

Today

March/April 2024

refresh, refocus, renew

JESUS
SAVES



ALSO: GOD'S ANSWERS FOR LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Dear Friends:

On a highway near our house, a large sign proclaims, "Jesus Saves!" Certainly all followers of Jesus Christ wholeheartedly agree, but what exactly do we mean when we say, "Jesus saves"? What's more, we might also ask, "How does Jesus save us"? In March, Kent Van Til explores some of the questions surrounding the what and how of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Focusing on the meaning of our salvation can help us grow in faith, gratitude, and service.



While we know the central message of the Bible is that Jesus saves, we may also wonder if the Bible can help us in our daily living and dealing with everyday challenges. In April, Darrell Delaney uncovers a treasure trove of biblical wisdom highlighting practical advice for following God in our daily lives. We see that God cares for us and can comfort, encourage, and strengthen us. God's love and care extend to us in *whatever* situation we may find ourselves—no matter how big or how small. Our mighty God promises to provide for all our needs, and he has already taken care of our greatest need through the work of his Son, Jesus Christ!

May you be refreshed, refocused, and renewed in God's Word!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kurt Selles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kurt Selles

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"Jesus Saves"
Kent Van Til



**"God's Answers for
Life's Challenges"**
Darrell Delaney

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**ReFrame
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april

God's Answers for Life's Challenges

Darrell Delaney

Many people think that the Bible doesn't have much to say about life's practical challenges. But God has addressed more issues in the Bible than we might be aware of. God cares about us and can comfort, encourage, strengthen, and uplift us, no matter what situation we might face. Our all-sufficient God can give us what we need when we need it. May these devotions help to equip and empower us to draw near to God, serve him in a life filled with faith, and be a blessing to others as well!

Darrell Delaney is a cohost of ReFrame's podcast ministry Groundwork and serves as lead chaplain with Reach the Forgotten Jail Ministry in Michigan. He considers it his life's calling to create and facilitate life-giving environments in which people can thrive and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Darrell and his wife, Kia, have three children. He enjoys spending time with family, walking, reading, and playing basketball, chess, and video games.

OVERCOMING INADEQUACY

Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent. . . . I am slow of speech and tongue."

—Exodus 4:10

In our life of faith, there are times when God calls us to tasks that can seem beyond our abilities. Like Moses, we might think we lack the skills or eloquence to do what God has asked. Doubts and insecurities can grip our hearts, causing us to question whether we can truly serve God's purpose.

When God called Moses to go before Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses hesitated. He felt that he could not communicate the message well. He may even have had a speech impediment. But God said, "Who gave human beings their mouths?" In other words, God is the one who equips and empowers the ones he calls. So he assured Moses that he would be with him, guiding his words and actions.

Just as God did not overlook Moses' concerns, he also sees

our doubts and knows our limitations. But God chooses us, imperfect as we are, to accomplish his plans. And it is in our moments of weakness that God's strength shines through. He delights in using us to accomplish extraordinary feats for his glory.

When we feel inadequate, let's remember that our sufficiency comes from God alone. He provides the necessary resources, wisdom, and strength to carry out his purposes. We can trust that God will equip us with exactly what we need, and he will never leave us to face our challenges alone.

Lord God, thank you for choosing us despite our weaknesses. Strengthen us to step out in faith to serve as you call us to do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCIPLESHIP: EMBRACING THE CALL

"Come, follow me," Jesus said. . . . At once they left their nets and followed him.
—Matthew 4:19-20

When Jesus called his disciples, he issued an invitation that went beyond mere companionship. He called for a radical commitment to follow him completely. This call echoes through time, extending to us as his followers today, urging us to embrace the path of discipleship.

Discipleship is more than attending church or learning about Jesus. It is a transformative journey of surrender, obedience, and growth. Just as he called his first disciples to follow him, Jesus invites us to do the same. This might even mean changing the work we do. The main point is to let go of pursuits that would hinder our devotion to him.

Our aim as disciples is to follow our Master by living out his teachings. Through an intimate relationship with Jesus, we are transformed into his

likeness and empowered to make an impact for good in the world around us.

Discipleship isn't without challenges, but it also offers abundant life and eternal purpose. We discover the joy of knowing Jesus deeply, experiencing his presence, and becoming agents of his kingdom. In this context our faith is refined, our character is shaped, and our lives bear lasting fruit.

Today let's respond to Jesus' call with wholehearted commitment. And may our lives testify to his love, grace, and transformative power.

Lord Jesus, thank you for your call to discipleship. Transform us with your love to follow you faithfully, knowing you are with us. Amen.

CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

—Revelation 7:9

In his grand design God calls us to embrace cross-cultural connections and celebrate the diversity among us. The vision in Revelation reveals a glimpse of the eternal kingdom, where people from every nation, tribe, and language will stand united before the throne, worshipping our Lord and Savior.

Cross-cultural connections allow us to experience the richness and beauty of God's creation. As we interact with people from different cultures, we can learn, grow, and broaden our perspectives. We discover the immense tapestry of humanity, woven together by the Creator's loving hand.

This also requires humility, openness, and a willingness to step out of our comfort zones. It calls us to set aside preconceived notions and to appreci-

ate the backgrounds and experiences of others. Through genuine relationships, we can foster unity, break down barriers, and bridge gaps that divide us.

Following Jesus' example, we learn to love and accept others as they are. Doing so, we become ambassadors of reconciliation and unity, reflecting the heart of God to a fragmented world.

Today let's seek opportunities to engage with individuals from different cultures, listening, learning, and building meaningful relationships. And may our lives bear witness to the power of God's love, fostering unity among all peoples.

Lord, we cherish your diverse creation. Use us for unity and reconciliation, reflecting your love. In Jesus, Amen.

FATHERHOOD: REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.
—Psalm 103:13

Fatherhood is a sacred role for dads, an opportunity to reflect the heart of our heavenly Father in the lives of children. This is a responsibility that carries great significance and impact, as fathers have the privilege of nurturing, guiding, and loving their children.

In a world longing for strong and loving father figures, we are called to show the compassion, grace, and wisdom of our heavenly Father. All of us who are fathers today have the privilege to provide security, support, and affirmation to our children, cultivating an environment where they can grow and flourish.

Fatherhood is more than a biological connection; it is a call to be present, engaged, and intentional in our children's lives. It is a call to lead by example, teaching values, and instilling a love for God and others. We

can shape our children's character, cultivate their gifts, and walk alongside them in their journey.

As imperfect beings, we may stumble and fall in this role. But God's grace is abundant, providing us with the strength and wisdom we need. God is the ultimate Father who guides and equips us to fulfill our role with love and grace.

As fathers today, may our lives exemplify God's love, compassion, and provision, leaving a lasting legacy of faith and love for generations to come.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of fatherhood. Grant us wisdom, patience, and love as we lead our children. Help us to reflect your grace and righteousness. Fill our hearts with your joy. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MARRIAGE: A SACRED UNION

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.
—Ephesians 5:25

Marriage is a sacred union designed by God, a reflection of his love and commitment to his people. It is a covenant relationship that calls us to sacrificial love, selflessness, and mutual support.

In a world that often prioritizes self-gratification, marriage is meant to show the beauty of sacrificial love. As husbands and wives, we are called to follow the example of Christ's love for the church by giving ourselves fully for the well-being and flourishing of our spouse.

Marriage is a journey of growth, forgiveness, and shared experiences. It is a partnership in which two individuals strive to understand, honor, and cherish one another. It requires open communication, vulnerability, and a commitment to work through challenges together.

In the highs and lows of married life, we find opportunities for growth, grace, and deepening intimacy. In the context of marriage we learn to offer encouragement, extend forgiveness, and support one another's dreams and aspirations.

Today let's honor the sacredness of marriage. May we embrace the call to love and serve our spouse, imitating Christ's selfless love. Let's cultivate a spirit of humility, understanding, and compassion in our relationships. May our marriages reflect God's love and faithfulness, bringing glory to him and serving as a beacon of hope in a broken world.

Lord, grant us grace and strength to show sacrificial love. May our love testify to your faithfulness. In Jesus, Amen.

WORSHIPING GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

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

—John 4:23-24

Jesus shares this important teaching while he is talking one day with a Samaritan woman (John 4:1-26).

Worship is a sacred act that connects us intimately with God. It goes beyond rituals and outward expressions. It is a heartfelt response to God's majesty and goodness. In worship, we surrender our hearts and minds to God, recognizing his worthiness, glory, and love. We draw near with awe and reverence, offering praise, adoration, and gratitude.

True worship involves more than words and songs; it occupies our entire lives. It means aligning our thoughts, actions, and desires with God's will each day. Worship occurs not only in a church gathering but also in our homes, workplaces, and communities.

When we worship the Lord in spirit and truth, we encounter the transformative power of God. His Spirit ignites our hearts, renewing our passion for him and aligning our lives with his purposes. In the presence of the Almighty, we find joy, peace, and strength to navigate life's challenges.

Let's be true worshipers, offering our lives as a continual act of worship to God. May we seek God with sincerity, authenticity, and a desire to know him more deeply. As we worship in spirit and in truth, may our lives reflect his glory, drawing others to experience the wonder of God's love.

In your Spirit and in truth, Lord, may our lives be a continual offering, reflecting your glory and drawing others to your love. Amen.

FINDING HOPE IN GOD'S PROMISES

*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and
my God.*
—Psalm 42:11

In our lives we can often face times of discouragement. Our spirits can feel heavy and our hearts burdened. When that happens, however, we can turn to God and lean on him, finding hope in his promises and unfailing love.

Discouragement can come from various sources—disappointments, failures, prolonged challenges. Yet even in the midst of such trials we can choose to put our hope in God. He is our refuge and strength, the one who sustains us through every season.

When discouragement threatens to overwhelm us, we can find solace in God's Word. His mighty acts and daily provisions remind us of his faithfulness, and his promises give us hope for the future. God is always present to help in times of trouble, and his love and grace

are sufficient for us (Psalm 46; 2 Corinthians 12:9).

As we anchor our hope in God, our perspective shifts. We begin to see beyond our present circumstances, and we focus on the unchanging nature of our heavenly Father. He is the source of true joy and peace, and in him we find strength to persevere.

Today, if you find yourself discouraged, turn to God in prayer. Pour out your heart before him and listen for his comforting voice. Trust in his perfect timing and purposes, knowing that he is working all things together for your good.

O God, when we are discouraged, may we turn to find hope, peace, and strength in you. Fill our hearts with praise. In Jesus' name, Amen.

OVERCOMING FEAR

"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
—Isaiah 41:10

Fear has a way of paralyzing us, hindering our progress, and robbing us of peace. Yet, as children of God, we are called to overcome fear and walk in the confidence of his presence and power.

When fear tries to grip our hearts, we can find strength in God's promises. The Lord assures us that he is with us, holding us in his mighty hand. In the face of uncertainty, we can trust in God's faithfulness and goodness.

Overcoming fear requires a shift in our perspective. Instead of dwelling on our anxieties, we can focus on the truth of God's Word. We are reminded that we serve the God who is greater than any fear we may face. His strength and help are readily available.

Courage is not the absence of fear but the choice to press for-

ward despite our fear. As we surrender our fears to God, he equips us with his strength, enabling us to face challenges with boldness and resilience. In God we find refuge, peace, and the assurance that we are never alone.

Today let's release our fears into God's capable hands. May we meditate on his promises, allowing his truth to banish fear from our hearts. With confidence in his presence and strength, we can step forward into the purposes God has for our lives, knowing that he is faithful to uphold us.

Father, thank you for your presence and power in our lives. Help us to overcome fear by focusing on you and your promises. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

EMBRACING GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers . . . nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

—Romans 8:38-39

Unconditional love is a gift from God that surpasses our understanding. It is a love that knows no bounds, that remains steadfast through every season of life. With unconditional love our heavenly Father lavishes us with his grace and mercy.

Human love often comes with conditions and limitations. But God's love is different. God's love embraces us in our brokenness, forgives our failures, and offers redemption and restoration. God's love is unwavering, extending to every corner of our existence.

In a world that craves acceptance and belonging, unconditional love provides support and affirmation. It reminds us that we are valued and cherished—not because of our performance or worthiness—but

simply because we are God's beloved children.

God calls us to love others as he has loved us, extending grace and forgiveness in all our relationships. Through our words and actions, we have the privilege of sharing God's boundless love with a hurting world.

Today let's embrace the beauty of unconditional love. May we open our hearts to receive God's love fully, knowing that nothing can separate us from his embrace. And may we overflow with love for others, illuminating the world with his unconditional grace.

Lord, we are in awe of your unconditional love. Help us to receive and extend your love everywhere. In Jesus, Amen.

SECURE IN GOD'S GRACE

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

—Romans 10:9

Salvation is a precious gift offered to everyone, and all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior receive salvation. Through Jesus' death and resurrection we are reconciled with God, forgiven of all our sins, and granted eternal life. This salvation is based not on anything we have done but on God's grace alone.

Our salvation depends not on our feelings or circumstances but on the unchanging character of God and the finished work of Christ. We are saved by grace through faith, and nothing can separate us from God's love for us in Christ.

Assurance of salvation brings peace and security to our souls. Yet this does not mean we can grow complacent or have a license to sin. The gift of salvation prompts us to live in gratitude and obedience.

Knowing that we are saved, we are motivated to live lives that honor and glorify God. We strive to grow in faith, walking in step with the Spirit and sharing the hope of salvation with others.

Today let's rejoice in the gift of salvation and the assurance it brings. May we embrace the truth that our salvation is secure in Christ. Let's live with grateful hearts, striving to live out our faith and share the good news of salvation with a world in need.

Gracious God, we thank you for salvation in Jesus Christ. Help us to live faithfully by honoring and glorifying you. Give us boldness to share this good news with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

GRATITUDE: A HEART OF THANKFULNESS

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
—1 Thessalonians 5:18

Gratitude is a transformative attitude. It helps us to shift from looking at what we don't have to seeing the abundance of blessings around us. In our gratitude we choose to recognize and appreciate the goodness and faithfulness of God in every aspect of our lives. Gratitude opens our eyes to the wonders of creation, the kindness of others, and the countless gifts bestowed on us by our heavenly Father.

Gratitude is not limited to favorable circumstances; it prompts us to give thanks in all circumstances. Even in the midst of trials and challenges, we can find reasons to be thankful. We can express gratitude for God's presence, for his comfort, and for lessons learned through difficult experiences.

Our gratitude flows from realizing we are saved from sin and death through the loving

sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are recipients of unmerited grace, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life.

Today let's cultivate a heart of gratitude. May we pause to count our blessings, expressing gratitude to God and to the people around us. In every season let's remember that gratitude is not just a momentary feeling but a way of life. As we live with hearts full of gratitude, we will experience joy, contentment, and a deep relationship with our loving Father.

Dear Lord, we thank you for countless daily blessings. Help us to see your goodness in all aspects of life and to give thanks in all circumstances. May our lives overflow with gratitude to you. Amen.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP I

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant."
—Mark 10:43

Leadership is not about exerting power and control but about serving others with humility and love. Jesus, our ultimate example of leadership, taught us that true greatness lies in sacrificial servanthood and selfless influence.

In a world that often values ambition and self-promotion, leadership that is rooted in humility and compassion stands out. A servant leader seeks the well-being and development of the people they lead, empowering them to reach their full potential. A servant leader listens, supports, and guides with empathy and grace.

True leadership is not defined by titles or positions but by the impact we have on others. Every interaction, decision, and action provides an opportunity to lead with integrity, authenticity, and a genuine concern for others.

As leaders, we are called to follow Jesus' example. We are called to lead with love, inspiring and empowering the people around us to grow and flourish. Our influence should reflect the character of Christ, nurturing an environment of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect.

May we embrace the call to leadership with humility and grace. May we put the needs of others ahead of our own, seeking to serve rather than be served. As we lead with compassion and integrity, let's point others to the ultimate servant leader, Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus, teach us to lead with humility, love, and grace, following your example. Grant us wisdom, discernment, and compassion, we pray. Amen.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP II

"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." —Matthew 20:28

In a world that often values power and authority, servant leadership stands as a powerful model for those who seek to make a lasting impact. Jesus, our ultimate example of servant leadership, has shown us that greatness is found in humble service and selfless sacrifice.

Servant leaders place the needs of others before their own. They lead with compassion, empathy, and a genuine desire to uplift and empower the people they serve. Instead of seeking to be served, they willingly serve others, pouring out their time, talents, and resources for the well-being of the team or community.

Servant leadership is not about the accumulation of titles or accolades, but about making a positive difference in the lives of others. It involves active listening, fostering an inclusive environment, and recognizing

the value and contributions of each person.

As followers of Christ, we are called to embrace servant leadership. By imitating Jesus' selflessness and humility, we reflect his love to the people around us. We lead by example, showing integrity, compassion, and grace in our interactions and decisions.

As we embrace the call to servant leadership, may we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve. May our lives inspire others to live this way too, bringing positive change to our families, workplaces, and communities.

Lord Jesus, may our leadership reflect your love and selflessness and bring glory to your name. Amen.

TRUSTING GOD

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

God invites us to trust in him, to surrender our worries, doubts, and fears into his capable hands. This involves a conscious choice to rely on God's wisdom and guidance rather than leaning on our own limited understanding.

In a world filled with uncertainty, we can find solace in the unchanging character of God. The Lord is faithful, steadfast, and true. He will fulfill every promise he has made. When we place our trust in the Lord, we tap into the wellspring of his grace, strength, and peace.

Trusting God doesn't mean that we will never face challenges or hardships. But it does mean that we can confidently face hard times, knowing that God is with us, working all things together for our good. We can rest in the assurance

that God is in control and that his plans for us are perfect.

Trusting God requires humility—a recognition that his ways are higher than ours. It involves surrendering our need for control and embracing his divine wisdom and timing. As we submit our lives to the Lord, he directs our paths, leading us on a journey of purpose and fulfillment.

Let's trust God with all our heart. In every circumstance, may we lean on his understanding and submit to his will. As we trust God, we experience his faithfulness, and our lives become a testimony to his goodness and grace.

Lord, guide us to trust in you completely. Help us to live faithfully for you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SINGLENESSE: EMBRACING GOD'S PURPOSE

I wish that all of you were [unmarried] as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

—1 Corinthians 7:7

Singleness is not a season to be endured but a gift to be embraced. People who are single have a unique opportunity to focus wholeheartedly on their relationship with God and his purposes for their lives.

A single person can serve the Lord with undivided devotion, exploring their passions, and using their time and resources to serve for the benefit of others. Singleness allows a person to develop a deeper intimacy with God and to fully pursue God's calling in their life.

Though society may emphasize romantic relationships, God sees the value and potential in being single. He equips us with unique gifts and opportunities to make a difference in the world. Let's remember that our worth is not defined by our marital status but by our

identity as beloved children of God.

If you are single, seek God's guidance, surrendering your desires and plans into his loving hands. Ask God for wisdom in using your singleness to glorify him and invest in meaningful relationships, serving others and sharing the love of Christ.

Dear God, thank you for the gift of singleness. Help all who have this gift to embrace it fully, seeking your purpose and serving others. Grant us contentment, wisdom, and intimacy with you. Use each one of us for your glory and purpose in this world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
—Ephesians 6:11

In our journey of faith we are engaged in spiritual battle. The enemy seeks to distract, discourage, and deceive us. But there is no need to fear because in Christ we are equipped for victory.

God has provided us with spiritual armor to stand against the schemes of the devil. We are called to put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

To engage in spiritual warfare, we must be vigilant, watchful, and prayerful. We rely on God's strength and guidance, knowing that the battle belongs to him. Our weapons are not of the world, but they are powerful and effective through God to pull down strongholds.

As we navigate spiritual warfare, let's stand firm in the truth, unyielding in righteousness and steadfast in faith. Let's immerse ourselves in God's Word, allowing it to guide and protect us. In every battle may our prayers be fervent and our trust unwavering.

Mighty God, strengthen us for spiritual battle. Help us stand firm in truth, righteousness, faith, and your Word. Grant us discernment and victory over the enemy's schemes. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

—James 4:8

Intimacy with God is a precious invitation that is extended to each one of us. Our relationship with God is not distant but brings us in close communion with the Creator of the universe, who desires to reveal his love and purposes to us.

To experience intimacy with God, we must prioritize our relationship with him. We set aside dedicated time for prayer, for studying his Word, and for worship. We cultivate a heart of surrender, seeking God's will above our own.

Intimacy with God is a two-way relationship. As we draw near to him, God comes near to us. In his presence we find comfort, healing, guidance, and peace. God speaks to our hearts, transforms our lives, and empowers us for his purposes.

Let's pursue intimacy with God passionately, longing to

know him deeply and to be known by him. May we invite God into every aspect of our lives and open our hearts to his presence. In the Lord's embrace we find rest, joy, and a love that surpasses all understanding.

Loving Father, draw me near. Help me to prioritize our relationship, creating space for intimacy. Thank you for the privilege of knowing you closely. May my heart be receptive to your presence and voice. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DEALING WITH DOUBT

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. —Psalm 56:3-4

Doubt can cast a shadow on our faith, causing us to question God's faithfulness and promises. But in the midst of doubt we can find assurance by anchoring ourselves in the unwavering truth of God's Word.

When doubt arises, we turn to God in prayer, pouring out our hearts honestly. We express our fears, uncertainties, and questions, knowing that the Lord welcomes our honesty. In his presence we find reassurance, comfort, and the strength to persevere.

It's important to remember that doubt is not a sign of weakness but an invitation for growth. It presents an opportunity to seek a deeper understanding of God's character and of his plans for our lives. We can find encouragement in the testimonies of others who have expe-

rienced God's faithfulness in the midst of their doubts.

As we experience doubt, we hold fast to the promises of God. We remind ourselves of his past faithfulness and lean on his unfailing love. We invite God to reveal himself to us, to increase our faith, and to dispel the shadows of doubt with the light of his truth.

Faithful God, when I am in doubt, guide me to trust your unwavering faithfulness. Help me to bring all my doubts to you, seeking comfort. Increase my faith.

Reveal yourself in profound ways. Grant me the strength to overcome my doubts and to walk in truth. In Jesus, Amen.

TRANSITIONS

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there . . . and make money." . . . [But] you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

—James 4:13-15

Transitions in our lives can be exciting and challenging. Whether it's a new job, a change in relationship status, or a move to a different city, transitions require us to trust in God's guidance and to surrender our plans to him.

In times of transition, we may feel uncertain and overwhelmed. Yet we can find comfort in knowing that God is with us every step of the way. As we trust in the Lord with all our heart, he directs our paths and provides the wisdom and strength we need (Proverbs 3:5-6).

During transitions, we can seek God's will through prayer, aligning our desires with his Word, and by searching out the wise counsel of others. We trust that the Lord will make our paths straight, even when

the way seems unclear. He knows the plans he has for us (Jeremiah 29:11), and his timing is perfect.

As we navigate transitions in life, let's embrace them with faith and hope. May we rely on God's guidance and be open to the opportunities he presents. In every season of change we can trust that God is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28).

Gracious God, in all our transitions help us to trust in your guidance and submit to your will. Grant us the wisdom and strength to serve you in all we do. Amen.

DISCERNING GOD'S WILL

In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.
—Proverbs 16:9

Discerning God's will calls for seeking God's wisdom and aligning our hearts with his purposes. As we desire to make choices that honor the Lord, we can trust that he will guide our steps and direct our paths.

To discern God's will, we must seek his wisdom through prayer and by meditating on his Word. We invite God into the decision-making process, surrendering our desires and plans and opening our hearts to his leading.

God speaks to us through his Spirit, through the godly counsel of others, and through circumstances that align with his Word.

As we grow in our relationship with God, we become more attuned to his voice and more aware of what aligns with his will.

In times of decision making, let's surrender our own understanding and submit to God's perfect plan. May we rely on God's wisdom rather than our own limited perspective.

As we trust in the Lord, we can have confidence that he will guide us along the way that leads to fulfillment and joy.

Wise and loving God, we seek your wisdom to discern your will. Help us to hear your voice. Give us courage to follow your leading. May your will prevail in every aspect of our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
—Romans 12:18

Conflict is an inevitable part of life, but as followers of Christ we are called to pursue peace and reconciliation. In the midst of conflict we have the opportunity to demonstrate God's love and bring healing to broken relationships.

When facing conflict, we begin by examining our own hearts and seeking humility. We strive to understand the perspectives of others and to respond with kindness, empathy, and forgiveness. Our goal is not to win arguments but to build bridges and restore relationships.

The process of reconciliation requires patience, grace, and a willingness to listen. We invite God to work in us and through us, enabling us to extend forgiveness and to seek restoration. As we yield to the Lord's guidance, he empowers us to respond with love and wisdom.

In dealing with conflict, we rely on the Holy Spirit to guide our words and actions. We pray for the strength to lay down our pride, extend forgiveness, and pursue peace. Through our peacemaking efforts, we reflect the character of Christ and become agents of his reconciliation in a broken world.

Prince of Peace, in situations of conflict, help us to seek your wisdom. May we respond with love, kindness, and forgiveness. Grant us humility for reconciliation, and give us the strength to pursue peace. Bring healing and restoration, Lord. Amen.

DEALING WITH ANGER

Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.
—Proverbs 14:29

Anger is a powerful emotion that, if left unchecked, can lead to hurtful words and actions. As followers of Christ, we are called to deal with anger in a way that honors God and promotes reconciliation.

When anger rises within us, we pause and take a moment to reflect. We invite the Holy Spirit to help us respond with gentleness, self-control, and understanding. Rather than allowing anger to control us, we yield to the transforming power of God's grace.

Cultivating a spirit of gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and self-control involves seeking to understand the root causes of our anger and addressing them with wisdom and discernment. We practice empathy and compassion, considering the perspectives and feelings of others. And in humility we

apologize where necessary and seek reconciliation.

God's Word teaches us to be slow to anger and quick to listen (James 1:19). We find strength in prayer, inviting God to heal our hearts and fill us with his love. As we cultivate a spirit of peace and forgiveness, we become vessels of God's grace, bringing restoration to our relationships.

Loving Father, grant us gentleness and self-control when anger rises within us. Fill us with wisdom and understanding. Guide us to listen, empathize, and seek reconciliation. May your love, reflected in our actions, bring healing and restoration. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FINDING TRANQUILITY IN GOD'S PRESENCE

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

—Philippians 4:7

In a world filled with uncertainty and turmoil, the peace of God offers us solace and tranquility. It is a peace that surpasses all understanding, guarding our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

To experience the peace of God, we surrender our anxieties and worries to him in prayer. We present our requests with thanksgiving, knowing that God cares deeply for us. In God's presence we find comfort, assurance, and a quiet confidence that he is in control.

The peace of God is not dependent on our circumstances but on our trust in him. It is a supernatural peace that defies logic and goes beyond human understanding. As we focus on the Lord and on his great mercy, care, and faithfulness to us,

we find peace that transcends the chaos around us.

In every situation, let's turn to God, seeking his peace. May we cultivate a heart of gratitude, knowing that God is our source of strength and security. As we abide in him, his peace will guard our hearts and minds, enabling us to navigate life's challenges with grace and confidence.

Lord, fill us with your peace that "transcends all understanding." Guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Help us to focus on you and to cultivate a heart of gratitude. In your presence may we find tranquility and strength. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WHEN WE ARE GRIEVING

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
—Psalm 34:18

Grieving is a natural response to loss and sorrow. In the midst of our pain we find comfort and peace in the assurance that God is near to the brokenhearted.

When we experience loss, we turn to God in prayer, pouring out our hearts before him. He understands our pain, and in his tender compassion the Lord offers comfort and peace.

Grieving is a process that requires time and grace. We allow ourselves to mourn, knowing that God wipes every tear and holds us close to his heart.

In times of sorrow, we can draw strength from fond memories of the ones we have lost. Their legacy lives on through the impact they have had in our lives, and we can thank God for the ways he has blessed us through them.

As we walk through grief, we find hope in the resurrection and eternal life promised in Christ, our Savior.

Trusting in all of God's promises, we hold on to the assurance that our loved ones who have passed away are safe in his loving arms.

Compassionate God, in our grief may we find comfort in you. Draw near and hold us close as we mourn. Thank you for all of your promises. Thank you for understanding our pain and our tears. Help us to find hope in the resurrection and eternal life you have made possible for us in Jesus. Amen.

TRUSTING GOD IN UNCERTAINTY

Who is like you, LORD God Almighty? You, LORD, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.
—Psalm 89:8

Uncertainty can leave us feeling vulnerable and afraid. But in the midst of life's unknowns, we have a trustworthy anchor: God's unwavering presence and faithfulness.

When we are faced with uncertainty, we remember that God is in control. God is faithful, and his plans for us are good. We can trust the Lord to strengthen and help us, upholding us with his righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

In the face of uncertainty and the unknown, we find comfort in the reliability of God's character and faithfulness. God is our refuge and strength, always present to help in times of trouble (Psalm 46:1). With the Lord by our side, we need never fear the future. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of [his] throne; love and faithfulness" surround him.

When we face uncertain times, let's lean on God's promises. We can draw near to God in prayer, seeking his guidance and wisdom. In the Lord's embrace, we can find the assurance that he is leading us on a path of purpose and fulfillment.

Almighty God, in times of uncertainty, I trust your faithfulness, power, and love. Help me to lean on your promises, finding refuge in your presence. Guide me on a path of right living for Jesus' sake. Amen.

WORK: SERVING GOD WITH EXCELLENCE

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord. . . .
—Colossians 3:23

Work is not merely a means of earning a living; it is an opportunity to serve God with excellence. Whether it's in our job or career, our studies, or our daily chores and tasks, we can bring glory to God by working with diligence and wholeheartedness.

Our attitude toward work reflects our devotion to Christ. When we view our labor as an offering to the Lord, even mundane tasks take on significance.

Every effort made with love and dedication is an act of worship.

God calls us to work for him and not for human approval. We find our ultimate reward in him.

Knowing that God sees and values our efforts, we serve with joy and a sense of purpose.

May our work ethic be characterized by integrity and humility. Whether we are enjoying success or facing challenges, we can keep our eyes fixed on the One we serve, knowing that our labor is not in vain.

And as we go about our work each day as working for the Lord, we become a reflection of God's love and a light in this world.

Lord, I offer my work and all I do as worship to you. Help me to serve diligently and with integrity. May my labor bring you glory and reflect your love to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

IMITATING CHRIST'S HUMILITY

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

—Philippians 2:3-4

As followers of Christ, we are called to embrace a servant attitude, putting the needs of others before our own.

This humility echoes the very heart of Jesus, who came not “to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

In a world that often exalts self-promotion and personal gain, we stand apart by valuing others above ourselves. We seek to meet the needs of people around us, extending kindness, empathy, and compassion.

A servant attitude begins with a heart transformed by God's love.

As we live in God's presence, we learn to lay down our ambitions and egos, making room for selflessness and sacrificial love. We act with grace and

love toward others, just as God has done for us.

In every interaction, let's consider the interests of others, seeking opportunities to serve in both big and small ways.

May we be known not by our accomplishments but by our love and by our servant hearts that follow the example of Jesus.

Spirit of God, mold my heart in humility and love to imitate the Lord Jesus. Help me to value others above myself and to serve selflessly. May I reflect Christ's love for the benefit of others in this world each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

TRUSTING GOD'S LEADING

"I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. . . ."
—Isaiah 42:6

Changes and transitions can bring uncertainty and stress, but they also present new opportunities for growth and transformation.

In times of change, we can find comfort and assurance in recognizing that God is leading us, making a way even in the most challenging circumstances.

As we step into new seasons, we can trust that God is leading us on a path of purpose and fulfillment.

Like a stream in the wasteland, God provides us with refreshment and direction in situations that are unfamiliar and may even be threatening (Isaiah 35).

Though changes in our lives may feel overwhelming—especially if they are forced on us—we have the promise that God is with us every step of the way. God equips us with

the strength and wisdom we need to face the future with confidence.

In times of transition, let's surrender our plans and desires to God, seeking his will and guidance.

As we embrace new beginnings, we can move forward in faith, knowing that God is our constant companion and the author of our story.

Faithful God, in times of change help us to trust in you for guidance and provision. Open our eyes to new things that you are doing in our lives. Help us to embrace change with courage and faith, knowing you are always with us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WHEN LIFE THROWS YOU CURVEBALLS

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. . . . —Psalm 46:1-2

Life is filled with unexpected twists and turns, but in the midst of uncertainty we can find refuge in God's unwavering presence. He is our rock and strength, our help in times of trouble.

When life throws us curveballs, we remember that God is still sovereign. He is in control, working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). In God's hands, even the most chaotic situations find purpose and meaning.

In times of trouble, we turn to God in prayer, seeking his guidance and wisdom. He provides the peace that surpasses all our understanding, calming our fears and steadying our hearts.

Though the storms of life may rage, we anchor our hope in the Lord our Creator, who faithfully protects our souls.

Our destiny is secure in him. God's promises are sure, and his love for us is unfailing.

As we trust in the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth and all that is in them (Psalm 24:1), we walk with confidence, knowing that nothing can separate us from his love (Romans 8:39).

Mighty God, when we face life's unexpected twists and turns, we find refuge in your presence. Help us to trust in your sovereignty and promises. Fill us with peace, knowing that you will guide us through every storm. May we stand firm in faith, knowing that you are in control. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SEEKING GOD'S PRESENCE

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Where can I go and meet with God?
—Psalm 42:1-2

Our relationship with God is a journey of seeking and drawing near to him.

Like a deer longing for water, our souls thirst for God's presence, yearning to meet with the living God.

We grow deeper in our relationship with God through intentional pursuit. We carve out moments in our day to seek the Lord in prayer, worship, and meditation on his Word.

As we spend time in God's presence, we are transformed by his love and truth. The more we know God, the more we are conformed to his likeness and character. We are gradually "transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The desire to know God intimately is nurtured through obedience and surrender. We yield our lives to him, allowing his Spirit to lead and guide us into deeper communion.

In our pursuit of God, we discover that he delights in revealing himself to us. As we draw near to God, he draws near to us, filling our hearts with joy and peace.

Eternal God, my soul yearns for your presence. Guide me to seek you with all my being. Draw me close in prayer and teach me from your Word. Transform me with your love and truth. I long to know you more and to live for you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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