

February 2016

Dear Friends,

As humans we think (and are often taught) that we must seek God, find God and hold onto God or we are lost. The problem with this is that we are the pursuer and God the pursued. That makes it seem as if it's up to us and that is not good news because we are sinful human beings and surely not up to the task. But God is almighty, all powerful and all knowing. God does not need us to be up to the task. God seeks us, finds us, and holds onto us for all eternity through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. How does it feel to be the pursued? Sometimes God feels inescapable – we don't want the responsibility of being children of God. And sometimes, when the world has forsaken us, we come to know God as inseparable – no one can come between us and God.

What you have just read is the introduction to this year's writing assignment. We are so blessed that PCA's Administrative Assistant, Julie Thomas, trusted our writers with this somewhat complex and thought-provoking challenge. The results, which you will read on the following pages, make up what I think is among the most powerful collection of writings I have ever read, eliciting joy and tears.

Herein you will read stories of deep personal relationships with God, like the writer who knows that she/he is a precious jewel to God, or the writer who shares a beautiful dance analogy.

You will read of deep trust in God, like the one who prays, "You are my help and my stability...You will deliver me from my fears and worry..."

It is our prayer that you, like we, are blessed by these meditations, for that is the intention of the writers, and why they have chosen to trust us with their hearts.

As always, you may copy this book or download it from our website. Just please give the writers and PCA credit for the work.

In the Name of the Inescapable, Inseparable One,
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Daily Meditation



Ash Wednesday February 10, 2016

Lamentations 3:31-35 For men are not cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men. To crush underfoot all prisoners in the land, to deny a man his rights before the Most High, to deprive a man of justice – would not the Lord see such things?

God says he would never leave or forsake me. Coming back to prison for the 3rd time has been hard for me. I felt guilty for the longest time because I knew I had turned my back on God. I had learned so much about the Bible and had drawn close to God over the years. I felt I knew better. It made me feel unforgiveable. I started getting into my readings and remembered God's forgiveness and love. Recommitting my life is the best I can do for me and the baby I am carrying. My mistakes and sins have come with a lot of guilt and shame. I've learned there's no need to turn away. Even Christians fall and have bad days! But my worst day with Jesus is 10 times better than 1 bad day without him. God is always waiting with open arms.

God give me the strength to live through any trial in life. Your word says that nothing can separate us from you. Keep Satan from telling me I am unworthy. Give me the right teachings and guidance to learn your word and how to live the new life you want me to live. Amen

Thursday February 11, 2016

Psalm 139: 5-10, 13-14 You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast... For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...

As I read this Psalm I can relate to all of it! Verse 9 reminds me of all the times I tried to escape God and his will by doing wrong, knowing it was all causing pain in every area of my life, but even when I did wrong, God did not abandon me, no matter what I did or how I tried to get away. God was inseparable. In verse 5 I feel God knew my choice of paths and he protected me through it all, allowing me to wonder, waiting for me to surrender. My favorite verses are 13-14. Today I am sober, I am a new mother and I have been saved. I am so thankful God is inescapable **and** inseparable. These verses really touched my heart especially while experiencing pregnancy. It allowed me to open my eyes to see that God formed me exactly as he desired, knowing my every struggle, intention and desire. Only God knows the exact position and sequence of moles on my neck! There is no denying I am one of God's children. When I think about "not being good enough" or that my sins are too bad, I can read Psalm 139 and be assured God loves me just as I am. For God knows my heart's true desire. God has pursued me, showing me he is inescapable and inseparable. Today I find myself wanting the responsibility of being God's child and I find myself in full pursuit of God!

Inescapable and inseparable God, remind me each day that I am yours and that I am fearfully and wonderfully made in your image. Amen

Friday February 12, 2016

Psalm 27:10 Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me.

There was a period during my incarceration in Nebraska when my own family cut me off for reasons stemming from a misunderstanding. During that time I became very depressed. The wonderful people at the prison stood by me with prayer and words of comfort. It was particularly the letters sent by my pen pal, (now I call her grandma) that ultimately lifted me from the depths of my depression and helped me to re-engage with the world and my family. Since then I have been able to be a part of helping other people re-start their lives as they transition from prison to society. So many blessings come from the prayers of strangers.

Dear God, help me to surrender to you, for I cannot escape. You are ever with me, and are found in all things. Amen

Saturday February 13, 2016

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

God already knew what our lives were going to be when he created us even before our first breath. God knew we would sin, but he gave us a doorway through his son to be forgiven even before we sin. This makes me wonder what heaven will be like.

Lord I seek of thee in prayer and ask thee to look past my sins and show me the light in which I may walk. Amen

Monday February 15, 2016

Matthew 13:44-46 The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

I always thought I was seeking God. I never realized God was also seeking me. Jesus not only owns the earth, he also owns the kingdom of heaven and all that is more beautiful than I could ever imagine. He gave all that up and came here to live with us in the flesh. I am a precious jewel and he bought me with the ultimate price. He gave his life for me. I am the one great pearl he sold all he had for. I am more valuable to God than God ever could be to me. I know God will never leave me or abandon me. Even when I feel totally alone God is still there. God nudges me in his direction whenever I try to turn away. I cannot escape God. I can try to hide from the world, but he is inescapable. I love him for that. I love God because God loves me and chose me before the foundation of the world. Thank you for reminding me I am a treasure to you, God!

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, I thank you for always loving me. Even when I can't feel you or hear your still small voice I know you are there. Thank you for buying me at the ultimate price. I can never escape your love. In Jesus name I pray. Amen

Tuesday February 16, 2016

Job 19:23-29; 42:1-6,10 ...I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth and after my skin has been destroyed yet in my flesh I will see God...[God] said, "Listen now and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me." [Job's] ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you. There I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes...After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.

I had done the unthinkable. I thought I was unacceptable. I cried out to God and waited. I looked and waited. I sought deeply and found. God showed me through many people that I was his. I spent years trying to make up for something that was forgiven the moment I asked. Pursuing God has become one of the most enjoyable things in my life. The more I seek God the more God blesses me with love and acceptance. Like Job I felt bereft and alone with nowhere to turn but God. By placing my complete trust in God, God restored me with even better things than I thought possible. By trusting and seeking God, I found myself.

Lord, thank you for loving me as myself even when I didn't love myself. Amen

Wednesday February 17, 2016

Romans 9:25-26 As [God] says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one... It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'you are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God'."

I originally was thinking about Job when I read the inescapable, inseparable topic in this year's Lenten devotional. I could go on with it, but my heart tells me to share the following: before county, on the 'outside' it was about me. It took prison and God to open my eyes to see that God was inescapable. God had sent me many warnings – I ignored them. I would get a beer and turn around and see one of my children's Bibles on a table or chair. I would look away from it or ignore it. But it seemed the Bibles were always calling me. In county it hit me and I realized I was being called back. I started reading – I needed to – I was in a dark place. That's when I knew things had to change. Jesus lifted me out of the pit and set me on the narrow path of righteousness leading to God. I gave my life to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and I am so glad that I am one of the inseparable 'sons of the living God'.

Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus, and Holy Spirit, this is the day I want to change my life for the better. I want to help others and not only myself. I want to know and feel I have been lifted out of the dark pit and placed on the path leading to you, Lord. I give myself to you, the potter – to mold me and shape me to do your will. In Jesus' precious name I pray. Amen

Thursday February 18, 2016

Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I chose these verses because I feel they describe me best. I have ventured down multiple evil roads and still every time I truly allow myself to listen then I am able to hear God calling me down the right path. He proves no matter where I go by choice or action, he is still there calling and welcoming me back with his grace and trying to show me the true, correct path.

Lord our Father, I give you praise and honor for always being my steadfast rock and my place of rescue from my sinful ways. You never abandon me though I repeatedly fight your ways. Blessed be your name. Amen

Friday February 19, 2016

Luke 18:8 I tell you he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

Can you walk the distance, call yourself to be true if God asks you to walk a mile in the old Apostle's shoes? Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, these were men worthy and true for they knew the mighty name Jehovah would always see them through. Abraham was the father of all the nations when his seed multiplied and grew. One day his faith would be tested, Jehovah always knew.

Abraham took Isaac high up into the mountains. When early morning came Abraham built an altar to sacrifice a lamb. Abraham, a man of faith and action, bound and offered up his son to the mighty Jehovah to show his undying love (God's faithful servant). So now my friend it's time to choose. Will you be a man of faith? Will you put on those old Apostle's shoes to walk a mile in faith?

Dear Father, I pray that the faith Jesus had in you in his time of suffering on the cross will overflow to all your children and all the lost souls here on earth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Saturday February 20, 2016

Esther 4:9-17 ...[Mordecai answered] "Do not think that because you are in the king's house, you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise at another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" Then Esther sent reply to Mordecai, I... will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

I feel like I can relate to Esther in the part when she says, "If I must die doing it, I will die." There are a few things I can think of that I would do if it was for my life. I would sacrifice it for what I truly believe in. If it means for a good deed then most definitely, I will do it. I know at the end it's worth it because God is with you every step of the way. If it wasn't meant, then surely the Lord would send a message. Nothing is without a prayer and with the prayers God helps you along the way. Every step he is always there supporting you. I know without the Lord's help I would not be here today but as a sign from God. I obviously needed this guidance and I thank the Lord for this great opportunity. My hope is to continue on this positive path. God's path. I hope to put the past behind me where it belongs and move forward. I'm thankful for this awesome opportunity. God is with me and I feel I can do it.

Lord Jesus, I pray that you guide me to do the right things in life. Help me step-by-step Lord. Help me put my struggles in your hands. I pray that you watch over my family. Guide them along the path to you. I pray that you forgive me – Lord I invite you into my heart. I am yours, Lord. Amen

Monday February 22, 2016

Matthew 6:33-34 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

I am an inmate stressing over leaving prison. I will see the parole board soon. Will I walk out or be sent back for one or two years or even until my mandatory release date in 2019? Should I go out to community corrections, which is available to me now? If so, will I find a job, pay my rent on time, complete the requirements of the program? My biggest worry is will I use again? Can I stay clean from alcohol and drugs? Who will help me? As I face these obstacles I regard them as things I should not stress about. I must lean on spiritual guidance and God's generous love and mercy. Only through the Holy Spirit who lives in me am I able to connect with God who is able to make all things possible. So I seek God!

Father help me stop worrying. Lead me on the path in which I should go. Guide my feet. You are my help and my stability. No evil shall come near me because I have made you my Lord and you will keep me in all my ways. God has given his angels charge over me because God loves me. God is in me and I am in God. He will deliver me from my fears and worry. God will be with me in times of trouble. God will strengthen me and deliver me. In the name of Jesus my Lord and Savior I pray, Amen.

Tuesday February 23, 2016

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

My relationship with God is both inescapable and inseparable. Ever since I've opened my heart to God truly and honestly and repented, God is with me. If I'm having a hard time or a bad day and I want to just give up, God is there to lift me up and I feel his love and graceful presence. Then my day gets better and I can do the right thing and make a good decision. It's a blessing to have God in my heart and in my life today and forever more...thanks be to God! Just knowing this makes me try to do my best to be a good Christian. I know God will never leave me and that makes me very happy. God is powerful and will never let me go.

God of love and grace, be with me always and guide me as I try to live a good life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Wednesday February 24, 2016

Psalms 139:1-12 ...You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me...

My favorite part of this psalm is that God's presence is always around me. I don't always sense God or feel God's presence but that doesn't change the fact he is there. God's spirit is in front of me and knows that what is in my path ahead is awesome. When my path seems dark, foreboding and uncertain, the fact that God's presence is already there puts light, comfort and certainty there. I do not have to fear any place where God's presence abides. God's presence behind me assures me there is forgiven sin behind me, forgotten by God. God may have forgiven and forgotten but there is an enemy that has not forgotten. He tries to catch me off guard and knock me down with memories from my past. The awesome thing about God being behind me is that the enemy can't get at my back. Only what God allows to get to me to build my strength and trust in him can ever reach me. I'm thankful the presence of God is so near that I do not need to fear what is ahead or worry about what is behind. God has my back.

Father thank you for always being near. Thank you that your hand is there to guide me. Thank you for presence so that I know I am not alone. Even when my family is far away, you are right here with me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thursday February 25, 2016

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling place among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Touch

Lord guide my feet to step into the footprints that are there.
Of a man who made them long ago, who loves and really cares.
Let my fingers touch His hands as He reaches out to me.
So I may feel the love he has, the way it's meant to be.
Please let us not forget my eyes, so I may gaze upon his face.
I'll always know that he'll be there and never be replaced.
With all of this, all I need is to ask him into my life.
Please forgive me all my sins, my savior Jesus Christ.

God of flesh and blood, thank you for coming to us here on earth and for saving us from our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Friday February 26, 2016

Acts 9:10-19 ...Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here – has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

When I think of the story of Ananias and Saul in Acts 9, I hear first the story of God's overwhelming love for us. Saul was murdering and persecuting the early Christians. He was an enemy of Christ. Ananias was obviously wary of going to heal Saul of his blindness. I would have been too. I think that Ananias must have been thinking about all those persecuted Christians when he told God, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem." But even with this thought in mind, Ananias went at God's command to heal Saul. God had chosen his enemy, Saul, to be his vessel to the world. These actions give testament to the impossibility of escape or separation from God. With God, anything is possible.

Gracious heavenly Father, I thank you for your overwhelming and inescapable love. I pray that I may be another of your miracle stories, showing your grace and majesty. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

Saturday February 27, 2016

2 Corinthians 6:16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people."

As a child of God I belong to him alone. God is my provider and my protector. There is nothing that God can't offer to me. As I read today's scripture I am assured that God lives in me, so I should worship God alone and have no other gods. Because God and I have an agreement to place him first before anything, I want to keep my body clean and free of sin. As the temple of the living God, I must worship and praise the only true God, the creator of the universe.

Help me God to get closer to you and to become a person who can only have a place for you in my heart. Amen

Monday February 29, 2016

Psalms 127:1 Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

We discovered Jesus Christ to be true to his word and true to every promise he ever made. He was true to his nature and truly a lover of our souls. We came into deeper places of knowing him to be a wonderful counselor to our weary hearts. He opened a door of hope for us and then led us through it. Jesus gave us peace beyond my imagination and hope beyond reason and he's holding the door open for you.

Father God, please let your spirit touch the men's and women's prison ministries. Amen

Tuesday March 1, 2016

Exodus 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

I know that I have been "born again". The Lord Jesus shed his blood to remove all my ugliness. From the lips of hell my rescue has become complete. Though doubt is Satan's tool and though scoffers may scorn, I know of the position of my salvation; for I was the one who was there at the time of my redemption. My fellowship with my savior on a daily basis for the Word of God, Jesus, is my constant companion.

Abba Father, daily restore to me the gift of my salvation. Thank you, Jesus. Amen

Wednesday March 2, 2016

1 Corinthians 13:4,13 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud....And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Each day I wake up knowing I am truly loved by God. No matter what I have done God will always love me. He is beside me each and every day to guide me in life, to hold my hand through ups and downs and for me to turn to when I am in need.

Holy God, I pray that I follow your path and that I turn to you to help me in making the right decisions for me and my children. Amen

Thursday March 3, 2016

John 12:45-47 When he looks at me he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.

The Lord loves us and wants to be loved by us. God is here among us and wants us to be saved and to spend eternity in God's kingdom of heaven. How great is it to be loved like that!

I pray for all God's children. The Lord brings light to the darkness and he does it for all. Jesus doesn't judge us for Jesus came for us all. I pray we all feel his love and greatness wash over us. Amen

Friday March 4, 2016

Job 5:15 God saves the needy from the sword in their mouth; God saves them from the clutches of the powerful.

This verse is reassuring to me, to know that we are both inescapable and inseparable from God's presence. God protects us and guides us. God commands us to speak no evil and will always protect us from the tainted swords within ourselves and will teach us. God will help us to grow in the trust that he is powerful and is always here in our time of need. With this reassurance of God's presence we can live in a state of peace and in God's will.

I thank you Lord for blessing me and helping me to set my mind and words on you. I thank you for your constant guidance. Amen

Saturday March 5, 2016

Psalm 139:13,16 You made all the delicate inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb...You saw me before I was born.

Matthew 10:30 And even the very hairs on your head are numbered.

John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

This is how I see God. God loves me and all of us in this world. God put me in my mother's womb and I love God and thank him so much!

Heavenly Father, I pray for my mother, my children, my grandchildren and my whole family. I also pray for all women and men who are in prison. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Monday March 7, 2016

Luke 22:33-34 But [Peter] replied, "Lord I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

We are to obey God's commandments, but Satan, like a fisherman, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish. Understanding, for us, can wait. Obedience can't. It's a matter of life and death! Jesus knows we must come apart and rest a while or we may just come apart. Christ is the meeting point between the trinity and the sinner's soul. A drop of praise is unsuitable acknowledgement for an ocean of mercy.

Father God, please help me to obey your commandments and to know that I am forgiven when I fail to do so. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Tuesday March 8, 2016

John 13:34 [Jesus said] "A new command I give you; love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

What this verse means to me is that no matter what and no matter who they are, we should love everyone and this includes ourselves! I am thankful for being a mother to my 4 kids and I miss them so much. God blessed me with love and protection. Without this love and protection I don't know where I would be.

Heavenly Father, I pray for my kids, the four who are born and the one who is unborn, to comfort and protect them and keep them safe. I also pray for my family. Protect them and help them through their struggles. I pray for the parole board when I go before them. I also pray for myself. Take away my loneliness. In Jesus name, Amen.

Wednesday March 9, 2016

Isaiah 40:29-31 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary and young people stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not be weary, they will walk and not be faint.

I am only in the beginning of this journey but I know that God held his hand out to me in my darkest moment. He walked beside me then and he walks beside me today. I am so thankful for that.

Dear God, continue to walk with me and to let me feel your presence each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thursday March 10, 2016

Psalm 20:6 Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

When I read this verse, I feel so grateful. I know I do not deserve God's love and protection but God gives it to me anyway and I know that wherever I am, God will be there with me. I am so grateful.

Thank you Lord, for being my Lord! In Jesus name, Amen.

Friday March 11, 2016

Lamentations 3:22-23 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for God's compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

God has a special love for us because we don't have all the nice things that others have. WE should never be envious or bitter because we don't have a lot. I have nothing and I am very happy because I can enjoy all the beautiful things in nature that belong to God, like sunshine, beautiful skies, little birds and animals, and flowers in the yard. We don't have to possess them to enjoy them. Being free is the secret of peace and happiness... always be free to enjoy the blessings God has bestowed on us.

Lord let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight, my rock and my redeemer. Amen

Saturday March 12, 2016

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart. These O God, you will not despise.

David said that the sacrifices of God are a 'broken and contrite heart'. I am not alone. God will go before me and will never leave me. I think when we worship we are making smoke, like a sweet incense, to attract God's presence. If you make enough smoke, God's mercy will cover you and God can come even nearer to you and you can draw near to God. The worship cloud releases God's mercy, which covers us so that we can commune with God.

Dear God, break my heart and my spirit so that I may be made new in you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Monday March 14, 2016

Luke 15:6 [the shepherd says] "...Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

In the movie, Forest Gump, Lt. Dan cynically asks Forest if he has "found Jesus". Forest replies, "I didn't know he was lost." This is certainly the correct perspective. It is indeed us humans who are lost and need to be found. For many years I ran from God's calling, but I am now forever grateful that God has proven himself to be inescapable (Psalm 139:1-8). I have found great peace and joy and have been transformed and now know God is inseparable from me (Romans 8:38-39).

Father, Lord, Jesus, thank you for pursuing me and forever keeping me in your saving grace. Salvation is of the Lord. Amen.

Tuesday March 15, 2016

Jonah 1:17; 2:2 But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights... [and Jonah said], "In my distress I called to the Lord and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help and you listened to my cry."

I have run from God many times in my life. God has always sought me out, many times while I was in my sin. When I was a heroin addict, God sought me out. One night, as I was walking down the street so very high that I was swerving and stumbling, God sent the police to arrest me. God got me off the street. I stayed in jail long enough to get the heroin out of my system. Like Jonah, who prayed from inside the fish, I called to the Lord and he answered me. God showed me that he will always seek me out. God has always loved me and my sin cannot keep him away.

Lord, help me to know that you are near even when I am running from you. Seek me out and show me the way out of each temptation. If I fail to see my way out, please send that big fish along to swallow me up and bring me to you. In Jesus name, Amen.

Wednesday March 16, 2016

John 6:68-69 Simon Peter answered [Jesus], “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

I am grateful and thankful that I cannot escape from my Lord. For every intense and difficult circumstance I face, God’s love for me is fervent and more intense than the situation. God leads me through and nothing and no one can strip me of his love, or of my love for God. I have God’s promises and assurances as I face life with or without distress, hardship, or pain. When I clearly focus on the life of Jesus Christ it settles any doubt or questions of how much God loves me. Difficult circumstances can be met with courage and confidence. Knowing my name is written on the palm of God’s hand captivates me and holds me still in God.

Lord, I choose to be committed to pursue and chase you until your presence is real in my life. I desire your presence in my everyday challenges and praise you with every breath. In Jesus sweet and holy name, Amen.

Thursday March 17, 2016

John 3:16-17 [Jesus said] “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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

God is love. No matter, God loves us in every way. Like a father or parent loving their child. God is our father who loves us and cares for us. God’s way teaches us about life and living it, even if there are ups and downs, good times and bad. God is always there for us, yet at times we fall to human traditions to solve and live our earthly lives. God is waiting patiently for us to turn to him and allow God to carry us, help us, teach us, and love us.

Loving God, teach us to love you and to love each other as you would have us love. Be patient with us as we learn. In Jesus name, Amen.

Friday March 18, 2016

Psalms 6:1-3 O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in anguish. How long O Lord, how long?

I know I am a sinner and deserve what I get. I am seeking God, praying for revival and God’s mercy. I pray that it is not God’s will – please don’t take my baby away for good.

God of comfort and light, stay with me in my sorrow. Remind me that I am your child and that you are always with me, no matter what happens on this earth. In Jesus name, Amen.

Saturday March 19, 2016

John 14:26-27; 16:33 [Jesus said], “But the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid...I have told you things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

No matter where you are or what you have done, Jesus is always there with you. The Holy Spirit, who is God’s helper, speaks to us on Jesus’ behalf and helps us when we pray, even if we don’t know what to pray (Romans 8:26-27). No sin is so great that Jesus can’t forgive us. He is right beside us in everything and is everywhere. He wants us with him because we are his beloved. Even if I were the only person on earth, Jesus would still have died for me.

Thank you Lord Jesus, for the love you have given us. May we live with reckless abandon as you pursue us. May we live for you and swim against the stream and be light in this dark world. In your heavenly and holy name, Amen.

Monday March 21, 2016

Ruth 2:10 At this [Ruth] bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me – a foreigner?”

I often linger at your door as a stranger. I am in such awe of your goodness, Lord. Every day you pass before me. Your knowledge of me is so beyond my understanding. Some days I feel like I have ended up on your threshing floor and I can’t find the door. You stop me and tell me to wait patiently before you. So I lay back down at your feet and when you take me by the hand and you ask me for this dance, I rise by the grace that is set deep within your eyes. I writhe in pain before you, twirled and carefully coiled around your heart. I know that I am not a stranger to you. Your affection is set toward me. As King Solomon said, “Love is surely as strong as death...” One look from you and I am utterly consumed; the Lord and I, dancing on the threshing floor.

My King, Jesus, possess all of me. Turn me inside out. You are the greatest author of all time – write your love story on my heart. Amen

Tuesday March 22, 2016

Romans 14:8 ...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

We are God's children. God is always with us wherever we go. God says he will never leave or forsake us. God is always pursuing us, no matter what, even when we are mad and run from him. God's right there with us, with his arms wrapped tightly around us. God never gives up on us. We belong to God, the Lord Almighty. We are God's!

My dear heavenly father, I pray you pursue those who are lost and I pray you may find them and that they serve you. In Jesus great name I pray, Amen.

Wednesday March 23, 2016

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

This verse speaks to me because it reminds me that trials are a test from God. Because I know that trials are a test from the Lord, I know that he is with me through that time. A specific time that stands out to me was through the passing of my daughter. At first I didn't think that I was strong enough to handle what battle was being given to me... but as I reminded myself that God was with me each step of the way, I found strength to move forward and even stay faithful to his Word. I know that God is inseparable from me as he has always made his presence known even on days I felt so alone. Because of the presence of God in my life I was able to stay faithful to him under trial and even grow closer to him because of them.

Dear Lord, please soften the hearts of those who have yet to find you. Please allow them to see in others the love and peace that you have to offer. Please give them the security of knowing that even if they haven't pursued you...you still pursue them and we are inseparable from you. In Jesus name, Amen.

Maundy Thursday March 24, 2016

Esther 4:9-17 ...[Mordecai said] For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?

God does feel inescapable to me right now. It at times feels like I have only **him** in here! My faith has been renewed since being in prison. I did fall away from my relationship with the Lord, but the Lord has kept his promise and has never left me. That is so amazing to me and I am thankful every day when I wake up that I am finding strength in here through prayer. I am finding it easier to share scriptures with others. I am finding my voice. I feel today and everyday is a day to praise God.

Dear heavenly Father, thank you for blessing me with today. May I never forget that I am never alone, but that you walk with me always. Amen

Good Friday March 25, 2016

Luke 23:43 And he said to [the criminal], "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

I first heard this verse while I was waiting for sentencing. I had a very hard time accepting that I led myself to a bad and dark place. I didn't know how to find a way out. I prayed every day leading up to my court date. My court date was on a Monday. The Sunday before, I went to Bible study. I asked the Lord to speak to me in some way. At Bible study I was chosen to read this verse and I smiled at everyone because I knew that God had heard. Even though I was going to prison, God would be with me.

Dear God, I pray that you be with my sons as well as with me and to always protect and watch over us. Amen

Easter Vigil Saturday March 26, 2016

Matthew 11:28-30 [Jesus said] “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 first came to prison I didn't know what to expect. I thought, “How could God let this happen?” Then when I sat alone in my cell I began to realize God stilled me in order to fill me with his love. My worst fear was losing my mother while I was incarcerated and that happened. She passed away of a massive heart attack. I was so hurt and angry at God but as the days went on, I began to forgive and let God in again. My goal is to reach out to other inmates and continue to guide them to the Lord. I realized I'm right where God wants me to be. In order for God to take me where I need to go I need to be happy right where I am. God is teaching me daily, healing me daily, and strengthening me wholly.

I pray that God will comfort and strengthen those inmates who have lost a dear family member or friend. Help them to know that their loved one is no longer in pain and is with God in the heavenly kingdom. God bless us all! In Jesus' name, Amen

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