

**2026
DAILY
DEVOTIONAL**

SEPTEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 31

HOW TO PRACTICE THE SOAP METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY

The SOAP method is a simple and powerful way to engage with Scripture and apply it to your daily life. It stands for Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer. Using SOAP helps you slow down, reflect deeply on God's Word and respond thoughtfully.

1. Prepare a Quiet Space

- Find a calm, quiet place where you won't be disturbed.
- Sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths.
- Begin with a short prayer, asking God to speak to you through His Word.

2. S - Scripture

- Choose a short passage of Scripture (a few verses or a chapter).
- Read the passage slowly and thoughtfully, even multiple times.
- Write down the verse or verses that stand out to you most.

3. O - Observation

- What do you notice about the passage?
- Who is speaking? Who is being addressed?
- Are there any repeated words, key themes or commands?
- Write down your observations—what's happening, what truths are being revealed?

4. A - Application

- Ask: How does this apply to my life right now?
- Is there a sin to confess, a promise to claim, a command to obey or an example to follow?
- Write down how you will live differently because of this truth.

5. P - Prayer

- Write a short prayer responding to what you've learned. It could include praise, confession, a request for strength or a desire to grow.
- Talk to God about what you read and ask for help to apply it.

6. Conclude

- Close with a moment of stillness, thanking God for His Word.
- Carry the truth or challenge from the passage with you into the rest of your day.

Helpful Tips

- Keep a dedicated journal or notebook for your SOAP studies.
- Try doing this at the same time each day to create a rhythm.
- Don't worry about making it perfect. The goal is not performance—it's connection with God.

SEPTEMBER 30

PERSEVERING LIKE JESUS

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

JAMES 1:12

One of my favorite things about the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels is that He is the ultimate example of perseverance and generosity. From the moment He began His ministry, He faced misunderstanding, rejection and hardship.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry and welcomed the outcast, even when it left Him exhausted and misunderstood. His journey led Him to the cross, the greatest trial imaginable, where He gave Himself completely for the sake of others. In His perseverance, He demonstrated perfect love and kindness, showing that true blessing comes from steadfast faithfulness, even in the face of suffering. James reminds us that enduring trials is not in vain. When we persevere in serving others through acts of generosity, kindness or sacrifice, we follow in Jesus' footsteps. Generosity rooted in faith is not about comfort or recognition; it is a deliberate choice to trust God, give of ourselves, and reflect Christ's love. Living generously means persevering, even when it is hard, and trusting that God uses every act of faithfulness for eternal purposes.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to follow Jesus' example of perseverance and generosity. Teach me to serve with faithfulness, even when it is hard, and trust that my efforts matter for Your glory. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

OCTOBER 1

ABUNDANTLY MORE

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" ... Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."

JOHN 6:8-9, 11-12

Jesus had been teaching and a large crowd followed Him, which often was the case. Much time passed and Jesus in His compassion saw that the people were hungry. Tasking the disciples to solve this problem, Andrew pointed out a young boy who had five small loaves of bread and two fish. He humbly gave up his food to Jesus, not thinking about his own hunger and needs. As a small child, he gave all that he had to His Lord.

Author and speaker Paul David Tripp says it like this, "No one in the crowd would have thought that this boy mattered. No one would have imagined that what he was carrying in his little basket would not only be the provision of the moment, but the basis of one of the most significant sermons Jesus ever preached. This was one little boy in the crowd, with a little bit of seafood and bread, but he had been chosen by God to be a significant piece of the Messiah's redemptive plan not only for that day, but for the rest of human history. We will never know which little person God will use, and how."

The food was multiplied, and all the thousands were fed. God provided enough for everyone there and abundantly more. The loaves and the fishes. If any of us choose to place what we have in the hands of Jesus, not enough becomes more than enough.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to live generously, humbly and trusting that Jesus can take anything I have and make it enough. Amen

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

OCTOBER 2

CREATED FOR A PURPOSE

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:10

Several years ago, I worked alongside a group of volunteers to build a wheelchair ramp for an elderly woman in the community. Some brought tools. Others brought materials. A few simply provided water and encouragement. No one person did everything, but each contributed something important. By the end of the day, a family had easier access to their home because ordinary people used their unique abilities to serve.

Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:10 that we are God's handiwork. The word suggests a masterpiece, something carefully designed and intentionally created. Too often we compare ourselves to others and wonder if we have enough talent, influence, or resources to make a difference. But God is not asking us to be someone else. He is calling us to be faithful with the gifts He has given us.

This verse also reminds us that good works are not an afterthought. God prepared them in advance for us. Long before we recognized a need, God was already at work. He places us in neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, churches, and communities where we can be His hands and feet.

A missional life begins with understanding that we have been sent. Every act of kindness, every word of encouragement, every opportunity to share Christ is part of God's purpose for us. We do not serve to earn God's love. We serve because we have already received it. As God's workmanship, we are called to reflect His grace to a world that desperately needs Him.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating me with purpose. Open my eyes to the opportunities You have prepared for me today. Help me use my gifts to serve others and point them to Christ. May my life reflect Your love wherever You send me. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 3

REFLECTION

Life doesn't slow down on its own, we have to choose it. In Scripture, moments of pause became turning points where God reminded His people who He was and who they were called to be. As you step into the weekend, take time to breathe deeply and seek God's presence. Humility grows when we release the rush and make room for Him. In the quiet, you may find that God's voice is closer than you thought.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

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You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

Imagine receiving a gift card to your favorite restaurant. You're free to order anything you want. But as you sit at the table, the server reminds you: this meal isn't just about satisfying yourself. The gift is meant to be shared.

Freedom in Christ means we're no longer bound by guilt, sin or trying to earn God's approval. But with that freedom comes a responsibility. Instead of asking, "What do I want?" we begin asking, "Who can I serve?" Our freedom becomes the starting point for lives poured out in kindness, compassion and sacrifice.

In Galatians 5:13, Paul reminds us that Christian freedom works the same way. Jesus didn't set us free so we could live selfishly. He freed us so we could live fully serving one another with love.

Serving doesn't always mean grand gestures. Sometimes it's a text of encouragement, a meal for a struggling friend, or simply listening when someone needs to talk. As we serve humbly in love, we reflect the heart of Jesus to a world desperate for His grace.

So today, look for small ways to turn your freedom into service. After all, true freedom isn't about living for us it's about loving others well.

PRAYER

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 6

DEEP GRATITUDE

Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

COLOSSIANS 3:16C

When I was growing up, after every birthday, Christmas or any special celebration when we had opened a gift, my brother and I would find ourselves at the kitchen table writing thank you notes. This was a non-negotiable in our family when we had received something that had been thoughtfully picked out just for us. And we knew that it wasn't enough to simply write, "Thank you for the gift. It was so great!" We knew that the note needed to be heartfelt and sincere, including a detailed description of the gift, how we were planning to use it, what it meant to us or how it had already changed our lives. I am incredibly grateful that my parents instilled in us this practice, no matter how excruciating it seemed to us at the time!

Not only should we be grateful for the people around us and the gifts that they bring to our lives, the author of Colossians says our worship should also be a thank you note written to God.

As we sing, pray, study Scripture and learn in community together, we should constantly be thanking God, not generically with a "thank you for the gift. It was so great," but specifically including a detailed description of it, how we've been able to use it, what it meant and how it's already transformed our lives. By being in community together, we have the opportunity to remind one another to regularly put our gratitude into words for our Heavenly Father.

PRAYER

Gracious God, who has given us more than we ever could have imagined, cultivate within us hearts of gratitude. Help us to be people who don't take your gifts for granted but recognize, cherish, and thank you with all our hearts. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

OCTOBER 7

SET APART AS HOLY

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

1 PETER 1:15-16

The Greek word for "holy" is *hagios*, which means, "set apart, devoted and pure." The word has hints of putting aside something, to be saved for a certain reason. Like having a piggy bank full of change, it is reserved for a special purpose, it is full of meaning and distinction. That's what God calls us to, to be set apart in our hearts, minds and actions.

Living generously is a tangible way to practice this holiness. When we give our time, resources or attention selflessly, we are set apart from the world's selfish patterns, devoted to God's purposes and reflecting His purity and love.

Generosity rooted in holiness is not obligation; it's a deliberate act of devotion. Each small sacrifice, each patient word and every moment spent serving becomes a way to honor God and show His character to others. Our generosity sets us apart, making us living examples of His love in a world that desperately needs it. So, be Holy as God is Holy.

PRAYER

Lord, help me be set apart for You. Teach me to live generously, devoting my time, resources and heart to reflect Your holiness and love. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

OCTOBER 8

ALL ARE WORTHY

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-13

"Jonah was a prophet, ooh ooh, but he really never got it, sad but true." Do you remember that Veggie Tales song? Jonah was a prophet, but when God asked him to do his job, he ran in the other direction! Finally, convinced by three days in the belly of a whale, he obeyed God and shared with the Ninevites the message God had for them. But his heart was still hard. He was angry and said in Jonah 4:2, "I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." Jonah did not want God to forgive the Ninevites because he deemed them unforgivable.

Pride got in his way. Jonah was unable to humble himself enough to see that the way he described God in Jonah 4:2 was the reason God could forgive Jonah for his own sins, yet Jonah couldn't admit that the 120,000 people in Ninevah were deemed worthy to deserve that same forgiveness.

As God's chosen people, we are called to "clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Jonah's story reminds us how hard that can be. Like Jonah, we may want justice for others but mercy for ourselves. Yet Christ calls us to forgive as He forgave us. True compassion means reflecting God's heart—even when it's uncomfortable. When we choose forgiveness over resentment and mercy over pride, we reveal God's love to a world that desperately needs it.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to wear Your character daily. Teach me to forgive freely, love deeply and extend mercy as You do. Humble my heart to reflect Your compassion. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

OCTOBER 9

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

LUKE 9:23

On any given day, it would not take long to come across a person who would be wearing a cross necklace of some kind. It is odd to think that what once was a Roman torture device has now become a fashion statement.

Jesus faced a brutal death as he was crucified in front of all to see. His hands and feet were nailed to wood using metal spikes. The Roman soldiers placed a crown of thorns on his head and a sign above him mocking him as the King of the Jews, before he was hung in the air. Chapters before this ever takes place, Jesus is addressing his disciples and tells them that if they are going to be devoted to his way, they must take up their cross and follow him. Jesus reminds them that it is going to cost them something to be his disciples: there would have to be a death. The same thing is true for us. In order to follow Jesus, we too have to take up our cross and put to death our old selves. We crucify our old sins, old desires, and old attitudes.

It means allowing the cross to shape the way we live. When we take up our cross, we lay down our comfort, our selfishness, our preferences, and our desire to live only for ourselves. Living missionally means taking that surrendered life into the world around us—loving people, serving others, and making Jesus visible through the way we live. The question isn't simply, "Do people know that I follow Jesus?" but "Can people experience the love of Jesus because I follow Him?"

PRAYER

Jesus, help me move beyond simply wearing Your name and teach me to live it. Give me the courage to lay down my own agenda and follow You wherever You lead. Use my life, my words, and my actions to make Your love visible to the people around me. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

REST

OCTOBER 11

NOTES

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

[illegible]

OCTOBER 12

EMBODIED WORSHIP

*Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.*

PSALM 95:6

Growing up, I attended a Methodist Church where we rigidly sat and stood during worship but we hardly ever clapped, raised our hands, kneeled or moved our bodies in any other way. When I got to college, I attended a huge worship conference for students and for the first time, I saw people worshipping in all sorts of ways. I will never forget in my small group breakout session when we were talking about what it would be like when we stood in the presence of Jesus at the end of time and began to worship him ceaselessly with all of the angels and other believers, kneeling before the heavenly throne.

All of a sudden one of the boys in our group, bound by a wheelchair, leapt up and fell on his face with tears streaming down his face. He told us he couldn't sit any longer, his body needed to do what it would do before Jesus on that day.

For some of us, expressing ourselves physically in worship is very out of our comfort zones and yet, I am reminded of a book I once read that talked about that we are embodied people who serve a God who in Jesus became embodied. Standing, sitting, kneeling, folding our hands, raising our arms, lifting our faces, bowing our head, feeling the waters of baptism, tasting the bread and juice of communion are all ways that we can readily come to experience the power of God. How can you push yourself out of your comfort zone to experience God in an embodied way this week?

PRAYER

Creator God, we thank You for creating us as embodied beings and for reminding us that our worship doesn't have to be rigid but can be experienced in our movements as well. Give us courage to step out of our comfort zone and encounter You in new and unexpected ways through worship. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

OCTOBER 13

THE STRENGTH OF TOGETHERNESS

*Two are better than one, because they
have a good return for their labor: If either
of them falls down, one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls and has no one
to help them up.*

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10

Imagine hiking alone on a steep mountain trail. Suddenly, you slip and twist your ankle. Alone, you're vulnerable, struggling to move forward or call for help. But with a companion, someone can steady you, bring aid and encourage you onward.

This picture reflects the profound truth in Ecclesiastes 4:9-10: companionship is a source of strength and resilience. Life's challenges can cause us to stumble—whether emotionally, spiritually or physically. But having someone beside us means we're not alone in our struggles. We can lean on each other for support, encouragement and practical help.

God created us for community, for relationship. When we walk through trials, a friend or loved one can help "lift us up." This mutual support not only eases burdens but also produces greater fruitfulness in our work and life.

If you're feeling isolated, reach out. If you see someone struggling, be ready to lend a hand. Together, we reflect God's love and grace, strengthening one another in the journey.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the gift of community. Help me to be both humble enough to accept help and generous enough to offer it. Teach me to walk alongside others with love and encouragement, reflecting Your heart. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 14

TUNING OUR LIFE TO GOD

Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

ROMANS 6:13

Before a musician ever steps on stage, they spend intentional time tuning every string of their guitar, violin or cello. Every adjustment matters because one loose string could ruin the harmony and crush the performance, but careful attention allows the music to flow beautifully. This tuning sounds a lot like what Paul tells us in the book of Romans. Romans 6:13 calls us to offer every part of ourselves to God.

Living generously works the same way.

God doesn't ask us to give only what's convenient or comfortable; He invites us to offer our time, talents and resources fully, as instruments of righteousness. When our hearts, hands and minds are surrendered to Him, generosity becomes natural and powerful.

Each act of service, every encouraging word and every gift we share becomes a note in God's symphony of love. The more we yield ourselves to Him, the more our lives reflect His grace and goodness. Generosity isn't just about what we give—it's about who we are: fully devoted, fully alive and fully instruments of His righteousness.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to offer all of myself to You. Teach me to live generously in every area of life, so that my actions, words and resources bring glory to You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

OCTOBER 15

NO JUNK

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:8-10

Growing up one of my favorite people was the Christian educator at our church. She was welcoming and kind and funny and humble and her office at the church was a mess! My mom's desk was outside of the Christian education office, and I loved to go in there to see her. There were books everywhere and papers all over her desk, and she would have to shift things around to make a place for me to sit. In the middle of all of this chaos was a black and white hand drawn picture of a messy looking cartoon kid and in bold letters below his figure were the words, "God Don't Make No Junk." It wasn't framed and the paper was dog-eared, but every time I entered her space that is what I saw.

As a young girl who constantly questioned her appearance and friends and choices, I found those five words to be a balm to my soul.

Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are God's handiwork or masterpiece, not by accident but with a specific purpose to do good deeds through Him and for Him. "God Don't Make No Junk." But before we get puffed up about being referred to as a masterpiece, verses 8-9 reminds us that it's only through God that we are seen that way. No one can boast. It's like the quote, "Humility is the narrow zone where you're not building yourself up OR beating yourself up."

Even when we feel inadequate or unseen, remember we are, every one of us, fearfully and wonderfully made with a purpose and for a purpose.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for creating me with purpose and beauty. Help me see myself and those around me through Your eyes. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

OCTOBER 16

READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

1 PETER 3:15

Once, a coworker asked me a simple question: “How are you able to stay positive when things are so difficult?” The question didn’t happen during a church service or Bible study. It came during an ordinary conversation. Yet that question opened the door to talk about faith, hope, and the difference Christ makes in my everyday life.

Peter wrote to believers facing challenges and opposition for their faith. Instead of telling them to argue, defend themselves aggressively, or withdraw from the world, he instructed them to honor Christ as Lord in their hearts and be ready to explain the hope they possessed.

Mission often happens in moments we don’t expect. When people see peace in the middle of hardship, joy during difficulty, or kindness in a divided world, they may begin asking questions. Notice that Peter connects our witness to our hearts. Before we can speak about Christ, we must be surrendered to Him. As we walk closely with Jesus, our lives become evidence of His transforming power. Then, when opportunities arise, we can naturally share why we have hope.

Being prepared does not require having all the answers. It means knowing the One who is the answer. As followers of Christ, we are called to live in such a way that others see our hope and want to know its source.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me honor Christ as Lord in my heart each day. Give me courage to share the hope I have in Jesus and wisdom to speak with gentleness and love. Open my eyes to the opportunities You place before me and use my life to point others to You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 17

REFLECTION

Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is slow down. Scripture shows us that God often met His people in the in-between spaces, after the work was done and before the next step began. As you enter the weekend, create room to breathe, reflect and let God re-center your heart. Humility grows when we stop striving long enough to recognize God’s steady presence. Give Him space, and He will speak.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week’s devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse’s entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

*As iron sharpens iron,
so one person sharpens another.*
PROVERBS 27:17

Proverbs 27:17 isn't just an old saying, it's a reminder that we're better together. Real friendships don't just make life more fun; they make us stronger, wiser and more grounded in truth. The right people in your life will challenge your thinking, hold you accountable and encourage you to keep going when you feel like giving up.

So, who's sharpening you? And just as important, who are you sharpening? Being that person means showing up, speaking truth and walking with someone through both wins and setbacks.

PRAYER

God, thank You for friends who help shape me into who You've called me to be. Help me to grow through connection and to be a source of growth for others. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 20

A DIFFERENT SACRIFICE

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise...

HEBREWS 13:15A

In middle and high school, there was no place I would rather be on Wednesdays or Sundays than at my church's youth group. We had the most fun youth director who constantly had some outlandish activity planned to draw us in, from drinking a blended happy meal to setting up an entire Amazing Race course. Alongside him were faithful adults serving every week so that we students had support, encouragement and faithful leadership in our lives. It wasn't until I became an adult that I realized what a great sacrifice that must have been on their part. They had spouses, children, jobs, responsibilities and, yet, they chose every week to give of their time that we might encounter Jesus' love.

In Old Testament times, the Jews lived under an intricate sacrificial system. Per God's regulations, they would have to bring an animal to be slaughtered on the altar for the cleansing of their sins. However, when Jesus came and gave his life as a sacrifice, no longer was an animal sacrifice required. Through Jesus' blood, once and for all, their (and our) sins had been forgiven. Now, what God asks of us is not a blood sacrifice but a sacrifice of praise, a sacrifice of our lives. Like those volunteer leaders who showed up to my church's youth group week after week, sacrificing their precious time and energy on behalf of me and my friends, we too must lead lives that are a living sacrifice to Christ and welcome others into his Kingdom.

PRAYER

Giving God, who sacrificed your own life through your son Jesus Christ on our behalf, create in us hearts that seek to give of ourselves that others might find your salvation. Remind us that nothing that we ever do in your will is done in vain. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

OCTOBER 21

PURSUE PEACE

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

HEBREWS 12:14

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, twenty-two American aid and faith based organizations joined together to form CARE (originally the "Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe"). Their mission was to send relief packages of food, clothing and supplies to starving and displaced families across war-torn Europe. The first CARE packages arrived in Le Havre, France in May 1946, offering hope, nourishment and peace to lives shattered by conflict. This historical act beautifully illustrates Hebrews 12:14: we're called to live in peace and pursue holiness. Generosity is one powerful way to embody both. Giving of ourselves, offering practical help, entering into others' suffering, these actions build bridges of reconciliation and reflect God's holy character.

Generosity isn't just about meeting needs, it's a heart work that shapes relationships, honors God and offers peace in places of brokenness.

When we choose to give our time, resources, patience or encouragement, we mirror the generosity of God and His own gracious invitation to receive His love and grace in abundance. In living generously, we step in to embrace peace and become agents of God's restoration in the world.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to live in peace and pursue holiness through generous living. Teach me to see the needs around me, to give sacrificially of myself, and to reflect Your loving, generous heart to everyone I meet. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

OCTOBER 22

PLANT THE SEED

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:6-7

As Halloween would draw near, my kids always wanted to read “The Pumpkin Patch Parable”. In the story, the farmer plants a seed and patiently watches a pumpkin grow. When it is time, he picks the pumpkin and brings it to his home. He empties it of all the ‘guts’ and makes it clean. He places a candle inside so the pumpkin will be ready to bring light and joy when it is lit on Halloween. The book is such a beautiful analogy to teach how after the seed is planted, God picks us, empties out the yucky sin from inside us, and puts His light inside us to shine so others can see. We are the pumpkin and God is the farmer!

Our role in God’s kingdom is to plant and water, but the true growth comes from Him. We may labor, serve and share the gospel, yet it is God who transforms hearts. This truth keeps us humble and dependent on Him. May you trust that your efforts in faith are a part of His divine plan.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to faithfully plant and water where You lead. Remind me that true growth comes from You alone. May I trust in Your timing and power, giving You all the glory. Amen.

OCTOBER 23

OPEN DOORS

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message...

COLOSSIANS 4:2-3

A friend was telling me recently about a conversation he had while waiting in line at a coffee shop. What began as casual small talk turned into a discussion about faith, hope, and purpose. Later he reflected, “I wasn’t looking for an opportunity. God simply opened a door.”

Many of us think mission work happens only on distant mission fields or during organized church events. Yet Paul paints a different picture in Colossians 4:2-3. Writing from prison, he asks believers to pray faithfully and to watch for opportunities God provides. Even while confined, Paul believed God could open doors for the gospel.

That same truth applies to us today. God is constantly at work in the lives of people around us. He places neighbors, coworkers, classmates, and friends in our paths. Our role is not to force conversations or create opportunities on our own. Instead, we are called to devote ourselves to prayer, remain spiritually alert, and trust God to open the right doors.

Every day holds the possibility of a divine appointment. A simple act of kindness, a listening ear, or a word about Christ can become an open door through which God works. When we pray, watch, and trust Him, we become partners in His mission.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me devote myself to prayer and remain watchful for the opportunities You provide. Open doors for the gospel through my words and actions. Give me courage to share Your love and wisdom to recognize the people You place in my path. Use me for Your mission today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

REFLECTION

OCTOBER 24

REFLECTION

The rhythm of rest is woven into God's design for us. Before moving into what's next, He often invites us to pause and pay attention to His goodness. This weekend, choose to be intentional: look back with gratitude, sit quietly with the Lord and let Him soften and prepare your heart. When we slow down, we begin to see how God has been at work all along.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

REST

OCTOBER 25

NOTES

[illegible]

OCTOBER 26

HEALING IN HONESTY

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

JAMES 5:16

Have you ever been a part of a group project when no one's being honest? Everyone pretends they are all doing their part, but things fall apart because no one admits what's missing. Now imagine what would happen if one person spoke up and said "I need help." Suddenly, things shift. The group rallies, divides the work and finishes stronger together.

That's what James 5:16 is all about. Confession isn't about shame, it's about freedom. When we're brave enough to be honest with each other about our struggles, temptations and failures, it creates space for healing. God uses community to restore what's broken.

We often think of prayer as something we do alone, silently, behind closed doors. And yes, that's important. But Scripture reminds us there's power when we pray for each other. God moves when we carry one another's burdens.

You don't have to be perfect to pray powerful prayers. You just need to be real. When we step into the light, we invite healing not just for ourselves, but for others too.

PRAYER

God, help me to live openly and love deeply. Give me the courage to confess what I've been hiding and the compassion to pray for others. Teach me the power of honesty and the beauty of healing that only comes through You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

OCTOBER 27

THE HOLY DARK

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God...

ACTS 16:25A

In 1914, leading into the Christmas season, the world was consumed by World War I. Soldiers—French, Belgian & British—were hunkered down in frozen and damp trenches, wondering if they'd be the next one to die. It was kill or be killed, wound or be wounded. Every day was filled with the sound of artillery until on Christmas Eve, suddenly, silence. The gunfire ceased so quickly that the silence rang in their ears until across enemy lines rang out a familiar melody, "Silent Night." Crawling out of their trenches that night, those who had been fighting united and sang together of the truth of Christmas. It was a holy moment in the midst of a dark season.

Here in the book of Acts, Paul and Silas have been arrested and thrown into prison for sharing the good news through a servant girl who'd previously made her master's living telling fortunes. Even though they were unfairly jailed, in their prison cell Paul and Silas began to sing the hymns of the faith, reminding themselves of the truth of God and sharing it with anyone who would listen. It was a holy moment in the midst of a dark season. So often when we encounter a difficult season in the midst of our lives, our immediate inclination is to turn away from God but Paul and Silas and the men on the battlefield remind us that we should turn toward God. Together, we should worship, singing the truth of our faith and sharing it with anyone who will listen.

PRAYER

Holy God, you bring light in the midst of the darkest situations, never abandoning us but being our certain guide. May we recognize your faithfulness and praise you even in our storms. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

OCTOBER 28

GENEROSITY GUIDED BY TRUST

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.*

PROVERBS 3:5-6

In the early 1900s, Booker T. Washington had a dream: to start the Tuskegee Institute, a school that would educate and empower African Americans in the segregated South.

He didn't have much in the way of resources, and plenty of people thought it was impossible.

But Washington trusted God to guide him, and he relied on the generosity of people who believed in the vision. Small gifts of money, hours of work and acts of support from others came together to build something far bigger than any one person could have done alone. Tuskegee grew into a place of opportunity, hope and transformation for thousands of lives.

Trusting God fully is never easy, and submitting our plans to Him can feel risky. But generosity works the same way. When we give our time, resources or care, even without knowing exactly how it will all turn out, we are stepping out in faith. It is an act of trust. God can take those acts of generosity and multiply them in ways we could never imagine, bringing hope, restoration and blessing to others. Every little act of giving becomes a channel for His love, a way to reflect His heart to the world.

PRAYER

Lord, help me trust You fully in every act of generosity. Guide my heart, my resources and my actions so that my giving reflects Your love, builds hope and brings glory to Your name. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

OCTOBER 29

REVENGE?

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

HEBREWS 13:16

My husband spent one summer in college living in Mexico doing mission work with an organization called AIM. The AIM staff used a very old Suburban that sometimes got them to their destination. One evening, my husband and another staff member were traveling back to base camp on a Mexican highway when they blew a tire. A police car pulled to a stop and immediately began helping them. He found stones to wedge under the jack so they could get the Suburban high enough off the ground to change the tire. As he worked, he kept saying, "Revenge, gringos!" in Spanish and laughing.

The boys assumed he wanted money for helping, which was common in that area, and they wondered what he meant by "revenge." When they finished changing the tire, the policeman laughed and said it again. They finally realized the Mexican soccer team was playing the USA that night. He was simply letting these American "gringos" know that Mexico was going to get its revenge! This man was a total blessing. He knew exactly how to use the rocks and the terrain to make the jack work.

Sometimes living missionally simply looks like being willing to receive help from the person God places in your path. God can use people we don't expect in places we don't expect to meet needs we don't know how to meet. And He can use us in the same way for someone else.

PRAYER

Lord, help me recognize the opportunities You place in my path to help others. Give me humility to receive help when I need it and the heart to offer help when someone else is struggling. Use my ordinary encounters to show Your love in unexpected ways. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

OCTOBER 30

HALLOWEEN

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed,
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving
thanks to God the Father through him.*

COLOSSIANS 3:17

One of my favorite Halloween memories is when our exchange student got to trick or treat for the very first time. He was 17 years old and had been living with us for about a month and a half. He had heard of the American tradition but had never seen it or participated in it. We gave him a pillowcase and sent him out with our younger children to harvest for candy! He ran from house to house and yelled “trick or treat” in his heavy accent and was filled with joy. He ran past us and shouted, “This is the best night ever!”

Someone once said, “Halloween: a day when we get it right. Strangers come to us, beautiful, ugly, odd or scary, and we accept them all without question, compliment them, treat them kindly, and give them good things. Why don’t we live everyday like that?”

Every action, word and thought in our daily lives should reflect Christ. Whether at work, home, moments of rest or holiday celebrations we are called to glorify God. Serving with a grateful heart shifts our perspective, turning even mundane tasks into acts of worship. When we align our lives with Jesus, we become living testimonies of His grace and love. So, light your jack-o-lantern, turn your porch light on, put a smile on your face and share the joy and light that only comes from the Lord.

PRAYER

*Lord, help me to honor You in everything I do.
Let my words and actions reflect Your love, and
may my heart overflow with gratitude. Guide me
to live in a way that glorifies You. Amen.*

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

OCTOBER 31

REFLECTION

Life doesn’t slow down on its own, we have to choose it. In Scripture, moments of pause became turning points where God reminded His people who He was and who they were called to be. As you step into the weekend, take time to breathe deeply and seek God’s presence. Humility grows when we release the rush and make room for Him. In the quiet, you may find that God’s voice is closer than you thought.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week’s devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse’s entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

[illegible]

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

HEBREWS 13:7-8

My great uncle was a Methodist pastor. He was also one of my very favorite people to be around. He would greet you by grabbing your hand and squeezing so hard you could hear your bones crunch. While he was holding your hand, he would look you in the eye and tell you a joke and laugh so hard you couldn't help but laugh with him. Joy always radiated off of him. He always made me feel seen and important and loved. The stories at his funeral were all about his kindness, and humor, secret financial help to others and preaching at almost every church, regardless of denomination, in Western North Carolina. I wanted to be just like him.

All Saints Day reminds us that we stand on the shoulders of all those faithful witnesses who have gone before us—the living and the dead. We are a part of a body of believers that dwell in heaven and on earth. It's a day set aside to remind us that grace is relational. We know and experience God's love through the people God gives us in this life. We couldn't do what we are called to without the help of all those who have come before us. Let us remember them well with the hope that one day we will also be remembered well.

PRAYER

Almighty God, we give thanks for the example of the saints, those who have gone before us and those who walk with us today. We celebrate their lives of faith, love and service, and we ask in true humility for Your grace to follow in their footsteps. Amen.

NOVEMBER 3

POTENTIAL, NOT PREFERENCES

"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

JOHN 4:24

Back in the 1990s, the church where I attended decided to start a contemporary worship service. Cutting edge for the time, we purchased corded microphones, set-up a drum kit and situated an overhead projector to project the song lyrics on the back wall of the church for the singers. It was a big step for that little church to move outside of their comfort zone and try something new and very different than what they'd known. While most were on board with the idea, some resisted it, insisting that there was only one worship style that was legitimate and it involved hymns and an organ. Their own preferences almost got in the way of the potential that God saw in reaching unbelievers in the community through a different worship style.

In this passage from John 4, Jesus is sitting on the side of the well with the Samaritan woman, discussing who he is. Realizing that he is some kind of prophet, she asks him to finally settle a debate that has been happening in their community between the Jews and the Samaritans (two groups that hated one another)—Is Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem the correct place to worship God? Jesus' response in this verse reminds us that it isn't about where they worship. It's about worshipping with a heart centered in God's spirit and his will for our lives. It's about not letting our own preferences get in the way of God's potential for our community.

PRAYER

Compassionate God, please forgive us for the times we have let our own comfort and preferences get in the way of creating space for you to work in the lives of unbelievers. Help us to center ourselves in your Spirit that we might faithfully follow your lead and reach the lost.
Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

NOVEMBER 4

PRESS ON

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 3:14

During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, British runner Derek Redmond tore his hamstring midway through the 400-meter race. As he fell to the track in agony, it seemed his Olympic dream was over and done. The stadium watched to see what would happen next. Then, something remarkable unfolded before them. His father, moved by love, ran from the stands, helped him to his feet and together they hobbled across the finish line. The crowd erupted, not because Derek won the race, but because he refused to quit. Paul's words in Philippians 3 echo this same spirit. Life in Christ isn't about sprinting without struggle; it's about persevering in the face of trial. There are moments when disappointment, failure or fatigue make us want to stop. Yet Paul reminds us that the goal is not comfort, or ease, it's Christ Himself. Like Jesus, we are to generously give ourselves away each and every day for the sake of the Gospel. Our calling is heavenward, and the prize is eternal life with Him. Whatever obstacle stands before you today, remember, you're not running alone. Your Father is with you, strengthening every step. Keep your eyes on Jesus and press on.

PRAYER

Lord, when the race feels long and my strength fades, remind me that You run beside me. Give me courage to press on and live generously with eyes fixed on the eternal prize. Help me not to give up but to move forward in faith. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

NOVEMBER 5

ROOTED IN THE RIGHT THINGS

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

ACTS 2:42

Imagine a group chat that never stops buzzing. Friends are sharing life updates, funny memes, serious questions and prayer requests. It's not just digital noise, it's community. When someone's hurting, others send food, prayers or just show up. When someone celebrates, they all celebrate together. That's more than a chat thread, it's a glimpse of Acts 2:42 in action today.

In Acts 2:42, we see a snapshot of the early church's heartbeat: teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer. These weren't just occasional activities, but constant ones. In a world full of distractions, it's easy to "attend" church without being the church. But real spiritual growth and connection happen when we intentionally build rhythms of truth, community and prayer into our daily lives.

The early believers didn't just fit these things into their schedules; these were the center of their lives. Imagine what our lives would look like if we gave that same devotion to God and each other. When we consistently show up for God and for people, we start building something deeper than convenience. We build Kingdom culture.

Make space today for what matters. Join a small group, start a prayer journal or invite someone over for coffee. Let Acts 2:42 guide the way.

PRAYER

God, help me stay devoted to Your Word, to real community and to prayer. Teach me to build my life around what truly lasts. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

NOVEMBER 6

BECOMING ALL THINGS

To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings

1 CORINTHIANS 9:22-23

I once watched a missionary speak to a group of children at a church event. Instead of beginning with a sermon, he sat on the floor with them, listened to their stories, and spoke in a way they could understand. Later that day, he met with adults and communicated the same gospel message in a completely different manner. The message never changed, but his approach did. He was willing to meet people where they were.

This passage challenges us to think missionally. It's easy to expect others to come to us, speak our language, understand our traditions, or fit into our routines. Paul did the opposite. He intentionally entered the world of others, building relationships and removing unnecessary barriers so they could encounter Jesus.

Being "all things to all people" does not mean compromising biblical truth. It means loving people enough to understand them, listen to them, and serve them. Mission begins when we place the needs of others ahead of our own preferences.

Everyday God places people around us who need hope. Our neighbors, coworkers, friends, and family members may never hear the gospel unless someone is willing to step into their world. Like Paul, may we do everything for the sake of the gospel, so that others might come to know the saving grace of Christ.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, give me a heart for people and a passion for Your gospel. Help me set aside my preferences and lovingly meet people where they are. Use my words, actions, and relationships to point others to You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

REST

NOVEMBER 8

NOTES

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

[illegible]

NOVEMBER 9

SCROLL WITH PURPOSE

Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

ROMANS 12:2A

Every day, we spend hours scrolling through social media feeds filled with images, opinions and trends. It's easy to start thinking that what we see there defines what we should value, how we should feel or who we should be. But if we let the world's constant noise shape our minds, we lose sight of God's unique plan for us.

Romans 12:2 challenges us not to conform to the world and to avoid getting caught up in the patterns and pressures that social media often amplifies: comparison, perfectionism and fear of missing out. Instead, God invites us to renew our minds. This means choosing what we consume carefully, filling our thoughts with His truth rather than the world's noise.

When we renew our minds by focusing on God's Word and prayer, we gain clarity. We start to recognize His good and perfect will for our lives beyond the likes, shares and filters.

So next time you scroll, ask yourself: Is this feeding my mind and soul or is it pulling me away from the life God designed for me?

PRAYER

God, help me filter what I let into my mind. Renew my thoughts so I can live according to Your perfect will, not the world's trends. Guide me to live with purpose and focus on You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

NOVEMBER 10

THE GOOD PLACE

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor..."

REVELATION 5:13B

A few years ago there was a television show called The Good Place. In its initial season, a deceased woman named Eleanor is sent to what seems to be heaven. In the good place, the sun is always shining, beautiful colors are everywhere, the homes are uniquely designed to each resident's preferred style and everyone is kind and welcoming. So often when we imagine heaven, this is similar to what we envision.

However, none of those imaginings capture what we are told in Scripture is the center of our experience and purpose in heaven. Heaven does not exist simply for our enjoyment. Heaven is meant to be the full circle resolution of creation once again becoming what it was meant to be in the beginning as God's perfect world. And in the midst of this perfect creation, our call is not to sit back and relax. Our call is to kneel before the throne of Jesus, the Lamb, praising his name without ceasing for all of eternity. Every time that we worship together here on the earth as a community is a foretaste of that blessed day that is to come. It's a practice round for what we will do for the rest of our eternal lives. How would it shift your perspective of our communal worship on Sunday mornings if you envisioned that you were doing it at the footstool of Jesus?

Would it change how whole-heartedly you participate to know that it is a tiny glimpse of what is to come in eternity?

PRAYER

Holy God, every single time that we step into the space of worship, when we hear voices lifted around us and are reminded that it is you and you alone whom we worship, help us to remember that this is merely just a tiny glimpse of what is to come in eternity. Center our hearts on you and your praise. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

NOVEMBER 11

LOVE SHAPES US

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4

When a sculptor begins with a rough block of marble, the final masterpiece doesn't appear overnight. Through careful chiseling, sanding and shaping, the artist gradually reveals the beauty hidden within the stone. God's generous love works the same way. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes love not as a fleeting feeling but as a steady, shaping force. Real love, God's kind of love, is patient when others test your limits.

It's kind even when kindness isn't returned. It refuses to compare, to brag or to demand the spotlight. This kind of love doesn't come naturally, it's formed in us by the Spirit of God. Each time we choose patience over irritation or kindness over criticism, God's love chisels away a little more of our roughness, revealing something beautiful: the character of Christ. Loving like this is hard work, but it's holy work. It transforms relationships, communities and our hearts. So today, let God's love shape you. Let it soften your words, steady your reactions and stretch your compassion and generosity to the world. The more we practice God's kind of love, the more we reflect the heart of Jesus.

Today, on this Veteran's Day, we especially give thanks for those who have loved us boldly by putting themselves in harm's way for our freedoms.

PRAYER

Father, today we give thanks for those who loved us well, particularly our veterans. Teach me to love as You generously love. Shape my heart to be patient, kind and humble. Help me reflect Your perfect love in all I do and say. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

NOVEMBER 12

SPIRITUAL GIFT

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-8

One of my kids has been blessed with the spiritual gift of hospitality. Every time he takes a spiritual gifts test at small group or camp, hospitality is his highest score. At school one day the guidance counselors had the students take a test to see what attributes they had to help them start thinking through future vocations. Again, hospitality was off the charts for him. If he is in the kitchen, he always asks if he can bring anyone anything. If his sister is upstairs, he always checks by her room to see if she needs anything as he is walking downstairs.

If he hosts a party, he is exhausted by the end because of tending to every person who came. This comes naturally to him. We don't know what future job he will hold, but what we see is that in day-to-day life he puts the interest of others before himself.

Paul calls believers to reflect the humility of Christ—a humility that willingly sets aside status and pride for the sake of others. Jesus chose to take on the nature of a servant, obedient even to death on a cross. These verses remind us that true greatness in God's kingdom is not found in power or recognition, but in service, compassion and humility. When we imitate Christ's humility, our relationships deepen, conflicts soften and our witness to the world grows stronger. Each day brings opportunities to serve others selflessly—at home, at work or in our communities.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, teach me to walk in Your humility. Help me serve others with a sincere heart, reflecting Your love in all I do. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

NOVEMBER 13

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself"
MARK 12:31

My son had been in Connecticut visiting a friend for a long weekend and had just gotten settled in the airport when the woman across from him asked him a question. They chatted for about an hour and had great conversations. Not long after, an announcement was made that all flights were canceled until Monday because of the weather.

My son immediately called his friend, whose family graciously said, "Come on back to our house!" The woman he had been talking to offered to take him where he needed to go. A few minutes later, her personal driver pulled up to the curb. She made sure my son got safely to his friend's house, helped him re-book his flight for Monday, and even arranged for her driver to pick him up and take him back to the airport for his return flight.

She didn't need to do any of those things for my son, but she chose to, using her resources to help him.

Jesus calls us to love our neighbors, and sometimes our "neighbor" is someone we've known for years. But sometimes our neighbor is the stranger God puts right in front of us at the airport. Loving our neighbor means being willing to notice, stop, and help even when we aren't required to. We may never know the full impact of a simple act of kindness, but we can trust that God can use our willingness to make someone's difficult day a little easier.

PRAYER

Jesus, give me eyes to notice the people You place in my path. Help me slow down enough to see when someone needs encouragement, kindness, or practical help. Help me love my neighbors—whether friends, strangers, or someone I encounter for only a few minutes—with the same selfless love You have shown me. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

NOVEMBER 14

REFLECTION

Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is slow down. Scripture shows us that God often met His people in the in-between spaces, after the work was done and before the next step began. As you enter the weekend, create room to breathe, reflect and let God re-center your heart. Humility grows when we stop striving long enough to recognize God's steady presence. Give Him space, and He will speak.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

NOVEMBER 15

NOTES

[illegible]

NOVEMBER 16

A DIFFERENT STANDARD

*But just as he who called you is holy,
so be holy in all you do; for it is written:
“Be holy, because I am holy.”*

1 PETER 1:15-16

Think about wearing a bright white shirt to a barbecue. At first, you feel confident, but the moment ketchup splatters or smoke lingers every stain shows. A white shirt demands extra care because it's different. In the same way, God calls us to live differently, to stand out in a world that often blurs the lines of right and wrong.

Peter writes, “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” Holiness means being “set apart.” It’s not about being better than others but about living by God’s standard, not the world’s. Just like that white shirt highlights every mark, following Christ makes us more aware of our choices, our words, our actions and even our thoughts.

This can feel overwhelming, but holiness isn't about achieving perfection on our own. It's about allowing God's Spirit to shape us daily. Holiness shows up when we forgive instead of holding grudges, when we choose honesty over shortcuts, when we extend compassion instead of criticism. Each small decision reflects a heart surrendered to God.

The world needs people who live differently,
not louder or harsher, but kinder, purer and more
loving. That's what holiness looks like in action.
And when others notice, it points them back
to the One who called us.

PRAYER

*Lord, thank You for calling me to live set apart.
Help me to reflect Your holiness in my everyday
choices, and may my life point others to You.
Amen.*

NOVEMBER 17

WE BELIEVE

*Let everything that has breath
praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.*

PSALM 150:6

Pastor Barbara Brown Taylor tells the story of her Episcopal congregation reciting the Nicene Creed together every Sunday morning in worship. Similar to the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed outlines the core beliefs of the Christian church from ancient times to the present, but there's one noticeable difference. Instead of "I believe," the Nicene Creed is constructed in the plural, "We believe." She talks about a time in her life when she was going through a particularly difficult season, but she showed up to church anyway. When the time came for the congregation to stand and recite the creed, all of a sudden she was overwhelmed when she heard that initial statement, "We believe." She realized that the beauty of worshipping in community together is that when we go through seasons when we are having trouble believing, the church can strongly remind us of what we believe. When others are going through similar seasons of doubt or struggle, we can do the same for them.

The Psalmist writes that everything that has breath should praise the Lord—not just humanity but all living, breathing creatures! In fact, in the Gospels, Jesus says that if we don't praise God, then the very rocks will do our job and cry out on His behalf. When we praise God with everything we've got, not only are we living into our God-given calling but we are also drawing others in, upholding them in their times of struggle and doubt and reminding them of what we believe.

PRAYER

*Faithful God, You have crafted us to praise Your name and to do so in community that others might be reminded of Your goodness and love. Help us not to take that privilege for granted but to declare what we believe with all our might.
Amen.*

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

NOVEMBER 18

GENEROUS HOPE

*Always be prepared to give an answer to
everyone who asks you to give the reason
for the hope that you have.*

1 PETER 3:15

A candle doesn't lose its flame by lighting another, it only spreads more light. The same is true of hope. When Peter challenges believers to "always be prepared to give an answer," he isn't just talking about words; he's talking about a generous spirit that freely shares the hope of Jesus with others. Sometimes, we think generosity is only about money or possessions. But one of the greatest gifts we can give is the hope that's anchored in Christ. When others are weighed down by fear, discouragement or uncertainty, your calm trust in God can spark something in them. Hope is contagious when it's shared with love and humility. Generosity of hope looks like encouragement instead of complaint, faith instead of fear and kindness instead of criticism. It's choosing to point others toward the Source of your strength, even in your own struggles. So, be ready. Be bold. Be generous. Let your life be a living testimony that says that there's still hope, because Jesus is still here.

PRAYER

Lord, make me generous not just with what I have, but with what I know: the hope found in You. Help me to share Your light with a world that needs it. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

NOVEMBER 19

HOW CAN I HELP?

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

MARK 10:45

We sat in the steep, narrow auditorium during our college visit, listening as upperclassmen shared their experiences with wide-eyed high school students and their families. After the panel, the Dean of Admissions took the stage and described the school's Jesuit philosophy.

One of the foundational Jesuit ideals is that education is meant to form "men and women for others." Learning is not simply about earning a degree or advancing a career—it is about using the gifts God has given us to serve our neighbors and contribute to the common good. He said that at the end of every class, professors intentionally left a few minutes to ask one question: "How can you use what you learned today to make the world a better place?" As soon as he said it, we knew this was where our son was meant to go to school.

Do we ask that question regularly? How can I use what I learned today to make the world a better place? How can I use my spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ? How can I lay down my own ambitions, preferences, and pride at the feet of Jesus so His love is seen more clearly through me?

Humility shifts our focus from "What can I accomplish?" to "Whom can I serve?" It reminds us that our abilities and opportunities are not simply for our own success but gifts entrusted to us by God. The more we grow in knowledge, the more opportunities we have to love others well.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for every opportunity You give us to learn and grow. Protect us from using our knowledge, talents, or resources only for ourselves. Give us the humble heart of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

NOVEMBER 20

THE DOG LIFEGUARD

Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

Our dog LOVES to swim in the lake. When we grab his lifejacket by the back door, he runs over and sits down, his whole body vibrating as he waits for us to put it on him. As soon as someone jumps off our dock, he leaps in after them. He swims in circles from person to person, checking to make sure everyone is okay. If we hold up our hand and say, "I'm good," he immediately swims to the next person. He takes his dog lifeguard duties very seriously!

The problem with a dog lifeguard is that if a new friend swimming at our dock doesn't know to put up their hand and let him know they are good, he keeps swimming toward them to "help." His version of helping involves barking and clawing at them—usually leaving our new friend with a few scratches! Sometimes our desire to help is genuine, but we don't always know what kind of help someone actually needs. We see a problem and immediately give advice, solutions, or our own ideas about what would make things better. But helping someone well often begins with simply being present and listening. Sometimes people need us to do something; sometimes they need us to sit beside them; sometimes they need encouragement; and sometimes they just need to know they aren't alone.

Our dog is convinced that everyone in the lake needs his kind of help. But sometimes the people around us don't need us to bark, claw, or jump in and take over. They need us to listen, ask what they need, and meet them where they are. The best help isn't always the help we want to give; it's the help the other person actually needs.

PRAYER

Lord, give me a heart that is willing to help others. Help me notice when someone is struggling and give me wisdom to know what they truly need. Teach me to listen before I speak, to serve without taking over, and to help without expecting anything in return. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

REST

NOVEMBER 22

NOTES

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

[illegible]

NOVEMBER 23

BUILDING BLOCK FAITH

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

2 PETER 1:5-7

If you've ever built with LEGO bricks, you know the key is stacking each piece carefully on the one before it. Skip a step or force the wrong piece, and the structure wobbles—or collapses.

Growth in faith works the same way.

Notice the order: faith is the foundation, but it doesn't stop there. God calls us to keep stacking, adding goodness, then knowledge, then self-control and so on until the structure of our lives reflects His love. Each quality builds on the last, shaping us into people who look more like Jesus.

In our instant culture, we often want “faith results” without the process, but growth is gradual. Self-control takes practice. Perseverance develops in hard times. Godliness comes through choosing His ways over our own. And love—the final block—becomes the glue that holds it all together.

Like LEGO bricks, these virtues are strongest when connected. Faith without perseverance crumbles. Knowledge without love can become harsh. But when they're stacked in order, they create a life that's both stable and beautiful.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to keep building my faith one step at a time. Teach me to grow in goodness, knowledge and love, so my life reflects You more each day. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

NOVEMBER 24

HAVE-TO'S OR GET TO'S

...serve one another humbly in love.

GALATIANS 5:13C

There is nothing I enjoy more than sitting down on the couch at the end of a long day. But, when I get home from work, there is always so much that needs to be done that stands in the way of me and that goal. We need to fix dinner, get our children bathed and ready for bed, clean up the house and prepare lunches and outfits for the next day. One day, we were complaining to our friend about how we hardly get to sit down, that we're always doing laundry and dishes. He just looked at us and said, “I view every dish that I wash as a way that I get to serve the family God's given me.” It completely shifted our view.

Writing to the church at Galatia, Paul says that because of Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf, we have been freed to live a holy and set apart life.

However with that freedom, we can choose to fall back into our sinful, complaining way of doing things or we can use that freedom to live a new way of servitude that was modeled for us in Christ Jesus. It is a totally different frame of mind to complain that laundry is something

I have to do than to see it as a way I get to serve my family. Every day there are have-tos in our lives that we need to get done, how can we reframe those into God-given get-to opportunities for service?

PRAYER

Serving God, you have modeled for us a new way of living that is centered in service to you and one another. Reshape our hearts and ways of being to see the opportunities you have placed before us. Amen.

WRITTEN BY RACHEL CAROSIELLO

NOVEMBER 25

RESCUED TO GIVE

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

COLOSSIANS 1:13-14

In 2010, a group of 33 miners in Chile were trapped underground for 69 days after a gold and copper mine collapse. This incredibly difficult and uncertain time was marked by darkness as the miners found themselves nearly 2700 feet underground. Rescue efforts involved days of drilling and the eventual creation of a narrow escape tunnel that allowed each trapped miner to be extracted one at a time by a specially designed and built capsule. It is believed that 5.3 million people watched worldwide with bated breath as the exciting liberation took place.

The story is a powerful picture of what God has done for us. Scripture tells us that we, too, were trapped in darkness—held captive by sin and separated from God. But God did not leave us there. He went to extraordinary lengths to rescue us. The price of our redemption was not a machine, a tunnel, or a capsule. It was the life of His Son. Jesus willingly gave Himself to rescue us and bring us into the kingdom of light.

Think about the generosity of that gift. God didn't give us what we deserved; He gave us what we desperately needed. He gave us Jesus.

And when we truly understand how generously God has loved us, generosity becomes more than something we practice—it becomes something that flows from us. We have been rescued so that we can become people who rescue.

How will His generosity toward you change the way you give yourself to others?

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for going to such great lengths to rescue me. Thank You for giving what I could never earn and paying a price I could never pay.

Help me remember that everything I have is ultimately a gift from You. Make me generous with my time, resources, abilities, compassion, and love. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

NOVEMBER 26

THANKSGIVING

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

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

A couple of days before Thanksgiving, my daughter and I followed the directions on the GPS and pulled into a long and winding driveway up to a one-story house. We hopped out and began to unload bags and a cardboard box of Thanksgiving groceries from the car. Before we could get up to the house, an older woman and her granddaughter came out to greet us. We put the groceries on the porch and then stood and talked for close to an hour. The woman thanked us multiple times for the food and kept saying one day she would be the one dropping off the food for someone else. When it was time to say goodbye, I asked if I could pray with them. We circled up and talked to God, thanking Him for bringing us together in that driveway and providing all the things that we need. We waved goodbye and backed out of the driveway and headed home. Later that evening, my phone pinged with a text message. It was from the sweet lady we had dropped the food off with. She was officially inviting us to come and eat at her house on Thanksgiving so she could share the food that God had provided for her family with us. I showed my daughter the message and we both got teary.

Gratitude is a powerful act of faith. Even in trials, we are called to give thanks, not necessarily for the hardship but in the midst of it. When we choose gratitude, we acknowledge God's sovereignty and our need for Him. Life's struggles can cloud our vision, but a thankful heart shifts our focus from our problems to His presence.

PRAYER

Lord, help me to give thanks in all circumstances. Strengthen my heart to trust You, knowing that Your plans are good. Fill me with gratitude. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

NOVEMBER 27

CHOOSE LOVE

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

JOHN 13:34

Love is the glue of any relationship. It does not matter if it is within a family, a friendship, a marriage, or with an acquaintance. Without love, we lose the ability to be patient with one another, to forgive one another, to be kind to one another, or to serve one another. We live in a world today that has largely lost the aptitude for loving others. Jesus was highly focused on helping his followers embrace the way of love. He did not tell us to love one another when it was convenient, easy, or comfortable. He told us to love each other because He first loved us. The late Christian author CS Lewis wrote in his classic book *Mere Christianity*, “Do not waste your time bothering whether you ‘love’ your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him.”

Being part of the family of God means learning the language of our Father. And the language He speaks is agape love—a self-giving, self-sacrificial love that is not dependent on whether someone deserves it, agrees with us, or can give anything back.

Living missionally means carrying the Father’s love beyond the walls of the church into our everyday interactions. It means looking for opportunities to love people who may never walk into a church, but who can experience the love of God through us.

PRAYER

Father, Teach me to speak the language of Your love wherever I go. Give me eyes to notice the people You place in my path and courage to move toward those who may feel unseen, unwanted, or far from You. Help me love without keeping score, serve without needing recognition, and give without expecting anything in return. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

NOVEMBER 28

REFLECTION

Life doesn’t slow down on its own, we have to choose it. In Scripture, moments of pause became turning points where God reminded His people who He was and who they were called to be. As you step into the weekend, take time to breathe deeply and seek God’s presence. Humility grows when we release the rush and make room for Him. In the quiet, you may find that God’s voice is closer than you thought.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week’s devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse’s entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

NOVEMBER 29

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

NOVEMBER 30

CLEAR THE CLUTTER

*In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our
God.*

ISAIAH 40:3

The first time my son flew home from college he packed like twenty-five T-shirts, four sweatshirts, five pairs of pants and so on and so forth. When it was time to go back to school after Christmas, we had a really hard time fitting everything back in his suitcase. Never again has he come home with so many things. None of what he packed was bad, but he realized what was truly necessary to prepare for a trip home.

The season of Advent can be like that for us as we prepare for the arrival of Jesus. We might think we need a perfectly lit tree, decorations all around the house, different types of homemade cookies and piles of beautifully wrapped gifts.

None of these things are bad, but they aren't necessary. Preparing for Jesus is the only thing we need to do.

Isaiah 40:3 reminds us that Advent is a season of clearing the clutter, making straight the path for Christ. As we wait, we ready our lives—welcoming Him, His glory, and His transforming presence.

So, deck the halls this Advent season but make a commitment every day to prepare the way for the Lord.

PRAYER

Lord, open my heart to hear Your voice. Make straight my paths, remove distractions, and ready me for Your coming. Amen.

DECEMBER 1

THE PROMISE OF IMMANUEL

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:
The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
and will call him Immanuel*

ISAIAH 7:14

Have you ever driven through a dense fog on a dark winter evening? Visibility is limited, and every mile feels difficult. A bright street light changes everything—what once seemed frightening becomes hopeful because you know you are not lost.

The Advent season reminds us that Isaiah's prophecy was given to people living in uncertain times. King Ahaz faced fear, political turmoil, and an unknown future. Yet God offered a promise—not merely of deliverance, but of His presence. The name Immanuel means "God with us."

Advent is more than preparing for Christmas; it is celebrating the fulfillment of God's promise to be near His people. When circumstances seem overwhelming or the future looks unclear, Immanuel reminds us that God has not abandoned us. He is present, faithful, and at work even when we cannot see the whole path ahead.

As we light Advent candles and anticipate Christmas morning, let us remember that the greatest gift is not found under a tree. It is the Savior who came to dwell among us and remains with us today. His presence brings peace to anxious hearts and hope to weary souls.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus, our Immanuel. During this Advent season, help us rest in the assurance that You are with us. Fill our hearts with hope, peace, and joy as we celebrate the coming of our Savior. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 2

BEAUTIFUL BROKEN THINGS

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness
has not overcome it.*

JOHN 1:5

Early one December morning, I came around the corner toward the kitchen and realized my path was blocked. Our big, fat Christmas tree fell as we slept. (I've always been a "fat, Charlie Brown tree" kind of person—the fuller and more imperfect, the better.) My daughter came around the corner shocked but immediately ready to help. Together, we lifted the tree to standing and then quietly surveyed the wreckage. Ornaments collected or gifted over years of marriage were shattered across the wooden floor.

With a deep sigh, we swept up all the pieces and placed them in the trash. As I looked down into that trash can, I felt the tears begin to form. These weren't just glass globes, porcelain crosses, and ceramic figures with our children's names on them. They were sweet memories.

And then, in the quiet before any of the tears had a chance to fall, the Lord gently spoke to my heart: This is a first-world problem. In a warm home, full of yummy food, healthy family, and blessings, the dead tree you paid for fell over.

Advent is the season when we acknowledge that things are not as they should be. We live in a world where things break, where we lose things we love, where our priorities go askew, and where we long for restoration.

Advent reminds us that God did not stay far away from our brokenness but He chose to come near.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for meeting us in the ordinary moments of life and gently turning our hearts back toward You. During this Advent season, teach us to look beyond what is broken and see the hope we have in Jesus. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

DECEMBER 3

A LIGHT IN TODAY'S DARKNESS

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

ISAIAH 9:2

Think about scrolling through your phone late at night. Headlines are filled with conflict, social media is filled with comparison, and endless notifications compete for your attention. Despite being more connected than ever, many people feel anxious, lonely, and overwhelmed. In a world flooded with information, genuine hope can seem surprisingly difficult to find.

Isaiah's words speak powerfully into our culture today. The darkness he described is not unlike the darkness many experience today. People search for meaning through success, entertainment, possessions, or approval from others, yet these things often leave hearts empty. Anxiety, division, and uncertainty have become common realities.

We live in a world desperate for light.

That is precisely why Advent matters. Advent reminds us that God did not leave humanity to find its own way. He sent Jesus, the Light of the World, to shine into our darkness. The birth of Christ was God's declaration that hope had arrived.

Jesus came not only to forgive sin but also to bring peace to troubled hearts and purpose to wandering lives.

Thomas Aquinas wrote, "There is within every soul a thirst for happiness and meaning." Advent points us to the One who satisfies that deepest longing.

In Christ, we find the hope that success cannot provide, the peace that circumstances cannot steal, and the joy that outlasts every season.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, may we look beyond the distractions of the season and fix our eyes on Jesus—the Light who still shines brightly in today's world and in our hearts.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus, the Light of the World. In the midst of today's distractions and uncertainties, help us to find our hope, peace, and joy in Him alone. Let Your light shine through us this Advent season so others may be drawn to You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 4

UNEXPECTED GIFTS

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

JOHN 1:14

My daughter-in-law gets more excited about giving gifts than anyone I know. A few years ago, she presented her sibling-in-law with a huge box beautifully wrapped in Christmas paper and topped with a big red bow. Inside that giant box was another big wrapped box. Inside that box was a slightly smaller wrapped box. By the time he finished unwrapping, the pile of discarded paper, boxes, and ribbon was significant. The final gift was an envelope containing a gift card for the exact thing he had requested on his wish list.

At first glance, that huge box was not the gift he thought it would be. The size, the wrapping, and the anticipation made him expect something different. But in the end, it turned out to be exactly what he wanted.

In many ways, this is the story of Christmas. When God sent us Jesus, He did not arrive the way people expected. He wasn't wrapped in royalty or wealth. His first visitors were not kings or influential leaders. At first glance, Jesus was not the gift the world thought it needed, but He was exactly the gift we all needed.

Advent reminds us that God's greatest gifts don't always arrive the way we expect. Sometimes they come quietly, look ordinary or require us to unwrap layers of misunderstanding before we see the beauty of what He has given.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the gift of Jesus—the gift greater than anything we could have imagined. Help us not to miss Your work because it comes in unexpected ways. Teach us to trust Your plans, recognize Your presence, and receive the gift of Christ with grateful hearts. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

REST

DECEMBER 6

NOTES

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

[illegible]

DECEMBER 7

THE HOPE WRAPPED IN A CHILD

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders. And
he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*

ISAIAH 9:6

I can imagine you're tracking a package that contains a very special gift. You check the delivery status several times a day, eagerly anticipating its arrival. The closer it gets, the greater your excitement becomes. Advent is much like that season of waiting. God's people spent centuries anticipating the promised Messiah, watching and hoping for the day He would come. In a world longing for peace, direction, and hope. God's answer was not a strategy, a kingdom, or an army. His answer was a child—Jesus.

This promised Son would be called Wonderful Counselor, offering wisdom when life feels confusing. He would be Mighty God, strong enough to overcome every obstacle and fear. He is the Everlasting Father, faithfully caring for His children through every season. And He is the Prince of Peace, bringing calm to troubled hearts and reconciliation with God.

During Advent, we celebrate not only that Christ came, but also that He is coming again. Just as those before us waited expectantly for the first Christmas, we wait with confidence for His return. The promises of Isaiah remind us that our hope is not found in circumstances but in the Savior who fulfills every promise.

As you journey through this Advent season, take time to marvel at God's gift. The King of Heaven came as a child so that we could become children of God.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming as our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Help us to wait with hope and trust this Advent season, keeping our eyes fixed on You. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 8

ANTICIPATION

But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

GALATIANS 4:4

Every Christmas Eve growing up, my family would spend the day at my grandparents' house before making the drive to our church's Christmas Eve service. One year, the temperatures dropped so low that our old diesel Oldsmobile refused to cooperate. The diesel fuel thickened in the frigid air, and the car stalled repeatedly. We had to pull over several times.

I remember sitting in the backseat, praying with a nervous anticipation that the car would start one more time and we could continue our journey. When we finally pulled into the church parking lot, my family breathed a collective sigh of relief. We bundled up against the cold and hurried into the warm narthex, grateful simply to have arrived. Every delay had increased my anticipation.

As I look back on that Christmas Eve, I realize that Advent is meant to stir a similar anticipation in our hearts. This season is meant to cultivate longing. It is an invitation to wait with hope, to long for Christ with expectancy, and to rejoice that every passing day brings us closer to celebrating the Savior who came and will come again. In a world that teaches us to rush ahead, Advent gently reminds us that there is joy in the waiting, because God is always faithful.

What if we approached each day of Advent with eager anticipation instead of hurried preparation? What if every candle we lit reminded us that we are one day closer to celebrating Christ's first coming and one day closer to His coming again? Waiting is not wasted when it draws our hearts toward Jesus.

PRAYER

Father, forgive me for rushing through this season without slowing down to wait on You. Fill my heart with joyful anticipation as I remember the birth of Jesus and look forward to His return. Help me trust that Your timing is always perfect and use this Advent season to increase my love for the gift of Jesus. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

DECEMBER 9

A HOPE FOR EVERYONE

And again, Isaiah says, 'The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.'

ROMANS 15:12

During the Advent season, many people eagerly watch the countdown for a long-awaited event. Whether it's tracking the release of a new phone, waiting for a holiday gathering, or counting down to Christmas morning, anticipation creates excitement. We look forward to something we believe will bring joy, fulfillment, or connection. Advent is a season of anticipation, but it points us to something far greater than any gift or event. Romans 15:12 reminds us that Jesus, the "Root of Jesse," is the fulfillment of God's promise to send a Savior. Isaiah prophesied that One would come from the family line of Jesse, the father of King David, and that He would bring hope not only to Israel but to all nations.

The beauty of Advent is that Jesus came for everyone. His birth in Bethlehem signaled the arrival of God's redemptive plan for the whole world. In a time when many people struggle with uncertainty, loneliness, and fear, Christ remains the source of lasting hope. Unlike the fleeting excitement of earthly things, His promises never disappoint.

As we light candles and celebrate the season, let us remember that our greatest hope is found in Jesus.

He is the King who came in humility, reigns in glory, and will one day return. Until then, we live in hopeful expectation, trusting in the One who keeps every promise.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for being our hope during this Advent season. Help us to trust in Your promises and share Your hope with those around us. Fill our hearts with joy as we celebrate Your coming and await Your return. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 10

THE WAITING

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

ISAIAH 9:2

Last Christmas morning, the kids waited patiently at the top of the stairs until all the adults were awake so they could come down and see if Santa had come! (The kids range from ages 16 to 27.) After checking stockings and eating breakfast, we circled up to open gifts from under the tree. Every year, one of the kids dons the Santa hat and passes out the gifts one at a time, youngest to oldest. Everyone watches as each person opens their gift, and the room fills with oohs, aahs, hugs, and thank-yous. We continue in order until all the gifts are opened.

That year, there were sixteen of us in the circle—our kids, grandparents, college friends, and young adults who couldn't make it home. My daughter's friends kept texting to ask what she had received, and her answer was always, "We haven't finished opening yet!"

I love that we don't rush the process. We wait, we watch and we are fully present in the moment.

This is what Advent invites us to do. Advent teaches us to slow down, to watch, to hope, and to remember that something wonderful is coming.

For generations, God's people waited for the promised Messiah. And when Jesus came, He was worth the wait.

As we move through Advent, may we resist the urge to rush toward Christmas. May we allow ourselves to anticipate, to wonder, and to be fully present. And as we wait for Christmas, may our hearts also remember that we are waiting for Christ to come again. The waiting is part of the gift.

PRAYER

Lord, teach us to wait well. Slow our hearts during this busy season and help us embrace the anticipation of Advent. Give us joy as we celebrate what You are doing in the lives of others and patience as we wait for what You are still preparing for us. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

DECEMBER 11

OVERFLOWING WITH HOPE THIS ADVENT

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 15:13

Imagine charging your phone before a busy holiday trip. You plug it in overnight because you know that without power, it won't last the day. Many people approach Advent feeling spiritually drained by packed schedules, endless to-do lists, and uncertainty about the future. We need more than extra time or energy—we need renewed hope.

Romans 15:13 reminds us that hope is not something we manufacture ourselves. It comes from God. During Advent, we celebrate the arrival of Jesus, the fulfillment of God's promise to save His people. The birth of Christ is the ultimate reminder that God keeps His promises, even when the waiting feels long.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, "The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul." Advent speaks most powerfully to those who recognize their need for God's presence and grace. It is for those who are waiting, longing, and hoping.

As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, God invites us to trust Him completely. When we place our faith in Christ, He fills us with joy and peace that are not dependent on circumstances. The Holy Spirit then causes that hope to overflow into every area of our lives.

This Advent season, let the God of hope recharge your weary heart. The Savior has come, and because of Him, our future is secure.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the God of hope. Fill us with Your joy and peace as we trust in You. May Your Spirit cause hope to overflow in our hearts throughout this Advent season. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 12

REFLECTION

Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is slow down. Scripture shows us that God often met His people in the in-between spaces, after the work was done and before the next step began. As you enter the weekend, create room to breathe, reflect and let God re-center your heart. Humility grows when we stop striving long enough to recognize God's steady presence. Give Him space, and He will speak.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

DECEMBER 13

NOTES

[illegible]

DECEMBER 14

REINDEER FOOD

Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help."

ISAIAH 58:7

When our kids were little, we always put out “reindeer food” on Christmas Eve — dry oatmeal mixed with glitter so the reindeer could see it in the dark. To our kids, this wasn’t just a fun tradition — they genuinely wanted to take care of the reindeer, knowing they had a long night ahead.

One year, my son's cheeks were especially chapped, so before he went outside with Nanna, I slathered Vaseline on them. They stepped onto the porch and began scattering the food. A few minutes later, the door flew open and they came back inside laughing — a gust of wind had blown the glittery oatmeal right back onto his Vaseline-covered cheeks!

I love that memory and the heart behind it — they were focused on caring for the reindeer.

Advent invites us to cultivate that same heart. We can become so focused on what we want, need, and have to get done that we miss the people around us carrying heavy loads. Isaiah reminds us that God's people are called to notice those who are hungry, hurting, and in need — and respond with love.

The children weren't asked to save the reindeer. They simply wanted to make their long night a little easier. Perhaps that's what God asks of us this Advent — not to fix everyone's problems, but to notice someone whose load is heavy and offer a little kindness. "Who needs to be cared for?"

PRAYER

Lord, give me the heart of a child who notices those who are working hard. Help me look beyond my own needs and recognize the people around me who are tired, lonely, burdened, or hurting. Show me simple ways to make someone else's load a little lighter. Amen.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA COATES

DECEMBER 15

THE LITTLE TOWN NOBODY EXPECTED

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

MICAH 5:2

Have you ever ordered something online and received a notification that your package was shipping from a town you've never even heard of? Not New York. Not Los Angeles. Not Chicago. Instead, it comes from a tiny dot on the map that makes you wonder, "People actually live there?" Yet somehow, that little town delivers exactly what you need.

That's the surprise of Christmas.

When God chose the birthplace of the Savior of the world, He didn't pick Jerusalem, Rome, or any famous city. He chose Bethlehem—a small town that most people would have overlooked.

Yet Advent reminds us that God loves working through unexpected places, unexpected people, and unexpected circumstances. While the world tends to focus on what is impressive and influential, God often chooses what seems small and ordinary to accomplish His greatest purposes.

Maybe you feel a bit like Bethlehem during this season. Perhaps you feel unnoticed, insignificant, or overshadowed by others. Take heart! The same

God who brought a King from a tiny town can work powerfully through your life. No person is too small and no circumstance too ordinary for God's plan.

The message of Advent is that hope arrived in an unexpected package—a baby born in a humble town. And that changes everything.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for showing us that You often work through the humble and ordinary. Help us trust that You are at work in our lives, even when we feel unnoticed. Fill our hearts with hope and joy as we celebrate the coming of Jesus this Advent season. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 16

BORN OF GOD

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

JOHN 1:12

Parenting is a funny thing. The memories that stick with you are often different than what you would think. A core memory of mine is seeing my son smile at me for the first time. That moment melted my heart—I remember bursting with pride, not because he had done anything. He was only a few days old; he had accomplished nothing. All he had done was notice me as his father, and he smiled. There is something powerful about being received and loved simply because of who we are.

Advent reminds us of the incredible truth that God came near so that we could become His children.

Jesus was not sent because we had earned His love. He came as a gift of grace. Our part is simply to receive Him—to believe, to welcome Him, and to rest in the love of our Father.

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" — 1 John 3:1

The manger is an invitation. God has come near, offering us His Son and a place in His family. We don't have to prove ourselves or earn our way into His presence—we can simply receive the gift.

This Advent, may we slow down long enough to remember what an extraordinary privilege it is to be God's child. May our hearts respond to Him with the simple joy of a child who looks up, recognizes his Father, and smiles.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for the gift of Jesus and for the incredible privilege of being called Your child. This Advent, help me slow down, recognize Your presence, and rest in the security of knowing that I belong to You. May my life respond to Your love with the joy of a child who knows they are deeply loved. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

DECEMBER 17

WAITING FOR PEACE

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

JOHN 14:27

Advent has a way of revealing our waiting. We light candles, hang greenery, rehearse familiar songs, and still carry quiet places in our hearts that long to be noticed. Maybe you have walked into a busy Christmas gathering and felt surrounded, yet unseen. You smiled, found a seat, and hoped no one noticed how out of place you felt.

In John 14, Jesus speaks these words to His disciples as they face uncertainty and sorrow. He does not promise them a trouble-free life. Instead, He gives them something deeper: His peace. Not the fragile peace that depends on perfect plans, quiet schedules, or everything going the way we hoped, but the steady peace of His presence.

That is the heart of Advent. God comes near. In Jesus, the promised Savior steps into our real lives with grace, truth, and tenderness. He is not embarrassed by our needs or the anxious places in our hearts. He comes as Emmanuel, God with us, bringing peace that circumstances cannot give and cannot take away.

This Advent, as you wait for Christmas, listen again to Jesus' words: "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." Because He has given you His peace, you can carry that peace into the rooms you enter—a person at church, at work, at home, or right beside you may need a gentle reminder of hope.

PRAYER

Jesus, Emmanuel, thank You for coming near and giving me Your peace. During this Advent season, quiet my troubled heart and help me share Your hope with others. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 18

ANCHORED IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

ISAIAH 26:3

Have you ever noticed how joy often grows in anticipation? A reunion with a loved one or the birth of a child can fill our hearts with happiness long before the moment comes. The certainty that someone beloved is on the way changes how we experience the waiting.

Advent is a season of waiting, but not anxious waiting. It is a season of joyful expectation. Isaiah speaks of God's perfect peace, yet beneath that peace is a deep and abiding joy that comes from trusting Him.

For generations, God's people held on to the promise of a coming Messiah, enduring hardship and long periods when God seemed silent. Yet God was at work even when they could not see it. Then, in the fullness of time, Jesus came. Bethlehem became the ultimate reminder that God never forgets His promises.

That truth gives depth to our Advent joy. It is not rooted in perfect circumstances or sentimental holiday moments, but in the character of God. Isaiah tells us that those who keep their minds steadfast on the Lord are kept in perfect peace. When our thoughts are fixed on God's faithfulness rather than our fears, joy takes root in our hearts. Billy Graham wisely said, "Faith points us beyond our problems to the hope we have in Christ."

Advent invites us to look beyond the struggles of the present toward the certainty of God's promises. Because Christ has come, is with us, and will come again, we can live with deep and abiding joy, trusting that the God who was faithful in Bethlehem will be faithful in every part of our lives.

PRAYER

Gracious Father, thank You for the joy that comes from trusting in Your faithfulness. Keep our minds fixed on Jesus during this Advent season. Help us find our joy not in circumstances, but in the certainty of Your promises. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 19

REFLECTION

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

DECEMBER 20

NOTES

[illegible]

DECEMBER 21

THE SONG THAT SHOOK THE NIGHT

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.

LUKE 2:13-14

Nighttime in the Judean hills usually carried a deep, heavy silence broken only by the shift of sheep or a cold breeze. But on the night Christ was born, that stillness was shattered by something the world had never experienced: heaven's choir bursting through the dark.

Imagine a chorus so powerful it didn't just fill the air, it reverberated through the very dirt beneath the shepherds' feet. The angels weren't giving a quiet announcement; they were releasing an overflowing, holy celebration. For centuries, creation had groaned under the weight of waiting and brokenness. Then, in a single moment, the silence of Advent was broken by a song of unfiltered joy: Glory to God, peace on earth.

Advent calls us to join that song. In a world often weighed down by noise, worry, and waiting, the gospel invites us to sing anyway, not because our circumstances are perfect, but because our Savior has arrived. Worship isn't just something we do when we feel happy; it is how we lean into the light when the world feels dark. When we lift our voices in praise, we echo the angels and welcome the peace of God into our hearts.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming into our dark world with light and joy. Teach my heart to sing Your praises this Advent season, trusting in Your promise of peace. Amen.

DECEMBER 22

A PEACE UNWRAPPED IN BETHLEHEM

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

During this Christmas season, God promises a divine quietness, a calm that far exceeds human logic to stand as a protective guard over our emotional and mental lives through our connection with Christ.

Advent often brings a whirlwind of activity: busy schedules, crowded stores, and endless holiday to-do lists. Yet right in the middle of seasonal noise, God offers a gift that cannot be wrapped in paper; a profound inner quietness that protects our spirit. Consider a snow globe sitting in the middle of a room. When shaken, the snow swirls in a chaotic storm. But inside the glass structure, the scene itself remains unbothered, steady, and secure. That is the essence of God's peace during Christmas. The world around us may be swirling with hurry and high expectations, but God places an invisible shield around our inner life, keeping us grounded in His love.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He brought the peace of heaven down to earth. That peace isn't just a fleeting feeling; it acts like a strong guardian standing watch over your heart when worries threaten to steal your joy. As you move through this Christmas season, remember that you don't have to carry the weight of the world—Christ has already come to carry it for you.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for the gift of Your presence this Christmas. When the busyness of the season threatens to overwhelm me, guard my heart and mind with Your supernatural peace. Help me to rest in Your love and share Your quiet joy with those around me. Amen.

DECEMBER 23

MARY'S SONG OF JOY

And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...'

LUKE 1:46-47

The Christmas season often invites us to pause and reflect on where our deepest joy truly originates. When Mary learned of her extraordinary role in the nativity narrative, her initial response was not one of panic or self-centered anxiety. Instead, it was a magnificent outpouring of personal praise coming directly from the very core of her being. She wasn't celebrating a smooth path ahead; she was celebrating the character of the God who called her.

Imagine holding a finely crafted instrument that has sat silent in a velvet case for months. Suddenly, a master musician picks it up, tunes the strings, and plays a rich, vibrant melody that fills the entire room. Mary's heart was like that instrument—vibrating with authentic, unforced praise because she recognized God's personal, tender care for her life. She saw that heaven had bowed low to touch the earth in her quiet hometown.

Advent offers us that very same invitation to tune our hearts toward heaven. In the middle of overflowing calendars, endless shopping lists, and social gatherings, true celebration isn't generated by external festivities. It is born when we recognize the incredible, quiet work God is doing within our souls. When we stop to consider how He steps into our everyday lives, our default response shifts from stress to wonder. This season, let your heart echo Mary's song, realizing that your joy doesn't depend on your circumstances, but on the Savior who walks alongside you.

PRAYER

Lord, let my spirit magnify Your name today. When the noise of the season threatens to crowd out my quiet awe, recalibrate my heart to focus on Your goodness. Help me to find my ultimate, unshakeable joy in Who You are and the salvation You freely offer every single day. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 24

GOOD NEWS FOR ALL

But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.'

LUKE 2:10

The divine announcement of Christ's long-awaited arrival did not take place in a grand royal palace or before an assembly of influential leaders. Instead, heaven's heralds appeared out in the open, chilly fields to ordinary workers pulling the night shift. The messenger's words carried a radical, comforting truth: this transforming joy was not reserved for a select, elite few. It was a gift intended for every single person, right where they were.

Think of a powerful lighthouse cutting through a thick, suffocating coastal fog, guiding weary sailors safely toward the security of the harbor. The light doesn't discriminate based on the size of the vessel or the worthiness of the crew; it simply shines into the blackness so that all who are lost can find their way home. The declaration of Christ's birth serves as that brilliant, welcoming light for our distracted and longing world.

Fear often tries to hijack our peace during busy seasons—fear of missing out, fear of the unknown, or fear that we aren't measure up to expectations. But God's message to the shepherds overrides our deepest anxieties with lasting hope. The angels declared that God was coming near to bridge the gap between heaven and humanity. You don't need to earn your way into this story; the light shines for you right now during your ordinary routine.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for sending good news that drives out every lingering fear. When life feels overwhelming, remind me that Your grace was given freely for me. May the quiet, profound joy of Christ's birth fill my home and overflow to everyone I meet this Advent. Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 25

COME, LORD JESUS

He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

REVELATION 22:20

One of my most memorable moments is when conclude our church service by dimming the lights and singing Silent Night by candlelight. In that holy moment, the congregation stands between memory and hope. We remember the night Christ came into the world as a child in Bethlehem, yet we also look forward to the day when He will come again in glory. The candlelight reminds us that we live in the light of both promises.

Christmas Day is the celebration of fulfillment. The prophets longed for it. Israel waited for it. Heaven announced it. In the birth of Jesus, God kept His word and entered human history. The eternal Son took on flesh and dwelt among us. The Child lying in the manger was the promised Savior, the Prince of Peace, and the King of Kings.

Yet the Church has always understood that Christmas points beyond Bethlehem. The One who came in humility will come again in majesty.

The infant wrapped in swaddling clothes is the risen Lord who reigns forever. That is why the final prayer of Scripture is so fitting for Christmas Day: "Come, Lord Jesus."

As we gather around tables, exchange gifts, and sing beloved carols, we do so as people of hope. We rejoice not only because Christ has come, but because He is coming again. Christmas is both a remembrance and an anticipation, a feast of thanksgiving and a declaration of expectation. Today, let us join the saints of every generation in praising God for the gift of His Son and in praying with longing hearts, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

PRAYER

Almighty God, on this holy Christmas Day we give You thanks for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ. As we celebrate His coming in humility, keep us watchful for His coming in glory. Fill our hearts with wonder, gratitude, and hope, that we may joyfully proclaim with Your Church through the ages: "Come, Lord Jesus." Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 26

REFLECTION

Life doesn't slow down on its own, we have to choose it. In Scripture, moments of pause became turning points where God reminded His people who He was and who they were called to be. As you step into the weekend, take time to breathe deeply and seek God's presence. Humility grows when we release the rush and make room for Him. In the quiet, you may find that God's voice is closer than you thought.

Instead of a new Scripture text today, look back over this week's devotions and select the bible passage that stuck out to you. Use the SOAP method (at the front of the booklet) to read and study that verse's entire chapter a little closer.

QUESTIONS

Where have you noticed God at work in your life this week—whether through challenge, blessing or unexpected moments?

What is one area of your heart that God may be inviting you to surrender, soften or realign before a new week begins?

DECEMBER 27

NOTES

[illegible]

DECEMBER 28
THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

*Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the heavenly
lights, who does not change like shifting
shadows.*

JAMES 1:17

This week, many of us will find ourselves taking down Christmas decorations. The tree that filled our homes with beauty is slowly stripped of its ornaments. The lights are unplugged and carefully packed away. As the room returns to normal, it can feel a little less bright and, if we're honest, a little less joyful.

But what if we looked at it this way? The lights may be coming down, but the Light of the World is still here.

That simple truth captures the heart of James 1:17. Christmas may be over, but God's goodness is not. The season reminds us of the greatest gift ever given, Jesus Christ. While the celebrations fade and life returns to its normal rhythms, Christ remains present with us every single day.

As we move beyond Christmas, it is easy to focus on what is ending. Yet James points us to the God who never changes. Decorations are boxed up, traditions conclude, and another Christmas season becomes a memory, but God's love remains constant. His mercy is still new every morning, and His promises are still true. The wonder of Christmas is not that Christ came. The wonder is that He is still with us.

PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank You for every good and perfect gift that comes from Your hand. As we put away the decorations and return to our daily routines, help us remember that Your presence never leaves us. Fill our hearts with gratitude for Jesus, the greatest gift of all, and help us walk faithfully with Him each day. In Jesus' name,
Amen.*

DECEMBER 29

THE BEGINNING AND THE END

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

REVELATION 22:13

It's that time of year when calendars are replaced, goals are written down, and plans are made for the year to come. There's something hopeful about a fresh start, but if we're honest, there can also be uncertainty. What will this year hold? What challenges will come? What opportunities lie ahead?

I was thinking about this recently while getting my new calendar ready. Before a single day had been crossed off, every page was blank. I couldn't see what January would bring, much less the rest of December. Yet God already knows about every day that will fill those pages.

That's why Jesus' words in Revelation 22:13 bring such comfort. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. As we stand at the threshold of a new year, we can rest in the truth that the One who holds the future is already there. Nothing in the coming year will surprise Him.

The same Savior we celebrated at Christmas will walk with us into January, through every season, and all the way to next December. His faithfulness does not depend on our circumstances. His love does not expire with the passing of a year.

As you look ahead, remember this: you may not know what the new year holds, but you know the One who holds the new year. The Alpha and Omega is already waiting in every tomorrow.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. As we enter a new year, help us trust You with every unknown and every opportunity. Remind us that You are already present in the days ahead and that Your faithfulness never fails. Give us peace, hope, and confidence as we walk with You into this new year. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WRITTEN BY SENTA HINZMAN

DECEMBER 30

TRUSTING GOD WITH THE YEAR AHEAD

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

JEREMIAH 29:11

High school graduation was a monumental moment in my life. A long journey of schooling that began in preschool had come to a close, and I was preparing to leave for college. I could look back with gratitude for what I had accomplished, but I think my parents felt the greatest sense of accomplishment. For 18 years, they had poured themselves into caring for me, guiding me, and preparing me for what was next. They had a plan, and they had faithfully worked toward it.

As we stand at the beginning of a new year, we can be reminded that our lives are also part of a much greater plan. God knows where He is taking us, even when we cannot see what lies ahead. He gives us gifts to use, people to guide us, opportunities to grow, and grace for the places where we fall short.

But God rarely gives us the entire map at once.

Perhaps if He did, we would grab the reins and try to manage the journey ourselves. Instead, He invites us to trust Him one day at a time. "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

(Psalm 119:105)

As you enter this new year, don't feel pressured to know exactly what the year will hold. Look back and remember God's faithfulness. Look forward with hope. Then place the year—and yourself—back into His hands. God has been faithful in the past, He is faithful today, and He will be faithful in everything that lies ahead. Maybe, just maybe, the best is yet to come.

PRAYER

Lord, As I look toward the year ahead, help me release my need to know and control what comes next. Remind me of Your faithfulness in the past and give me confidence to trust You with the future. Guide my steps, use my gifts, place the right people in my path, and give me the courage to follow You even when I cannot see the whole road. I trust Your plans more than my own. Amen.

WRITTEN BY TREVOR MILLER

DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR, NEW WORD

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

1 TIMOTHY 6:6-8

It was Christmas night a few years ago. We had put our 'soft clothes' back on and gone into the sunroom to play a game. The sun was going down and the Christmas tree lights popped on. Someone's response in the game had us all laughing so hard there were tears in my eyes. I looked around the room full of the people I love most in this world and I felt happy. You know that feeling. At peace. Fulfilled. Satiated. Content. Contentment is being able to enjoy what I have without being consumed by what I don't have.

It is choosing gratitude over comparison. It is recognizing that my circumstances do not determine my joy. It is resting in God's provision rather than obsessing over what might be missing. Contentment is wanting what God has given me rather than always wanting what He has given someone else. It is learning to say, "God, You are enough," even when life doesn't look the way I hoped. It is being present enough to notice the blessings already in front of me. Contentment is holding what I have with gratitude rather than holding what I don't have with resentment.

All of that. That's what I want in the new year. Recognizing that what God has given me today is enough for today. I will choose to be content whatever the circumstance. (Philippians 4:11) Will you join me?

PRAYER

Lord, as I begin this new year, teach me contentment. Help me release comparison, unmet expectations, and the constant desire for more. Give me eyes to recognize the blessings already around. Remind me that because You are with me, I have what I need for this moment. Amen.