, I ask for His presence. Sometimes it feels like He's not answering, and that's where being watchful comes in for me, because I forget to relax and look for Him working. The last part is easy after those two--I'm incredibly grateful for everything God has brought me through. Sometimes, I still have to practice being watchful to find what I'm thankful for in other parts of my life, so then I make a list of everything that made me smile that day. You know, He made everything, so I can thank Him for all of it :)

What's on your gratitude list?



#### HEBREWS 11:1 ESV

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

This verse is one of my favorites in the whole Bible. In the verse the author of Hebrews is saying that the only way to believe is through faith. For instance, you can't see your brain, and you can't feel it either, but you know it's there. That's faith. We are saved by faith alone (sola fide), and that's awesome. There was a time when I was having struggles with temptations in my life. I prayed to God. I believed He would help me get through this, and He did. I honestly in my heart had faith that he would help me through my temptation, and because of my faith He was there. We have to have faith in God. Even when we are scared, or when we are worrisome, or even when we feel He is not with us. He is. God makes promises to us and He is perfect and will not break them. I hope this was encouraging!

If you are struggling with your faith, seek God. Even when you feel like He is not there, seek Him and pray. That's faith. Even if it's small, it will grow with time. God Bless and have an amazing day!



### GENESIS 1:26-28 ESV

Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth,' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

This verse means God created us to rule over all the other things that he created. God created all things, but only one thing was created in his image. The only thing that was created in his image was humanity. We are set apart to be like God in the world. In this passage, the Lord is saying just this. I think it is so awesome that God created us to be individuals. I know I have seen this in my own life because everyone I know is unique in their own way. When I think of my friends, they are all different, some are athletic, some are funny or goofy. God made them all different in their own way, but we are united in our purpose: to be image-bearers of God in the world!

My challenge for you today is to begin to learn how your friends might differ from you but also notice their attributes that resemble God. Think in your own life how you can represent God through your own unique gifts and talents.



## 2 CHRONICLES 7:14 ESV

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

This verse to me, means that God will always listen to your prayers no matter what they are. In this passage the Lord is saying that he wants everyone to pray to him no matter what. I think it is so cool that God will always forgive us for our sins. I know that I have seen God forgive us because in my life I have seen so many people go from being so low to being the happiest in the room because of God. I hope this encourages you to spend time in prayer with God today.



Spend time praying this verse as a prayer to God today.

WRITTEN BY Molly Bell



## 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18 ESV

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

This verse means that the closer we get to God, we are becoming a new person, and that when we get to heaven, all our faith will outweigh the sins we've done. It says we fix our eyes on what is happening in our lives that is temporary. God is telling us to focus on what is right now in our lives but no matter how much we mess up, we will be renewed and forgiven. I think it is amazing that God forgives us no matter what if we repent. I know that I have seen God bringing me closer to him so I can be forgiven and live eternally with him!

How can you take steps to focus more on eternal/unseen things today?

WRITTEN BY Caroline Hill



### 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 ESV

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

This verse means to always be thankful even in bad situations. In the passage, I like that it he said to give thanks because it is a reminder to always take a moment to thank him for all things he does in our life because it is Christ's work. I know I have seen God in my life when I did not make a team that I wanted to. That was a blessing in disguise for me because I had so much going on at the time. I know now that I was so blessed for that to happen because it saved me mentally.

I hope this is a reminder to give thanks to God no matter the situation!



## 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 ESV

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

This verse means to me, that we need to trust in God's grace and rely on it to sustain us in our weakness. Paul not only reveals the key insight into how weakness serves as the foundation for our life in Christ, but also how we might learn actually to rejoice in weakness. I think this is cool because it reveals to us just how much we need and should want to be closer to him. I have seen God help me through my weakness when I struggle with comparing myself to others and he helps me realize that he made me just how he planned. That he didn't make a mistake in creating me. I hope this encourages you today to lean into God with your troubles because he is the only one who can sustain your needs.

The next time you're feeling down on yourself, take some time to dwell in his word and let his words bring you to wisdom :)

> WRITTEN BY Jobeth Johnson



## 1 JOHN 1:9 ESV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

To me this verse means that if we acknowledge the fact that we sin, we can be forgiven through God. We have to own up to our sins and he will wipe them away. In this message John was writing down God's very word for us. I think this is cool because we are sinners and without God we are lost and dull of sin but with him we can be clean. God gives everyone when we don't deserve it and through this, we are brought closer to him.

Are there sins that you have been hiding from God that you need to confess? Take time to do that and know that you have received his full forgiveness in Christ!

WRITTEN BY Elise Boyd



### JEREMIAH 31:31-34 ESV

"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband," declares the LORD. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD. "I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more."

This passage says that though people are sinful and have broken God's law, this verse brings joy and comfort. What God is saying through Jeremiah is one day our discipleship work will be finished because everyone will know the Lord. God also says he will forgive us and remember our sin no more. This is so cool because this verse in the Old Testament is pointing to Jesus. I hope this encourages you to keep pushing through your hard times and sin because one day it will be completely washed away!

This passage shows us that even in the Old Testament, Jesus was the main focus of God's plan. How have you seen Jesus evidenced in the Old Testament? Take some time to reflect on that.

> WRITTEN BY Allee Autry



### 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4 ESV

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude.

This verse is very popular and very well known. This "hits home" for most everyone because it describes Christ's love for us and how we should love others. This verse shows me that no matter what that love stands. It will always stand because love is patient. Christ will always be patient and have open arms waiting for us to come back. That's how powerful, patient, and kind his love is. Paul tells us that isn't just a feeling but it is a way to genuinely treat others.

When it seems hard to forgive or love someone, stop and pray. Pray and ask God that he would remind you what the true meaning of love is.

WRITTEN BY Addison Adair



### **JOHN 16:33** ESV

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

To me, this verse means that no matter what we go through in life, we always have something to look forward to. We are able to live free from worry knowing that greater is coming. The troubles we have in this temporary world will NOT last forever. In this passage, John is saying that although it is sometimes hard being a Christian, we can still have joy knowing that Christ has obtained the ultimate victory. If Jesus is capable of obtaining this great of a victory, it should be easy for us to know we can trust him with everything in our lives. Because of this, we can live in peace knowing he has everything under control. I think it is important that God reassures us in this way. He wants us to know that he is here for us, and has everything taken care of, so we don't have to worry. Many doors in my life have been closed throughout the years. Whether they are break-ups, ended friendships, missed opportunities, etc. God has never failed to open new doors. I hope this encourages you to re-evaluate the struggles in our life. Instead of focusing on the things happening, try to think of the good that is coming!

How have you seen Jesus come through and "overcome the world" even through your own struggles in life?

> WRITTEN BY Kelsey May

## **DEUTERONOMY 6:4 ESV**

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One.

What this verse means to me is it is a clear reminder that our Lord is the one thing we need in life. He is the one who we follow and the one we will always have. He is the one who will love us with all our heart. In the passage, Moses is reminding Israel of the Commandment and the warning. He is reminding them that they must display their loyalty and love to the Lord because he is their only God. I love that God is the one who we can turn to in happy and sad times, as well as the fact that he is the one and only forever. I have seen this in my own life as I have watched myself feel as though I needed other things besides God, just to find out that I need him more than anything else. Once I realized this and believed it, I now see he is the only one I need.

This verse has been committed to memory by the Jewish people for thousands of years. Scripture memory is a great way to grow in your own faith, practice the habit of Scripture memory by memorizing this verse today and throughout this week!



### **MATTHEW 11:28-29** ESV

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

This verse means a lot to me. In this passage, Jesus is saying that He will carry even your heaviest burden and He will care for the tired. We can only find rest in Jesus when we give Him our burdens. For that to happen we have to give our burdens up even though we may want to keep them. I love that God deeply cares about us. I know that I have seen God care for me because He picks my burdens up off my shoulders. I hope this encourages you today!



Give God your burdens and go to Him when you are weary.

WRITTEN BY Piper Mobbs



#### ROMANS 8:28 ESV

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

This verse means that when you love and trust in God, he will make all things work out in the end. In this passage, Paul says to trust your whole life in God's hands because he has a plan. God's plan and purpose is always better than our own, therefore following his purpose is for the betterment of who we are in Christ. I have seen this in my life because through trust in him, God has helped me live for him and encourage others to follow God.

How have you seen God work even difficult parts of your life into his purpose for you?

WRITTEN BY Brooks Johnson

# 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 ESV

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

These verses encourage me, knowing that God's Word speaks to us in various ways. No matter how dark of a place you're in, God is always with you, and His Word is a reminder of that. The passage is a reminder that God is always there to guide us. I know I have seen God be this way in my life when the summer of eighth grade, these two girls I was friends with asked me if I wanted to go on a church trip in the summer to another FSM location. I was hesitant because I had always been a churchgoer, but then as I got older and my parents split, I didn't go much anymore except on big religious holidays. The school year before had been the most depressing and lonely year of my life; I lost many friends and had difficulty making new ones. I mostly kept to myself and cried in my room on the weekends. I told the girls I would go with them to church, and I was nervous the whole time because what if I messed up and God couldn't forgive me for not being involved in church or his Word much in the past few years. But after worship that night, I was determined to put my all back into God and try living through Him again. I told those girls I was thankful they invited me and asked when something like that would happen again, and they said to me that when school started back up, it'll be every Wednesday night. God knew I was feeling alone, and He showed me that I would never be alone in his home. I have built such a strong relationship with God and made many new Christ-following friends in the process. If you're feeling alone or down, I hope this shows you that it does get better and that God is always there for you.

If you have felt lonely or like God has forgotten about you, remember that he has given you his Word so that you will never be alone! He speaks to us through the Bible—that's why we're spending all summer reading it together. Be encouraged by His presence today.

> WRITTEN BY Hannah Winebrenner



### CORINTHIANS 10:5 ESV

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

This verse means that we should stop every argument and that anything that goes against the knowledge of God is wrong and that we should take every thought of obeying God captive. I think that this is cool that God is pointing out what to do and what not to do. It speaks to me as a teenage girl because most girls get caught up in the moment and continue the argument. This helps me know when to stop the argument and to see if I'm handling it in a Godly way.



I hope you apply this to your life and when you're having any trouble in your life to remember this verse.

written by Ella Poe



### EPHESIANS 2:1-10 ESV

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-by grace you have been savedand raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

This passage means everlasting love to me. In this passage Paul is saying that without Christ we are dead because of our sins. I think that it is so cool that God loves us so much that he gave us away to live forever by having faith in Jesus. God's grace is incredible. I know that I have seen God be loving in my life because he never left me and has always been there for me.

I challenge you today to keep pressing forward in putting all of your faith in God and sharing his love with others.

Addison May



## ISAIAH 9:6 ESV

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

This verse means a lot when it comes to Jesus' high power and his humility. In this passage, Isaiah is saying that even though Jesus was sent down as a 'mighty God' and a 'wonderful counselor'. He lived a life of humility and grace with everyone he interacted with. I think it is so cool that God is caring enough, and loving enough, to send his one and true sinless son at the price for our sins knowing that there is nothing we could ever do to gain salvation on our own. I know that I have seen God be loving in my life because he draws me near to him in times when I need it the most.

This verse is usually something that is read or sung at Christmas time, so reading it during the summer almost feels out of place. Think about the excitement and joy felt at Christmas. Think of the spiritual energy and hype around Christmas. How can you bring some of that energy and excitement to your day with Jesus today and the rest of this week?

# MATTHEW 28:19-20 ESV

Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

To me, this is the purpose that God has for all of our lives, known as the Great Commission. Jesus is saying that our true purpose is to display the qualities of Christ, remaining in him, and leading others to himself. We can live in a way that reflects Jesus's life, fix our minds on him, and lead others toward him, whether that be starting a conversation about God or inviting friends to church. Doing this in our lives may be hard, but Jesus also says that if we display his character and lead others to God, he will be with us to the end. I love how God continues to love and extend grace to us even in our sin. In these verses, Jesus says that he will be with us always. What does this mean? While our lives are not perfect, we can be assured that we are loved and forgiven. I have seen God stay with me when things aren't going the best, and I still know that he is there. God is calling us to live out his commands, being a display of him and showing others his love and grace. In all of our imperfections, he remains by our side.

How are you making disciples in your daily life? Who are you pouring into? Is anyone pouring into you? What would it look like for you to make "making disciples" a clearer focus of your life?

> WRITTEN BY Bailey Yarberry



## ISAIAH 40:31 ESV

But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings life eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

This verse means that those who put their hope and trust in the Lord, he will strengthen them. This verse means so much to me because it helps us get through tough times. If we hope in Christ, he will give us the strength to get through whatever might come our way. I have seen God do this is my life whenever we moved from Japan to Cabot. I hoped through this move that God would provide me with good friends, and he did on the very first day I arrived. I hope that God has spoken through this devotion to you that he can and will give you strength to get through whatever it is you're going through.

Trust in the Lord today to renew your strength. If you're feeling tired or weary, trust that he will strengthen you and give you perseverance and endurance.



## AMOS 5:23-24 ESV

Take away from me the noises of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Being a freshman has opened many doors for me through sports, relationships and friendships. God has been a big impact on my life and every day I sit down and read Scripture to myself and reflect on it. I came across the scripture Amos 5:23-24 and this text spoke out to me because back before my relationship with Christ I just didn't know who God was and what a relationship with him was like, kind of like just listening to the noise of a song. Now that I have drawn closer to the Lord, I have felt his melody and his words speaking into me. Not only by His word but by his Spirit. It has opened many more doors and allowed rivers to flow like never before. Now looking back, I continuously strive to feel his melody every day. This may be through friendships, coaches and teammates, or sports. Seeking God is an everyday challenge for me and I hope it will be for you, too.

In this passage, the Lord was refusing to accept the "noisy festivals" of the Israelites because they weren't living rightly, they were just acting "religious." He instead called for them to live rightly by letting righteousness and justice dominate their lives. How can you focus on justice and righteousness in your life today?



## PSALM 23 ESV

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

This passage means that God is our leader and our guide in life. In this passage, David is saying no matter what is going on in your life, God is your shepherd meaning he will always protect you and will guard you from evil. I think this is cool that God is my shepherd because that means he is always with me. I have seen God be my protector in my own life because ever since I can remember, he has been leading me and has never wondered off as I often have. I think that is the best gift he has given to me, and I believe that is a true leader. A leader protects his people, and he has protected me from birth and surrounded me with my parents. I hope this encourages you today by helping you ask yourself, "what do I need to do to accept God as my sole leader".

This psalm is filled with imagery of peace and nature. To get a real sense for the kind of peace and comfort that the psalm is describing, spend time today in nature—find an area outdoors that reminds you of the language in this psalm and spend time praying with God there!

WRITTEN BY Gunner Poe



# 2 TIMOTHY 1:7 ESV

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

What this verse means, is that the Spirit of God gave us the calling to do big things through his power and love. This calling will make us be more confident and less fearful in the things we encounter daily. In this passage, Paul is saying that we don't need to live in fear and timidness. We need to live through God's power and love. I know that I have seen God be this way in my life especially last year at my first Winterchill. I was very timid and fearful to express my feelings/emotions toward worship or talking about God. Now that I do not live in fear anymore, I hope this encourages you to do the same.

Take a moment to reflect, is there a fear dominating your life right now? How can you give that over to the Lord today?



## **ROMANS 10:14-15 ESV**

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

This means if you speak out, ask for guidance, and ask for forgiveness you will be saved and blessed with the love of God. This also means no matter how young or old you are and no matter what you have been through, God will always allow you to run to him. I think anyone is able to accept God into their lives no matter what. That is just how powerful his love is. He accepts us as we are.

Who is someone that you can share this good news with this week? Take time right now to pray for them and ask God for an opportunity to share this news with them.



## ROMANS 5:8 ESV

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Jesus died not only for the good person, but also for the person who mocked him, humiliated him, and rebuked him. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8 shows us an overwhelming picture of the peace, love, and grace that Jesus brings us. By His love, through pain and suffering, Jesus has made us right with God.

Take time today to rejoice in God's love for you that was demonstrated on the cross!





## PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 ESV

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.

This verse means to not be worried about anything but through prayer let your worries be known to God, and he will give you peace of mind. In this message Paul says that joy and thankfulness are the answer to cure our minds of the strongholds that anxiety has. We can completely depend on him with our needs and to just fully be there for us. I have seen this in my own life when my parents got divorced. I remember being so heartbroken and feeling like nothing in my life was good. My parents were arguing a lot and the realities of divorce is so hard. But, I decided to open my Bible and pray to give my worries to God. For years my parents have stayed friends and even live three houses down from each other. I then realized, that through talking to God and trusting in him, he will deliver what needs to be delivered. I hope this encourages you to not worry about anything but to pray about everything.

What is something that you have recently been anxious about? Take some time now to give these things to God in prayer and practice thankfulness.

WRITTEN BY Bella Shock



## ISAIAH 41:10 ESV

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

This verse is telling us to have faith and that God is with us. It encourages us to not be afraid, have courage, and to trust in God with all that we have. In all our daily tasks and temptations all he wants is for us to trust him and not fall into temptation that society tells us is okay. I have seen this play out in my own life one-time last year when I was fearful. It was my freshman year of high school and I was so excited to try out for the cheer team like I had the previous year. I was tired of basketball and wanted to do cheer again, but when my name didn't make the list of cheerleaders who made the team, I was devastated. I was so scared I would go into high school not being a part of a team and being "alone". Little did I know, God had something better for me. The following fall I had signed up for theatre and when auditions for the play came up, I was scared that once again I wouldn't be "good enough" for something. God knew what was best for me. I auditioned and made the production. I have now been in four musicals and I really found my group of people as well as a second family. These people make me better! Although I was sad about cheer, I am so grateful I did not make the team because I wouldn't have found what I now really enjoy and would've stuck to what is comfortable.

Has there been a situation or circumstance in your life that didn't go the way you were hoping it would, but in the end God turned for good?

> WRITTEN BY Halle Carter



## JOHN 14:6 ESV

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

God assures us that in the midst of our uncertainties; we can rely on him and cling to him. God introduced himself to us so that we will not be confused and preoccupied. Instead, we will seek for good deeds and truthfulness that the Lord offers us. He says that he is the truth, the way, and the life. Love that God tells us that we might not know where we are going, but we must keep in mind that there is a Jesus who is willing to guide us at any time of the day. I have seen God act upon this in my life because of a past relationship I had with someone. I did not know where I was headed or what to do. This relationship made me fall far away from God a lot. But, later I realized the only thing I needed was to realize Jesus was right there by my side, holding my hand through all of it. So, I ran to him and his word. He carried me through the darkness to find that all I needed was Jesus!

How has Jesus carried you through your tough times? Reflect on that and take time to thank him for that.



## DANIEL 1:8-9 ESV

But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank... And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs.

To me, this means that you should follow God and he will reward you. Daniel 1:9 exhibits that if you follow God and follow his rules, he will guide you and aid you in helping you follow his ways. It is so amazing that God will reward you for showing that you obey and love him. I have seen this in my life when I decided to start being more consistent in going to church and God rewarded me by showing me that I can solidify relationships with good Christian friends and overall, I was so much more content. Daniel's life was far from easy or "perfect," but God granted him much favor because he chose to stay committed to honoring him no matter what was going on in his life. I hope this encourages you today!

What is one way that you can be like Daniel and resolve to obey and honor God in your life this week?





## **JOHN 17:17** ESV

#### Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

This verse means if you are looking for what is true, you will find it in God's Word—the Bible. He's explaining to sanctify your truth with God's truth because he will always be true to you. I know I have seen God be truthful to me because about a year ago I was lost, mentally. I didn't have the strongest relationship with God and I had terrible thoughts in my head. But one night, I decided to open my Bible I had no idea what moved me to open it but I always remember the first verse I read. God was reminding me that he loves and protects me as well as that he is the truth. I hope my story encourages you to always remember that God is the truth and to put trust in him.

Thank you for spending time in God's Word today! You have been meditating on God's truth and this will sanctify you and grow you. Keep it up, keep using this devotional to help you stay committed to God's truth.

WRITTEN BY Lana Shultz



## DANIEL 3:16-18 ESV

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

This verse tells us that God will establish his kingdom forever. This shows us there is a bigger picture going on that we may not even be aware of. It is easy to get caught up on little things in our daily lives. Sometimes steering us away from the fact that it is not just about us and that there is a bigger picture God is establishing for each and everyone of us. God has been working behind the scenes to give solutions to us but also everyone around the world. Sometimes we need to take a step back and stop worrying about us and take a look at the bigger picture around us.

Is there a particular area in your life where you need to take a stand like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did? May this verse encourage and embolden you to do just that!



## GALATIANS 5:22-23 ESV

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control; against such things there is no law.

To me, Galatians 5:22-23 shows me that the attributes I should aspire to have as a Christian. In this passage, Paul is emphasizing traits that should be evident if a person has the Holy Spirit in them. I think it's so cool that God gives us this list of traits that Christians should strive to have. I see some of the traits listed by Paul everyday while talking to my friends. I'm not saying they are perfect, but each of them displays the fruits of the spirit in their life.

I encourage everyone to pick at least one of the fruits that Paul listed and strive to get better at showing others what that trait looks like in a Christian.

WRITTEN BY Emma Shepherd



## EPHESIANS 3:17-19 ESV

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith 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.

This verse means that he gave us strength through the highs and lows. In this passage, he is saying that the writer understands the depth of God's love for him and prays for others this same understanding. I like that this verse encourages me to know that God is helping me through everything in life and understands me. I know I have seen God with me and how he has given me strength countless times. When I doubt in him or his plan for me, I know I can pray to God and he will work in me.



I encourage you to pray that the Lord will give you strength beyond your doubt.



## 1 PETER 2:9 ESV

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

This verse is a very important one to live by and base our daily lives off of. It goes into depth about how God personally chose us to be his disciples and members of his glorious kingdom. He calls us his own and has given us the amazing opportunity to spread his word each day, but we're still given the choice to do so. When we spread the gospel, whether it be to friends, family, or even strangers, we are each a vessel for the light of Christ and can shine his light onto others daily. During the difficult walk throughout life, Christ will always be our place of refuge and rest, as he too dealt with a lot of the same struggles we do. He calls us his children, and it is our honor to be brought out of darkness and into the light of Christ!

I challenge you to find different ways to share the gospel with others today, whether that be in sports, social conversations, etc.

WRITTEN BY Everly Lyles



# ISAIAH 53:5 ESV

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

This verse means that Christ has endured my sins. In this passage, this is a statement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ saying he was "pierced for our sins and our immorality". I think that it is a great reminder that Jesus was taken on the Cross of our sinfulness. Towards the end of the verse, it also says "and with his wounds we ace healed". Jesus has healed our wounds by his own wounds. In the end this verse gives me a great reminder that I am broken and sinful, but he is perfect in all hi ways, I hope that this verse has given you a great reminder that we are broken but he is there for us, and because of his sacrifice he will be in heaven with Him forever.



Have you trusted in him and asked for forgiveness recently?



## PSALM 91 ESV

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked. If you say, "The Lord is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent. "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

This chapter means a lot to me and how I worry about the things around me that might distract me from God. In this passage, the writer is saying that no matter what you go through, as long as you have faith in God's love, he will protect us. I know I have seen God protect me whenever I had surgery in eighth grade. I was very worried for it and scare to hear the outcome of it. But, through it all God had my back and pushed me outside of my comfort zone.



Where have you seen God's protection in your life during a moment of worry?



## JOHN 1:14 ESV

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

As I was reading this verse, I loved it more and more. When it says that 'the word became flesh', this means that when Jesus Christ came down on earth, he lived out what the Bible prophesied he would. Everything in the Bible happens according to God's plan and we see that through the story of his son. This passage also speaks to God's glory which is relevant in the messy times we live in, but also tells of how graceful God is in his glory. But God doesn't just show truth and grace in the Bible. He also shows it in our own lives every day. I hope this encourages you today!



Take time today to seek out where God has placed grace and truth in your life.

WRITTEN BY Sarah Rogers



## JOHN 3:16 ESV

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

This verse shows God's great love for each of us. John writes that God sent down his son for the purpose of dying on the cross to rectify my sin and allow me to have eternal life with him if I believe this is true. God has continually shown this to me in my life by growing my faith, even when I sin. God guides me in wisdom to grow and teaches me more about the sacrifice he made for me.

Who can you share God's love with today?





## ISAIAH 12:2 ESV

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and I will not be afraid; for the LORD God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

In this verse it states that God is our salvation and our only salvation. Fear is, of course, a natural human thing. People can't naturally muster trust in the face of danger. So, trust God's plan. I can relate to this verse, because there have been many times where I have pulled away from God, believing that I didn't deserve to be in his presence, that God will never want me, a sinner. But just as many times I have pulled away, he's pulled me back in, showing me how much he loves me and cares for me. Though it can be difficult at times because it's hard to believe that there's someone out there who loves us, no matter how many mistakes we have made. We have to put faith and trust in him because he is the one and only God and without him, we would be nothing.

Has the LORD become your salvation? Are you trusting him in your life to truly be the one and only thing that saves you and gives you life?

WRITTEN BY Cailynn Stone



#### NUMBERS 6:24-26 ESV

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

These three verses are so important to understanding God's character. God's blessings to us consist of peace, hope, grace, mercy, love, etc. This verse reminds us of the comfort of the presence of God. It states that the Lord will keep you. The meaning of the word "keep" in this verse is to guard or protect us. There is no escaping the presence of God no matter how hard you try. No matter how far and no matter how long you go without spending time with him, he is keeping you, he is protecting you, and he is with you. When we are close to the presence of God, all it takes is for us to look around and see the blessings in which he provides. In the second verse "the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you" is so powerful. The Lord keeps our favor in mind. He does everything for the good of those who follow him. He is gracious to us although we don't deserve it. The reminder that what He does is in our best interest should change the way we live, and it should change the way we face adversity. Instead of dwelling on the "why is this happening to me." This verse reminds us to train our hearts and minds to be aligned with God's plan. It is so perfect, and it is so much better than what we have planned out for ourselves.

Pray this prayer over your own life, that God would do this for you today and then take time to pray this over at least one other person.

WRITTEN BY Megan Moudy



## PSALM 133:1 ESV

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

The more I dove into the context and the importance of this verse, the more I realized truly amazing the joy God gets when we dwell together. To me this verse is saying that it is worship when followers of Christ come together in beautiful unity. In this passage, King David is describing how sweet and tender it is when we dwell in him with others. I think is this amazing to see how much God truly enjoys seeing us worship together. I know I have seen God provide me community in my life through my FSM family. This group of people is something that God has provided each and every one of us to better our faith and worship with the community around us. I hope that this encourages you today!

So, remember God gets an immense about of joy when we are diving into His word and worshiping Him with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

> WRITTEN BY Mady Calhoun



#### 2 SAMUEL 7:12-13 ESV

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

This verse is one of many, in the passage that speaks to God's promise to David through the prophet Nathan. It is because David was a faithful servant to the Lord, that the Lord recognized David's work and faith. In the passage the Lord also points out that through everything David had gone through, God never left him and has blessed him. These two verses in 2 Samuel explain God's promise to David that he would bless the lineage/blood line of David (meaning Jesus) and bless David in heaven. God does this in many of our lives as well. He blesses us with things we never knew we needed or wanted, and he absolutely never leaves our side. We should want to pursue serving God as David did because God is faithful to those who are faithful to him.

My challenge to you today is to sit and think of all of the blessings that the Lord has given you. Then, write all of these down and pray a prayer of thanks over each individual blessing!

WRITTEN BY Haley Cason



## ISAIAH 40:28 ESV

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable.

This verse tells me that we can lean on him when we are weak, because he never grows weak or weary. In this passage, Isaiah tells bus that no one can measure the depths of his understanding. I think it's awesome that God, the creator of the universe, understands us even in our most difficult times. I know that God has allowed me to lean on him in my life because the day I wrote this, I took my driver's test, and I was really anxious. When I prayed about it, God reminded me that he never grows weak, and I can lean on him in these types of situations. I hope this encourages your heart today. Next time you're stressing over school or even driver's tests, ask God to remind you that he understands, and never grows weak or weary.

How can you lean on Him in your weakness this week?



## JOSHUA 21:45 ESV

Not one of word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

This verse means that the Lord will stay loyal to us. In this passage Joshua is saying how the Lord has never broken a promise to the house of Israel. I think it is so amazing that God is Loyal and never breaks promises with us. I know that I have seen God be loyal in my life. This passage made me feel so hopeful, knowing that God keeps all his promises, even when I think that he's not. I hope that this encourages you today!

How have you seen God be loyal in your life in the past week?

WRITTEN BY Avery Morse



## PSALM 139 ESV

#### Read Psalm 139

This hymn highlights a theme of the Psalms: God's intimate knowledge of His people. The passage encourages me in my faith because Psalm 139 reminds me of the Lord's love and intentionality in my life. It also reassures me in my personal life because I know that God is constant, which is confirmed in verse 7, "Where shall I go from your spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?" A specific example is how God was faithful even while I pushed Him away during trials and times of hardship. I hope that this characteristic of God encourages you as well today. I urge you to lean into this fact and ask the Lord today to "lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:24).

Take some time now to reflect on a time when you may have tried to "flee from God's presence" like the psalmist in verse 7. What happened? What led you to that place? How was God present with you even in that time? Let his presence with you today encourage you throughout your day.



## HEBREWS 12:1-2 ESV

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, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

There is no doubt that life can be overwhelming and obstacles will get in our way. It's easy to forget what we are living for when others break us down and the darkness of the world weighs heavy. However, because of the debt that was paid on the cross, we can give those burdens to Jesus and trust in His purpose through it all. We can rest in the fact that he will carry our sins, mistakes, worries, and burdens. Jesus is right there running the race of life with us and we are fully dependent on His strength to fight with endurance every single day.

Think of some way that you can practice looking to Jesus today. How can you make Jesus a more visible part of your life? Consider some ways that you can use reminders and tools to literally direct your eyes to Jesus today.



## EZEKIEL 34:11-16 ESV

For thus says the LORD God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the LORD God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

Look at these words. Right off the bat, they sound familiar—and that's because they are! We see this analogy of the lost sheep and the Good Shepherd in Matthew 18:10-14 as JESUS declares it. And what's cool is, in Ezekiel, verse 11 starts with "For this is what the Sovereign Lord says." Jesus not only proclaimed to be good; he proclaimed to be God! In this passage, the Lord says that he will rescue us from places where we were scattered—the clouds of day and the darkness. We can get lost in the "darkness," the dark parts of our life, the ones full of sin and evil, but we can also get lost in the "clouds of the day," the times when we're busy, confused, and our minds are just cloudy. He is here! He will care for us in the best pasture and be the shepherd. He will care for the ninety-nine and still seek out the one because he loves us.

How has Jesus sought you out as the Good Shepherd? What good pastures have you seen him lead you in? What "cloud and darkness" has he brought you out of? Take time to celebrate these moments and journal them. Take a moment to praise God for being your Good Shepherd.

> WRITTEN BY Gracie Smith



## MATTHEW 6:33 ESV

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

This verse comes at the end of a long section in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus talks about worry and anxiety. There are many things in this world that we can be anxious about—clothes, popularity, status, you name it. Jesus knows that the more we chase after these other things and try to find satisfaction and fulfillment apart from him, the more anxious we will. The cure for anxiety is right here in verse 33—Jesus tells us to seek his kingdom first instead. So, the natural question is: what does it mean to seek God's kingdom? It means to live our lives like God really is the king. Loving others sacrificially, living out the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, and ultimately loving God above everything else.

What are some things you are often anxious about? Take time to do some self-reflection, are you carrying any particular anxieties right now? Take some time to give those over to Jesus and ask him how you can actively choose to seek his kingdom first today.



Addison Adair CABOT, 8TH

Allee Autry CABOT, 9TH

Emily Barnard WLR, 8TH

Karis Barnard WLR, 12TH

Lawson Beams CABOT, 10TH

MK Beavert CABOT, 10TH

Molly Bell CABOT, 9TH

Levi Bessire WLR, 10TH

Owen Bishop WLR, 12TH

Elise Boyd CABOT, 9TH

Clara Bozzay WLR, 12TH

Emily Braunfisch WLR, 12TH

Chauncey Bryan MAUMELLE, 7TH

Mallory Burton MAUMELLE, 7TH

Mady Calhoun BENTON, 9TH

Halle Carter CABOT, 10TH

Lucy Carter WLR, 10TH

Max Carter WLR, 8TH

Haley Cason CABOT, STAFF

Claire Chapman WLR, 9TH

Carson Cook CABOT, 11TH

Liam Cook WLR, 11TH

Lucy Coon MIDTOWN, 9TH

Evie Ellis MIDTOWN, 10TH

Jenna Fellers WLR, 10TH Joanna Fontenoy WLR. 12TH

Ann Freeman WLR, 12TH

Jayden Green CABOT, 9TH

Hannah Greeson MIDTOWN, 11TH

Ally Hamaker WLR, 10TH

Savannah Harrison WLR, 9TH

Mattie Henry WLR, 10TH

Caroline Hill CABOT, 9TH

Grayce Hill MAUMELLE, 7TH

Lauren Hill CABOT, 8TH

Luke Hill CABOT, 11TH

Mia Hollis WLR, 10TH

Nate Hollis WLR, 12TH

Ashlynn Horn CABOT, 9TH

Vivian Huff MIDTOWN, 9TH

#### Molly Ivy CABOT, 10TH

Maggie James WLR, 9TH

Bailee Jeffus MIDTOWN, 10TH

Brooks Johnson CABOT, 11TH

Jobeth Johnson CABOT, 8TH

Kailyn Jones WLR, 10TH

Ryen Jones WLR, 8TH

Vella Kaman MIDTOWN, 12TH

Ethan Keller WLR, 12TH

Loren Kim WLR, 10TH Emory Koch CABOT, 10TH

Olivia Lessel WLR, 12TH

Shepherd Livers WLR, 10TH

Everly Lyles CABOT, 8TH

Kylie Martin WLR, 10TH

Addison May CABOT, 10TH

Kelsey May CABOT, 11TH

Mary Alice May WLR, 9TH

Reagan McCartney WLR, 8TH

Noah McClendon CABOT, 11TH

Cal McElduff MAUMELLE, 9TH

Sydnee McPherson CABOT, 8TH

Piper Mobbs CABOT, 10TH

Jeremiah Moix WLR, 12TH

Thoven Moore WLR, 9TH

Avery Morse BENTON, 9TH

Megan Moudy CABOT, 12TH

Emily O'Quinn WLR, 12TH

Isaac Ortega WLR, 9TH

McKenzie Owens WLR, 8TH

Ada Peeples MIDTOWN, 9TH

Chanyn Phifer BENTON, 8TH

Drew Poe CABOT, 10TH

Ella Poe CABOT, 8TH

Gunner Poe CABOT, 11TH Gunner Pruett WLR, 7TH

Bobby Pugh CABOT, 11TH

Logan Shelton CABOT, 12TH

Mackenzie Reddin WLR, 12TH

Sarah Rogers CABOT, 9TH

Samuel Rogers CABOT, 11TH

Chloe Saunders CABOT, 9TH

Savannah Shelley WLR, 9TH

Emma Shepherd CABOT, 10TH

Bella Shock CABOT, 10TH

Lana Shultz CABOT, 11TH

Gracie Smith WLR, 10TH

Noah Smith CABOT, 11TH

Cailynn Stone, CABOT, 9TH

Jake Steelman CABOT, 9TH

Nate Vance CABOT, 10TH

Ruthie Vincent MIDTOWN, 9TH

Ava Walker MIDTOWN, 11TH

Avery Walker WLR, 11TH

Lauren Walker WLR, 9TH

Hannah Winebrenner CABOT, 9TH

Mackenzie Wood CABOT, 10TH

Sunnie Woodard WLR, 11TH

Bailey Yarberry CABOT, 10TH

Grayson Younkman WLR, 11TH

