

Where is God?

2013 Lenten Devotionals



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Dear Friends,

Amid the joy of living in God's light, there is sometimes darkness, and sometimes that darkness is so overwhelming, we even wonder if God is present. I asked the writers of this year's meditations to think of a time when they asked the question, "Where is God?" They were then asked to share the answer that came to them, and what Bible passage best exemplifies their experience. As is the case every year, the responses were varied and powerful.

On these pages, you will read words of doubt and confusion, redemption and hope, and abiding faith. Says the writer for March 7th, on wondering why God was not there at a tough time, "It was rather simple now that I look back. He told me he was with me and that he would never leave me."

Then there is the realization, beautifully shared on March 27, "I was, and am, a new beautiful pure child of God."

Among the most poignant of the writings is on March 2, as the writer closes a meditation fraught with worry and doubt, with the child's prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep..."

These writers wish to share their thoughts with you, so that you may know that no matter what is going on in your lives – whether you are in love, in doubt, in fear or in confusion – you are not alone. God is there. Your brothers and sisters in Christ are there. Thanks be to God.

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Daily Meditations

Wednesday, February 13

Psalm 139:7 NASB "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?"

Like most, there was a time in my life when I was not sure where God was. In fact, the question raging in my mind was not so much where God was, but does he even exist. I still had enough conviction however, that if there was a God and he finally showed up, I was in big trouble! So were my thoughts about God for many despairing years.

Thankfully, God "showed up" in my life. He was always there, I just couldn't see beyond myself. In my brokenness, resulting from years of running from God, there He was, lovingly and mercifully waiting to let me experience what I had been searching for all those years--Him and Him alone. "Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth." Psalms 73:25

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for Your never ending presence and help me to always see You in spite of myself. Amen.

Thursday, February 14

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The verse above is very special to me. He loves me. Jesus is always with me. God is in heaven and also with me and everywhere. He is with me always.

Prayer: Jesus please help me and guide me through my life here on this earth. Amen.

Friday, February 15

Ruth 1:16-18 But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

In death and in Prison. From the death of my baby sister to the crime that landed me in prison, I thought, where is God? I had trouble coming to terms with the empty void left in my life. I floated through life making a passable effort at achieving my goals. Until recently, I was still making a passable effort. Then after crying out and really meaning it, God helped me to see that I had a help meet in my life to help me grow in my faith, in changing my reactions to situations I thought were big deals in my journey for the day. Ruth was a help meet to Naomi, willing to help in any way to ease any burdens that came along. I have my very own Ruth. Someone to walk my path and help me through what I think is a mile, but to her is one small step. While I am in prison God is there in fellowship. When death happens, God is there in comfort, when disaster happens, God is there to lift me up.

Prayer: God, thank you for all my trials. May you continue to send help meets when I need them most. Amen.

Saturday, February 16

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

The night I was arrested for my crime, I was guilty, but it still caught me by surprise. I was 57 and had never been arrested before. I had much fear then, and felt like was going to panic. God said that He forgave me for my 5th crime and that he would be with me during the time of my imprisonment. This gave me peace in my heart.

The verse I chose I had previously memorized. God brought it to my mind that night. During my incarceration, when I have had my mind on God, I have been given peace, and have realized HIS presence. When my mind is not on God, I feel lost.

Prayer: Oh God, I thank you for your peace/afraid and for Jesus the Prince of Peace. Help me to always have that peace. In Jesus name, Amen.

Monday, February 18

Romans 1:18-32 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles...

I was overwhelmed by some of the abject poverty examples and constant acts of violence occurring in the world, near and far. I spoke out loud to God, “You being God Almighty, is this really the best you can do,” my example included!

Part of it had to do with verses from Romans 1:18-32 which cause me to personally search God out to find my way back, because I saw myself lost in that description. Later, I realized those men and women of heroic faith, be it Moses, David, the prostitute who lowered the men down on the rope, etc.; they didn’t stay where they were found, God brought them out of that condition and used them.

Prayer: Lord, give me the wisdom to know, understand and live the truth, your will for my life. Amen.

Tuesday, February 19

Job 1:21 And he said “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away: Blessed be the name of the Lord.

My father broke his hip when he was 98 years old. It never healed and he laid and suffered for about 6 months before he passed away. God was testing his faith.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I want to thank you for all of the love and forgiveness you have bestowed on me. It is way more than I deserve, for the way I have sinned against you. Amen.

Wednesday, February 20

Acts 4:32-34a All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power, the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them.

Acts 2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

When we women were moved here 15 years ago -- we went from the freedom of an outdoor campus, a healing atmosphere, surrounded by caring people, and a loving body in Christ with brothers in Christ who ministered to us. When we got here we were treated like animals--made to stand chained together and locked in cells 20 hr/day. We never saw daylight or moonlight. Fear struck my heart, the attack sent me to the infirmary with an IV in my arm. My fear was, where is God in this? What I didn't know was my sisters were joined together praying for me. We all quickly came to cling to each other, caring for each other, sharing what we had, praying for and with one another. Our church services were filled with tears and the Holy Spirit fire that is only called out in desperation.

It felt like the 1st church. (Acts 4:32-34a) We were of one heart and mind. Joined by our individual relationships with Christ and our great need. We were of one accord. During those days girls were saved, healed and delivered from everything - satanism to homosexuality. (Acts 2:46) We continued to meet together and sang, prayed, testified and praised God. God was with us and in us. Fifteen years later...he still is.

Prayer: Lord, let our church feel your love and holy fire--bring our church into total unity and increase our numbers in your kingdom. Give us the spirit of charity and a hunger and a thirst for you and you alone. Amen.

Thursday, February 21

Philippians 4:13 For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

I often thought that there was no God until I got on my knees and asked God to come into my life.

My life was forever changed. The birds were singing, the skies were different colors and they were really cool. All I have to say is God is good to me.

Prayer: I thank God every day for watching over me and my family. Amen.

Friday, February 22

Psalms 34:4 I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears.

After my brain tumor was healed by God, other health problems occurred. I lost my belief and faith in God. Thankfully He is always there for me and forgives me.

Prayer: Thank you for always believing in me even when my faith in you falters. Amen.

Saturday, February 23

Genesis 37:35 "I (Jacob) will go to my grave mourning for my son", he would say, and then he would weep.

Why God, did you let this happen? My 35 year old beloved daughter died after "minor surgery" - heart valve repair. Death was agonizing! And took 20 months! She was in perfect health, had a 13 month old daughter and was a missionary to Brazil for a while, and my best friend!!!!

I was a Christian, as was (is) my wife of 43 years. We realized it was God's will, we didn't understand it, but know we will see her again.

Nobody understands unless they've experienced it, i.e. preacher saying, "I know what you're (prisoner) going through."

Prayer: Heavenly Father, in Jesus name give me grace for my loved one and mercy for me. Amen.

Monday, February 25

1 Kings 19:11-13 The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and battered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Through the times of my life when in turmoil and strain, I went to God angry, shouting where are you? I never heard an answer. I got even madder, shouting louder, and I never seemed to get anything back. Not until recently have I learned that God answers in silence. He will help us and show us the way if we would but close our mouths and listen for him.

Prayer: God, give me the strength and courage to remain silent when I most want to rage in order to hear your voice and know your will. Amen.

Tuesday, February 26

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. Also... **2 Corinthians 4:8-9.**

I wondered where is God when finding myself in a bad relationship. Very self-destructive, fueling my desire to use my drug of choice, turning myself against myself and my beliefs. I wasn't sure of what I really wanted out of life anymore, or even if I wanted to be a valid player in “Life”.

God answered my prayers by putting me back in prison. Since my return, I've become a born-again Christian, anxious to share God's word. I now experience Serenity at its finest, without the use of any drug.

The scriptures above tell how life is hard, confusing, and frustrating. How temptation is very real. But God will not abandon us! By holding onto God's truths, we will not be trapped by Satan's lies.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask that whomever calls to you, you touch their hearts and sow a deep seed of faith. Let them know that you're a merciful, forgiving, always present loving God. In Jesus name, Amen.

Wednesday, February 27

Matthew 28:20b And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Many times I have had the feeling of being abandoned, then I remember that God is always there. I raised myself. Loneliness is an evil feeling. God helps make it go away.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for filling the emptiness and chasing away the loneliness! Amen.

Thursday, February 28

Psalm 73:25-26 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

I had taken a Friday off from work to sign papers on a construction loan to build my new house. I came to work on Monday and was laid off. I wanted to know where God was. I thought He was supposed to be taking care of me.

After about 3 months, I found that I was able to work on my house more and when money started running low, I got a new and better job. God was taking care of me at His own pace. I was worried about myself and forgot that God is with me. He is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help those who have forgotten you are there and open their eyes to see you now. Amen.

Friday, March 1

Proverbs 21:16 Whoever wanders from the way of understanding, will rest in the assembly of the dead.

My friend died last week of throat cancer and I've talked with him about the Lord for the last 5 months. He believed Jesus and God were a fairy tale. Three months ago, he was credited with saving my ex-wife's life. I'm not sure if he ever believed or not. At his wake the hospital Chaplain spoke. I pray he found his way home to Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, I pray you open the eyes and hearts of those who have heard your word and wandered away from your love. Help them to believe. Amen.

Saturday, March 2

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Worry about WW3. Kill many people. Why won't you stop it before it gets so far?

God lets us do our own thing even if we don't believe in him. We have sin in us and it is our choice. Some die young, some old. Where God is, is a mystery.

Prayer: Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake. I pray the Lord my soul to take. Amen.

Monday, March 4

Jeremiah 29:11 "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." Also... **Psalm 46:1.**

When my life was at my lowest point, I thought I lost everyone I loved and had no reason to live. I gave up and tried to commit suicide. I took 40 pills and started driving and then asked, "Where is God?"

God took the wheel and stopped my car. My son found me and got me to the hospital. They were going to take me to a bigger hospital. My son asked if we could wait for his dad, and they told him I would not last that long. But God gave me a second chance.

Because I believe God has a plan for me and gives me hope and a future, he spared me that day, he took the wheel. I will never forget that or him. I believe he is an ever present help in trouble and he is with me in good times and bad times.

Prayer: Thank you is not enough, God, for taking the wheel that day. But I'm trying to live a better life for you. Thanks for showing me new plans for my life. Amen.

Tuesday, March 5

Hebrews 1:14 Therefore, angels are only servants--spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.

I wondered where God was when I couldn't lay my hands on my mother to be delivered and to be healed physically etc., etc. She died, but I believe she received a different type of deliverance and healing.

Prayer: I am blessed to be a blessing, saved to serve my Lord and King. Given light, that I might use it, other souls to him to bring. Amen. It is true, let it be so.

Wednesday, March 6

Psalm 22:1-2 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.

The verses above say everything I feel. When my heart kept longing and desiring for the same thing. It says just ask and it shall be yours. Pray and you'll have it, so why isn't that true? This one thing is all I want and I'd give my life to Him. Is there a God really? Where is God? Answer my cries and my prayers. Is there really a God?

Prayer: Lord, if you are truly there, have mercy on me and grant me this want. Have mercy O God, have mercy one more time. Amen.

Thursday, March 7

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

When my mom passed away in August 2007, I felt that God had taken a vacation from me, although I knew that was the exact opposite of the truth. I wondered at times where was God, and why did he allow something like this to happen to me?

It was rather simple now that I look back. He told me that he was with me and that he would never leave me. He told me to stand on Psalm 23. Now I see why. Because the Lord is with us, no matter what we are going through. We need to stop worrying about where God is, because he is with us today, tomorrow, and forever. Each day does have enough troubles, just as Matthew 6:34 says. So stop worrying about things.

Prayer: Father, help us to know that you are here with us, no matter what. In your name, Amen.

Friday, March 8

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

After 8 years of complicated medical assistance, we were pregnant. The 9 months went by and our perfect, beautiful son was born, a blessing to my husband and I. On the day of his baptism, he was rushed to the hospital. At age 2 weeks, he was diagnosed with spinal meningitis. He suffered greatly, but recovered to live a long life of 3 ¼ years. A true blessing to all of us.

Prayer: Loving Father, may we always rejoice in the gifts you bless us with each moment we enjoy them. Amen.

Saturday, March 9

Job 2:12-13 When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.

I thought "Where is God" when I lost my grandmother at age 16. I was in a juvenile facility and I didn't understand why. I thought God was punishing me. I was confused. I thought God was supposed to protect us, not hurt us.

Like Job, My friends helped me through this hard time in my life, when I thought I had nobody.

Prayer: Lord, I pray to you that you will help heal all the people grieving in their life. Amen.

Monday, March 11

Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; Never will I forsake you."

Never will I leave you; Never will I forsake you.

Jesus will always be with you if you ask him into your heart. Jesus is saying, just because we sin does not mean that he won't still love us. So, if you ask Jesus to come into your heart and turn everything over to him, then you will feel so much peace in your heart. It is overwhelming.

Prayer: Thank you for loving us - no matter what. Amen.

Tuesday, March 12

Proverbs 3:11-12 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in. Also...Psalm 31:7-10 and Psalm 32:1-5.

When I returned to prison for the 3rd time, I was ashamed and kept wondering why did I try to take care of things on my own AGAIN?!?! I realized that God had something to teach me AGAIN and he has--I now realize my purpose--HIS plan for me!!

When I returned back here, I read and read the above scriptures and felt He was with me, I felt comforted.

Prayer: Remember us Lord, when we are especially at our lowest point, for that is when we need you most. Amen.

Wednesday, March 13

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I have done lots of things in my life that I could have gone to jail or prison for, but I am locked up right now for something I didn't do. I know I am here for a reason. Maybe to bring my story to people, to strengthen their faith or for me to become close to Christ. Either way, I would have not been able to do it without the strength of Christ that lives within me. With His teaching and strength, I have become closer to him and have learned about who I am, and who I am in God. If this is where He wants me to be, for however long that is, I know I can do it through Christ who strengthens me.

Prayer: Lord, I pray that we will all learn and have peace within our hearts and know we can do anything through you who strengthens us. Amen.

Thursday, March 14

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness, be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

I have always thought about where is God. My answer to this question is, when I am feeling down and need someone to talk to, he is there. I know that God is everywhere. God is in my heart. He is with me all the time.

Prayer: Lord, help me know that you are always with me and help me in time of need. Amen.

Friday, March 15

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

I made a promise to God: If He would let me and my wife have kids after so any miscarriages happened, I would straighten my life up and follow Him. God kept his end of the promise and gave me three handsome sons, but I did not keep my promise. As I grew farther away from God, He still stood by my side. But, my broken promise was always in the

back of my mind. If I could have kept my faith strong, he may have let me go down the right path. Now he has set me down in a place so I can get my life together and show me the wonderful blessing he has given me - a beautiful family and friends. Now it is my turn to keep my promise and follow him and do his will and share his word to everyone.

Prayer: I thank you, Lord, for setting me down to save my life and to keep my promise to come closer to you and do your will and not mine. For you are God and I am your sheep to carry your message to others and to share what you have done for me. Amen.

Saturday, March 16

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 Love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it's not proud, it's not rude, it's not self seeking, it's not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease, where there are tongues, they will be stilled, where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

When I violated my probation, I was arrested and brought back to prison. I violated probation by not telling my probation officer where I was living. I was living in Rapid City with my boyfriend. I was in love with him. I was in the hospital with my boyfriend when the cops arrested me. My boyfriend didn't know what was going on. I was sentenced to 2 years in prison. I lost my boyfriend through it and my family washed their hands of me. I had no one. I was so asking myself where was God. I thought I lost everything.

But really God was with me the whole time, because coming to prison was the best thing that happened to me. Because I'm getting the help I need, I'm closer to God now than I've ever been in my life. If it wasn't for this, I'm not sure where I'd be right now. The verses above are my favorites, because they help me know God loves me always.

Prayer: Our father in heaven, thank you for giving me a chance to get help and be able to be closer to you. Thank you for giving me another chance at life. I love you God. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Monday, March 18

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

I was a sinner, lost for 29 years. Ignorance I could not claim. I grew up hearing the Word of God. I knew the truth but I chose not to listen. At the age of 18, I went to prison where I spent the better part of a decade. There the devil trained me to be who he wanted me to be. A man of false pride, with no morals or integrity. I had no concern for anyone but myself and my desires. I did not care who I hurt, so long as I accomplished what I wanted to, or finally got my way. But, in June of 2009, sitting in a jail cell alone and in tears, I called out to God, "Save me. I can't do it anymore." He wrapped me in His arms and said, "I will be your strength."

I am still a sinner, but I am a sinner who has been saved by the Grace of God, who strengthens me in all I do.

Prayer: God, I ask you to walk with me daily. Strengthen me daily and help me overcome all the doubts and fears that the devil puts in my path. You said, God, that all things are possible through your Son, Jesus Christ, and that is where I choose to put my faith today, and for the rest of my life. Amen.

Tuesday, March 19

John 11:4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

A friend's teenage daughter was diagnosed with bone cancer and only given a few months to live. Through her spirit, she touched many people, sharing her faith and confidence in Jesus with others. Though Melinda was dying, she remained a beacon to the rest of us.

Prayer: God, help us to remember, always, that you will be with us even to the end. Amen.

Wednesday, March 20

Jeremiah 29:11-14 "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. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

One time when one of my sons had a cancerous brain tumor, we were told that it was a fifty-fifty chance he'd make it through surgery. He made it through, but we were told that he might only make it six months. He is now 21 going on 22 years old and has made it through all the time lines that the doctors had given him. He is doing good and hopefully the tumor is gone.

There were dark times in my life and now I had ended up here. I felt ashamed and unworthy, because I had taken someone else's life. All I wanted to do is to get somewhere to hide because I had felt so awful. I just kept praying that God do what is right.

In the first incident with my son, I thought how could you let this happen? Are you even paying attention? I was upset. Through the years I have forgiven and have gotten over my anger. I see how my son's illness has brought my family together.

The second incident, I, at least have survived the whole experience with his help. He was with me through the whole thing and he has held me up when I was down. He gave me the strength to carry on.

Prayer: I pray that everyone someday will see how God, the Heavenly Father, works in all of our lives. He works! Amen.

Thursday, March 21

Genesis 8:22 "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."

As long as the earth endures, God's faithfulness is shown in this eternal self-limiting promise, to never again respond to human sin, in flood like ways. The promise focuses on environmental matters. Every time I see a rainbow, it always reminds me of God's promise to never flood the earth. God loves us so much and will bless us in the way he sees fit. Seeing a rainbow also, always reminds me of God's faithfulness to us. I like to just sit and watch, and know that I am not alone.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your promise and your love. Amen.

Friday, March 22

2 Corinthians 5:17 **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!**

"Where is God" is an everyday question that can always be addressed. What came to me first was when my cat Bonkers came up missing. I would pray and curse to God for taking my cat. That's the only time I've cursed God. I love cats so much. It hurt me so much for him to be gone. I still cry for cats. I can't help it.

Prayer: Lord, I pray for my son to be kept safe, protect him from the things I cannot. Give him wisdom, strength, and courage to get through each day we are apart. Most of all, keep him happy. Lord bless Ramone. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Saturday, March 23

1 Timothy 4:8 **For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.**

I just think a daily devotion is required to God. Like when I work out lifting weights, I have to focus on my routine for the day. Like we have to focus on God's word.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for the promises you proved true to every word. Amen.

Monday, March 25

Isaiah 26:9 **My soul yearns for you in the night; in the morning my spirit longs for you. When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness. Also...Isaiah 51:4-6 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.**

In 2006 I asked, "Where is God," when my boyfriend was severely abusing me. Well, I committed a crime which ended his life. What I did wasn't intentional, I was trying to protect my kids. Even after that, when I was getting sentenced for what I did, I asked, "Where is God?" He hadn't answered me when I did that, or when I was about to be taken away from my kids for a long time. Where was He when my children cried for their mother not to go? It's from that day, I got down on my knees and begged for an answer, not only for myself, but for my children and family.

When I was told how long I'd be away from my kids, I thought this was God's way of punishing me for what I did. The first year I was here I stopped praying. But one day when I was sitting in the rec yard, I was looking at the trees blowing in the wind and I felt something touch my heart in a way my children did when they smiled at me. It was like I took a deep breath, and let it out slowly, and my shoulders literally eased down with comfort. I knew right then, that I wasn't alone, he was holding me in his embrace. From that I picked up my faith and continued on to heal my wounds and get stronger.

When I was in jail, I read Isaiah for everything, not because someone said so, but because I wanted to see something, and it was Isaiah I turned to. To this day, I read it, other chapters as well, but more Isaiah than some.

Prayer: Lord, watch over the ones who are afraid and feel alone. Help them find faith and give the guidance they need. Forgive the ones who do wrong. Amen.

Tuesday, March 26

Psalm 51:10-13 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

These are the verses I used when I was sent to prison. I was reading the Bible when I came across them. I got down on my knees in the dark and asked for forgiveness and I confessed my sin. I felt a great weight was lifted from my shoulders. Since that day, I promised the Lord I would do my best to follow Him and make only promises I could keep. Especially to my kids.

Prayer: We pray always to include your family. Amen.

Wednesday, March 27

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

When I was a very little girl, I was abused by my dad and brother, me and my sisters. We grew up in church. We constantly were at church. We used to hold hands and pray for our father. Preachers would come and try to talk to him, but he shut the door on them. I gave up after awhile. I fell apart and did bad things. Then one day in prison, I realized, God is my father. He will hold me in his arms when I can't walk no more. He don't want to see me hurting myself. I'm not my earthy father. I was, and am, a new beautiful, pure child of God.

I chose the verses from Matthew because I was tired, weary and burdened and I needed rest. I can take His yoke and trust Him. I was tired of hurting, not trusting.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I completely surrender to your loving arms, where I know I am safe. Amen.

Thursday, March 28

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

One day I was reading my Bible and after finishing a couple of chapters of Matthew, I laid my head down on my bed and closed my eyes. Without any thought, a voice came over me and said "My son, don't get too comfortable here and don't start anything that is not important for you to finish, because I'm finished with you here, and I am sending you home soon."

Well, the goose bumps were all over my arms. Then I got cold, and then warm. I then opened my eyes and said to myself, "What was that?"

Then with a smile I knew. It was Jesus talking to me. Two days later, when I called home and talked to my brother, he said the same thing. I'm coming home soon, possibly in December or January. WOW!

Prayer: Thank you for being such a wonderful and giving God. I know all I have to do is just be patient and have faith in You. I'll soon be home. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

Friday, March 29

Job 29:2-5 How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me, when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness! Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God's intimate friendship blessed my house, when the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me.

I would ask where God was when I was scared and terrified. One night I was laying in bed and there was some entity there with me, bothering me. I was paralyzed. I could not move or scream. So I began to pray to the Great Lord and it went away.

I know God is there in spirit. He is all around. Always has been. Little do some know. I figured this out on my own, that it's our spirit and his spirit that is powerful.

In Job, they explain he is here through darkness, the Almighty was still with me. I can always turn to him and pray and feel an inner peace.

Prayer: I ask you Dear Lord, to show everyone real peace, love, understanding, happiness and the Power of Prayer!! Amen.

Saturday, March 30

Psalm 13:1-2 How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Psalm 10:1 Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

My God where are you, why am I still here?

The other day as I looked upon the sun setting and thought to myself, why am I still here? As I grow in my faith, I strive to know you better, I see you work in my life. It is so apparent that you are with me everyday and bless me continually. Yet, is it because I'm in fear, hurt or disappointment that I'm always feeling alone? Why am I still here after all we have been through? Why can't your love for me just be enough?

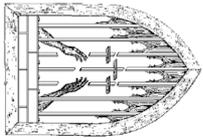
Prayer: Please Father, give me strength and comfort. Amen.



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