

MARCH 27, 2023

MONDAY

**Scripture:** *“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”* 1 Corinthians 13:7

**Devotional:** Through Jesus we have been afforded an anchor of hope. Through God’s promises of his presence now and total restoration in the age to come, we can have peace in the midst of trials, joy in persecution and steadfastness when it seems nothing can go our way. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.”* As believers, we have an inheritance of boundless communion with our heavenly Father. And with this inheritance we are called to share our hope with a lost and hopeless world.

The hope that’s been freely given to you was not meant to be solely contained within you. You have a testimony in Christ that has the power to transform lives. 1 Corinthians 13:7 says, *“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”* You are called to hope for a better life for those around you. You are called to believe in people when no one else will. God has abundant life and relationship for all if they will simply come to know him. And he’s chosen to use his children to share that message of hope. Your life has been transformed from being lost and lifeless to being filled with the powerful hope of the gospel. No one is hopeless. No one is beyond the saving grace of Jesus. And God is calling you to love others enough to share with them the reality of his love in both word and deed that they might have hope in God.

The only hope the world has is Jesus. No amount of money, no friends, and no politician can save us from the destruction of sin. The truth of God’s unconditional love and unmerited grace is the only source of redemption and joy this world has.

So who around you needs hope today? Who around you needs to know that God has a plan for their life? Who around you needs you to have hope in *“all things”* for them today? There is no love without hope. There is no gospel without hope. In you lies the hope for all the world, the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Share that hope with those around you today who are in desperate need of restored relationship with their heavenly Father.

Worship Song: Living Hope, Phil Wickham (<https://youtu.be/u-1fwZtKJSM>)

### Guided Prayer:

**1. Reflect on the hope you have in Jesus.** Allow Scripture to remind you of the destruction that awaited you apart from God's saving grace.

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you."* 1 Peter 1:3-4

**2. Ask God who he would have you hope "in all things" for today.** Who around you needs someone who will simply believe in them and reflect the unconditional love of God?

**3. Ask the Spirit to show you how you can share the message of hope with that person today.** How can you reveal God's heart of grace, love and peace?

Both believers and non-believers need hope. Everyone needs love from the people around them. Whether you're sharing the gospel with someone for the first time or helping a fellow believer through a tough time, you are needed by the people around you. Exemplify the hope God offers as Jesus did, and watch as lives are transformed around you. May your day be filled with reconciliation and good works as you allow the Holy Spirit to use you.

MARCH 28, 2023

TUESDAY

**Scripture:** *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 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.”* Romans 8:37-39

**Devotional:** Through Jesus, God has obtained victory in the earth. The dominion the devil had over humanity was crushed by the cross of Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:13-15 says, *“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”* Jesus has triumphed over everything that stood between us and a life lived in relationship with God.

One of my favorite chapters in all of Scripture, Romans 8, tells us, *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 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”* (Romans 8:37-39). We’ve been given victory over the enemy and all his schemes. But even though we have obtained victory in Jesus, the devil still works to lead you and me back into our former ways. Even though Jesus has defeated the enemy, we still must live out that victory every day and help others around us do the same. Even though love has won, we still must fight for the victory in others.

We need each other to experience the freedom available to us in Christ. Scripture admonishes us to engage in confession, community, worship, and spiritual battle together. Proverbs 27:17 says, *“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”* James 5:13-16 says, *“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 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.*” We must engage with one another and fight for a life lived victoriously in Christ together. The Bible is clear that sanctification is a process worked out, and it’s a process meant to be worked out together.

We must call out the greatness in each other. If you see a brother or sister struggling with temptation, fight for them through prayer. Speak life into them. Encourage them in who God has made them to be. Stand with them through whatever circumstances and consequences come their way. See them through the fight until they experience victory over the power of sin and darkness in their life. Open up to those around you and ask for their help in your own life! You don’t have to fight spiritual battles alone. There are people around you who will fight for victory in your own life.

Through Christ, love has won. He has paved the way of victory for you and me. We are the world’s no longer. Ephesians 2:10 says, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* Walk in the works God intends for you today and, in love, fight for those around you to do the same. You and I are meant for more in this life than the struggle with sin. Let’s fight for the victory in each other.

**Worship Song:** I Belong, Kathryn Scott (<https://youtu.be/fU0pK85Xp9g>)

### **Guided Prayer:**

- 1. Renew your mind to the victory available to you in Christ.**
- 2. Who needs you to fight for their victory today.** Who needs encouragement from you? Who needs you to speak truth over them in love? Who needs you to intercede on their behalf?
- 3. Pray for their victory.** However the Spirit prompts you, pray that they would overcome the power of sin in their lives. Trust that God will move when you pray.

MARCH 29,2023

WEDNESDAY

**Scripture:** *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”* James 1:17

**Devotional:** One of my favorite parts of God’s heart is his desire to give us amazing gifts. James 1:17 says, *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”* Every good gift you receive is because God loves you. His love for you is so great that he looks for every opportunity to give you a gift. He desperately wants you to know that you are loved and valued by him. He so deeply wants you to know that he is not distant from you but, rather, is working in your midst to lead you to abundant joy, peace and life.

Matthew 7:11 says, *“If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”* I love how God has chosen to be known to us as a Father. And because God has chosen to reveal himself as a Father, we can more tangibly understand the love of God by looking to good earthly parents. God longs to bless you the way a good Father would. And at the same time he loves you more deeply and powerfully than any earthly parent ever could. Our heavenly Father far outdoes any example an earthly father give us. What gift are you longing for today? Do you long for friendship? Do you need a greater sense of being loved? Do you just need to know that he is with you?

God’s gifts may not look like a present you opened for Christmas last year, but they will be exactly what you need when you need it. If you need a friend, ask God for one! He’s promised you his friendship, and he loves to guide his children into community with others. Do you need to know you’re loved? God so longs for you to know the depth of his love that he sent his only Son to die for you! He’d love to pour his love out on you right now. Do you need to know that God is with you? Just ask for his manifest presence. Ask the Spirit to give you eyes to see all the ways he is working in your life. Ask God to reveal to you the ways he was, is and always will be with you. Do you need financial provision? Ask for the leading of the Holy Spirit in your finances! Ask God to provide for you what you need. Whatever gift you need from God today, his word promises in 1 John 5:15, *“if we know that he*

*hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.*” Your God hears you today. What’s more, he will respond to you perfectly.

God’s gifts are much more life-giving than anything an earthly parent could give. He gives the gift of a beautiful sunrise because he knows you have a longing to gaze upon beauty. He gives the gift of his presence because he knows you need the peace that only he can bring. He gives you the gift of friendship because he knows you aren’t made to do life alone. He provides your finances because he cares about everything you need and desires to use you to bless others. Spend some time today reflecting on the amazing gifts he has given you. Thank him for his desire to bless you. Worship him because he is good. And open your heart to receive all the gifts your heavenly Father longs to give you today.

**Worship Song:** Thank You Lord (<https://youtu.be/xOgAmQvOUM0>)

### **Guided Prayer:**

- 1. Take a minute to reflect on all the good gifts you’ve been given by God.**
- 2. Now thank God for everything you’ve been given.** Thank him for your friends, family, job, church—anything that you love. Let thanksgiving stir your affections to know your heavenly Father more.
- 3. Now ask the Spirit to open your eyes and heart to see and receive all the gifts God has in store for you today.** Often to know a gift comes from God, we must be in tune with the Spirit. For a sunset to tell us of God’s love, we must be sensitive to God’s presence in our lives.

Thanking God for what he’s already given us is a powerful way to position our hearts to be receptive to what he will give us in the future. Life is so much better when we acknowledge what God is doing in our midst. Knowing you are loved, liked and cared for is better than any material possession you could receive. You have a heavenly Father who gives amazing gifts. Celebrate his love today. And receive all that he longs to give you.

MARCH 30,2023

THURSDAY

**Scripture:** *“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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* Matthew 11:28-30

**Devotional:** Scripture describes a great exchange of our burdens for the peace of God. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, *“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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* You have a God who loves you so much that he offers to take your burdens off your own shoulders, place them on his, and give you peace in return. Where does your life feel heavy? Where do you feel buried under the burdens of the world? God offers you his peace today if you will take some time to align yourself with him and “yoke” yourself to the teaching of Jesus.

In Matthew 11, Jesus presents us with an image of two animals sharing the burden of work together. The point Jesus is making here is in reference to coming under his teaching. He asks us, *“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.”* He isn’t asking us simply to cast our burdens on him, but also to humble ourselves and submit to his teaching. If we are willing to come underneath him as our Teacher, then we no longer carry the burden of figuring out life on our own. And in freedom we are able to live life under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

Do you ever feel alone in what you’re doing? Do you ever feel like peace is an unobtainable goal, blocked by layer upon layer of work you need to get through first? God’s plan is different than the world’s plan. The world says you can only have peace when you’ve completed the job, become the best, or gained the approval of man. God tells you to stop working in your own strength, yoke yourself to his teaching, and rid yourself of all the stress and pressure of the world. 1 Peter 5:7 says *“[Cast] all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”* You have a God who cares about you. Your God is for you. He knows society tells you to work for and care about certain things, but he offers you the refuge of his peace instead.

You serve a God who doesn’t want you to live even one day burdened. Every day, you can wake up and choose to yoke yourself to your heavenly Father

and his word. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, *“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.”* Align your mind with what he says about you—casting off every opinion other than his. Align your day with the leading of God’s Spirit, and receive the anointing and power he longs to bring into every situation.

God says, *“My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* If you will choose God today over the way you’ve done things in the past, if you will choose to obey his word, then *“you will find rest for your souls.”* What area of your life needs rest today? In what parts of your heart do you need God’s peace and ease? He’s waiting right now to meet with you, to offer you his yoke. Let him take your burdens, fears, and stress. Our fragile frame wasn’t meant to bear such pressure. Come underneath God’s teaching today, align your thinking with his, and let the cares of the world fall off as you live in light of the teaching of Jesus.

**Worship Song:** It Is Well, Hillsong (<https://youtu.be/YNqo4Un2uZI>)

### **Guided Prayer:**

**1. Reflect on your life for a minute.** In what areas do you need God’s peace today? It could be your mindset, your appearance, friends, family, work, anything that you feel burdened by.

**2. Now offer that area of your life to God and ask him for his opinion.** Listen to God and let him tell you what he thinks about you. Look up verses that reveal his teaching on the subject.

**3. Meditate on Scripture or what God spoke regarding the area in which you need peace.** Let his peace flood that area of your life. Submit yourself to his word. Believe that he sees things truthfully. Whatever God says goes.

Yoke yourself to the teaching of Jesus today. Let his word be your refuge in a world full of opinions. Doing life yoked to God, being obedient to his word, is the best way to walk the path God lays out for us to abundant life. Every day attacks will come your way. But every day God has provided the truth you need in his word to fight those attacks. Choose the word of Jesus today, walk in obedience to it, and experience God’s *“rest for your [soul].”*



MARCH 31,2023

FRIDAY

**Scripture:** *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”* Ephesians 1:7

**Devotional:** Grace is one of the most astounding and life-transforming aspects of God’s character. From the beginning of time God has chosen to lavish grace upon us instead of wrath. Time and time again, we’ve turned our backs on him. And time and time again he demonstrates the depth of his desire for us through the giving of his boundless grace. In his grace we are afforded a life not only apart from his wrath, but lived in the glory of relationship with our Creator through the redemption of Jesus.

Ephesians 1:7 says, *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”* Let’s look at a few of these ideas today and let them stir our affections for God. Allow God to speak through his word to the places of your heart where the grace of God hasn’t been given the opportunity to abound yet.

Paul says that in Jesus we have *“redemption through his blood.”* Have you thought about the nature of your redemption at length before? Colossians 1:19-22 says, *“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.”* Such is the grace of your heavenly Father that there is not a single thing between you and him. You, who at one time stood apart from God, have been brought into the family of God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus.

Not only have you been redeemed once and for all, but you are forgiven both now and forever. Paul writes that we as believers have *“the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”* Where in your life do you need forgiveness today? What do you feel is separating you from unveiled relationship with your heavenly Father? When you confess your sins, God offers you his forgiveness for anything you have done. *“According to the riches of his grace,”* which was made perfectly evident in the death of Jesus, you are being offered forgiveness. If God would send his Son to die in order to have restored relationship with you, you better believe he will forgive any trespass that seems to stand in your way now.

God doesn't operate the way the world does. He doesn't make you pay the penalty for your own sin. Instead, he offers perfect grace. In story after story in Scripture God turns the systems of the world on their head through the concept of grace. In the story of the prodigal son, the father allowed the son to dishonor him, set aside his rightful punishment, and threw a huge party for his wayward child returned home. He didn't wait. He didn't make him work for his redemption. He immediately offered him forgiveness freely in grace. God offers you the same today. Don't attempt to pay for your own sin by separating yourself from the fullness of relationship with God. Jesus paid the only price necessary by his own death. Live in light of God's grace. Offer your heart to God freely. Let him work out redemption in every area of your life that you might more fully experience the wonderful relationship you have available to you with God.

**Worship Song:** Redeemed By the Blood of the Lamb, People and Songs  
(<https://youtu.be/znyhfpzzlM>)

### **Guided Prayer:**

- 1. Take time to reflect on the amazing grace of God.**
- 2. Talk to God about any area of your life you feel separated from him through sin or a lack of understanding.** Where in your life do you not feel grace? What part of your thinking is dominated by condemnation or negativity?
- 3. Ask God for forgiveness and understanding of his grace in those areas of your life.** Receive the freedom that comes from his presence and forgiveness.

God works tirelessly to lead you into the fullness of relationship with him because he loves you. You are his child. He knows everything about you; he's created you, and he loves spending time with you. May your affections be stirred towards him today. May you know and experience his love in mighty and transformative ways. May you spend your day in God's presence, changed and empowered by the reality of his boundless grace.

APRIL 1, 2023

SATURDAY

**Scripture:** *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."* James 1:5

**Devotional:** Your heavenly Father is perfectly wise. Everything he does is perfect. Every thought and idea he has is filled with complete wisdom. What's more, through the Holy Spirit you have access to that wisdom. James 1:5 says, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."* Your God loves you so much that he's just waiting to bestow on you his vast wisdom. He never wants you to suffer from a lack of knowledge. So often, we are taught that God only reveals to us what we absolutely have to know right before we need to know it. But that's not the truth of Scripture. James 1:5 proves that. Your God gives his wisdom *"generously!"*

Not only is the wisdom of God given to you generously if you ask, but it also has with it incredible attributes. James 3:17 says, *"The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."* The wisdom of God will do incredible things for your life. With it comes the very nature of God. James 3:17 could just as easily have said that God is *"pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."* So when you receive the wisdom God bestows upon you, you are receiving many of the attributes of God himself.

The wisdom of God is unlike any other way of thinking you'll find. 1 Corinthians 3:18-20 says, *"Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, 'He catches the wise in their craftiness,' and again, 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.'" Jesus taught us in Matthew 10:39, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."* The path he is guiding you to is the way out of the stress that worldly ambition and success will assuredly cause. He's guiding you to a life of abundant peace. When you forgo the wisdom of this world for his, you will undoubtedly appear more foolish to some. But you will have found a way of living free from the burdens of the world. God's wisdom leads you to a life truly hidden with Christ, lost in the sea of his love and mercy.

Ask God for his wisdom today. Read his word with the guidance of the Spirit. God is waiting patiently to reveal everything you have the desire to seek out. Proverbs 25:2 says, *“It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.”* Ask him for his wisdom today, and live the abundant life God has planned for you.

**Worship Song:** Perfect Wisdom of Our God, Keith and Kristyn Getty

(<https://youtu.be/hSnzYnOe6kI>)

### **Guided Prayer:**

**1. Meditate on the amazing qualities of the God’s wisdom.** Let meditation stir up within you a desire to think like God.

*“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.”* James 3:17

**2. Where in your life do you need God’s wisdom?** Maybe you need to know how to see yourself. Maybe you have a situation in which you could really use some guidance. Think about the areas in your life in which you need God’s help.

**3. Ask God for his wisdom.** Have faith in response to his word that he gives wisdom generously, and receive and implement anything he shows you.

*“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”* James 1:5

The wisdom of God won’t do much for you if you don’t choose to implement God’s thinking over the world’s. If you continuously work for the favor of man and worldly success in light of what you know to be God’s truth, you will continue to experience the consequences of a life lived foolishly. God’s word must be implemented to produce fruit. You have to choose to live in light of your position in Christ for transcendent peace to become the norm in your life. God gives wisdom to you freely when you ask. The question before you today is simply whether or not you will choose to trust God and implement it.

**APRIL 2,2023**

**PALM SUNDAY**

## **SEEING THE KING ON PALM SUNDAY**

*“Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)*

Today is Palm Sunday. We picture ourselves welcoming the King into our city and into our hearts. He tries to make his intentions known by coming, not on a great stallion, but on a lowly donkey, meek and humble.

I wonder how many here look upon this lowly Servant-King and feel that this is just a thin veneer, and that beneath this lowly exterior there is a terrible power and authority which is just waiting to burst out against you if you slip in any way.

I wonder how many feel that it is not really the deepest pleasure of this King’s heart to serve his people and meet their needs. I wonder how many feel that he’s riding this donkey of lowliness as a kind of camouflage. And once he gains a foothold, he will throw off his rags, pull out his sword, and storm forth to do what he really loves to do, namely, judge and destroy. Of course, some will be saved—the few who somehow could please him. But that is not his heart’s desire. He is basically angry—always angry. And the best we can do is stay out of his way, and maybe, if we keep the rules well enough, we could sneak by him when he is in one of his temporary good moods.

### **God’s Deepest Delight**

Jesus is at pains to help you not feel that way about God. And I want to draw your attention to one verse, namely, Luke 12:32, because every little piece of this verse is intended to help take away the fear that Jesus knows we struggle with, namely, that God begrudges his benefits, that he is constrained and out of character when he does nice things, that at bottom he is angry and loves to vent his anger.

Luke 12:32 is a verse about the nature of God. It’s a verse about what kind of heart God has. It’s a verse about what makes God glad—not merely about what God will do or what he has to do, but what he delights to do, what he loves to do, and what he takes pleasure in doing. “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

The phrase “good pleasure,” is a verb in Greek: “to be a pleasure” or “to be pleased by.” You could translate it: “It pleased God,” or, “God chose it gladly.” In other words, God is not acting in this generous way in order to cloak and hide some malicious motive. The word “good pleasure” utterly rules that out. He is not saying inside, “I will have to be generous for a while even though I don’t want to be, because what I really want to do is bring judgment on sinners.”

The Lord’s meaning is inescapable: God is acting here in freedom. He is not under constraint to do what he doesn’t really want to do. At this very point, when he gives his flock the kingdom, he is acting out his deepest delight. This is what the word means: God’s joy, his desire, his want and wish and hope and pleasure and gladness and delight, is to give the kingdom to his flock.

**\*taken from “*Love To The Uttermost Devotional*” - Desiring God**