

FOLLOWING JESUS DAY BY DAY

# PURE

**P**eople

**U**ndergoing

**R**egeneration

**E**veryday

**PURE**

Devotional Ministry

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*Our prayer for this devotional booklet is that you would meditate on the thoughts presented here, drawing closer to the Lord in your daily walk, and begin "reflecting the glory of the Lord...being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit". (2 Corinthians 3:18 NET\*)*

### *PURE Devotional Ministry*

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*\*Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from the ESV translation of the Holy Bible.*



## 1 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

As we begin this new winter-to-spring devotional, let us begin with our identity as beloved and "*hidden with Christ in God*" (Col 3:3).

Our new life has begun. Yet, like winter, sometimes newness springs forth from a time of loss. The leaves on the trees change colour and fall away. Similarly, in some seasons we may experience short term changes. Those patterns and practices which once served us may need to be stripped away in preparation for the new thing that God is doing.

As we face this new season, let us be ready to lay down our patterns and plans for the way ahead and fully trust that the Creator of the universe has the knowledge and wisdom to bring all things together in His perfect way.

*Pray: Dear God, thank You for how You are at work in my life. Please help me to lean in in trust.*

## 2 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

If we are new Christians, we may need to practice patience with our progress. As with any new adventure, we may occasionally suffer bumps or bruises through unsteady steps or miscalculations. With time, our progress became smoother.

This may be our first winter as a Christian. Up until now, we have had beautiful experiences of God's amazing grace and goodness. Now we may be faced with unexpected trials, loss, or overstretching, and it is unfamiliar. Yet, our walk with Christ is a transformational journey. Each new experience, each new day, we are growing more and more in our maturity as Christians. God is nurturing us toward stronger faith.

Let us serve with open eyes, attentive ears, and obedient hearts.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, thank You for how You are growing me. Please strengthen me to endure.*



## 3 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Yesterday we talked about practice, patience, and perseverance.

Practice, patience, and perseverance will help us to grow in transformation as a Christ-follower, but only if we stick with it.

It can be super easy to read about an amazing adventure and to believe that we would be able to accomplish all that the hero achieved. However, just a tiny step into their shoes will transform our understanding, revealing the skills and stamina that are necessary for participants. We grow through actual real-life experiences.

*Pray: O Mighty God, what patience You have shown with me. Thank You. Thank You for Your kindness and Your grace when I have allowed fear to hold me back. I long to be Your more perfect witness. Please help me to get involved. Thank You for growing and renewing me day by day.*

## 4 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

When facing another winter as a more mature Christian, we have a greater awareness of God's faithfulness. We have seen how He has walked beside us through a wintertime in our natural world. When the leaves fall away and the temperatures drop, God is still with us.

Beyond that, we have also known God's faithfulness through seasons of hurt, pain, weariness, and loss. Even when some opportunities fall away, doors close, and some relationships grow cold, God is still with us.

*Pray: Dearest Father God, thank You for the faithfulness of the love You have shown to me after my life began afresh in You. In You I live.*



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**"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live,  
but Christ lives in me."**

*~ Gal 2:20a NIV*



## 5 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Facing the uncertainty of death is challenging!

If you are now in a season where you are looking death face-to-face, I pray that you know God's peace surrounding you, and His family sharing His words, and being His arms and feet in comforting you (2 Cor 1:3-4).

Facing death can represent our own frailty in battling disease, an acknowledgment of our ageing bodies, or be the pending death of a younger person beloved to us. Either way, our lives are not our own, and the lives of loved ones are best placed in God's loving care (Col 3:3).

My prayer is that these devotions will not cause you unnecessary angst but might instead help you to know our Father's loving closeness.

*Pray: Dearest Triune God, I come before You with trust that You are walking with us in this season. Thank You for being close.*

## 6 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

While we may not be facing physical death, we know that we have died to self. *"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there"* (Gal 5:24 NLT). This winter, this week, or simply day by day, how can we give the passions and desires of our sinful nature over to God?

From James's epistle we know that passions and desires can draw us away from God, toward sin and, ultimately, death (1:13-15). *"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire"* (Jas 1:14).

Instead, choose to draw nearer to God (Jas 4:4), knowing that He can meet all your needs, as the Giver of every good gift (Jas 1:17).

Pray: *Dearest Lord Jesus, please forgive me for every time that I pursued my selfish desires and self-centred passions. I choose to pursue You afresh.*



## 7 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

We can still experience joy, passion, and desire which do not draw us away from the Lord. God is not inviting us into a life devoid of joy, passion or desire. No, when Paul wrote to the Galatians, he was addressing them on pursuing passions and desires prompted by their sinful nature.

Similarly, James recognised that following desires could lead to sin. *"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death"* (Jas 1:14-15).

It is not that passion or desire are bad. Rather our passion and desire are to be submitted to God's will and glory. When they are, then our hearts, minds, and spirits may hold passion and desire while bringing honour to God.

Pray: *Dearest Father God, I seek to honour and glorify You with all I am.*

## 8 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

When our lives are *"hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3 NIV), then our passion and desires will naturally be consistent with God's will.

How can we know this?

Think for a second on whether sharing about your passion and desire among your Christian friends or church group is likely to draw others toward God or to make them cringe?

Maybe you are passionate about saving young people trapped in sexual slavery. It may be an uncomfortable subject to discuss, but you know that the lives impacted are being turned toward God as they receive recognition as His image-bearers. Rescuing them is pleasing to God, and being part of setting them free is in alignment with God's will. Thank you.

*Pray: Thank You, Dearest Father God, for those whose passion is to help improve the lives of others. Thank You for each one who looks beyond themselves to help and offer freedom to others as they glorify You.*



## 9 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Yesterday we talked about those who have a passion to help others, particularly that they might know freedom.

Quite possibly you are a quiet-achiever who would be uncomfortable with a public stage. And yet, do you feel that God may be calling you to a platform as part of His perfect will?

If the answer is Yes, remember that *"your life is now hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3 NIV). You may not feel able for public speaking, but if you are called to be Christ's representative, He will enable you. Keep trusting.

*Pray: Dearest Lord Jesus, If You are calling me to a public stage, please open the doors and show me clearly, and please be my strength.*

## 10 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Just as your life is "*hidden with Christ in God*" (Col 3:3 NIV), so too are the lives of other believers, old and new.

Where we may personally struggle with some of the people in our church or Bible study group, let us ask the Lord to help us see them through the filter of His love. As they are "*hidden with Christ in God*," let our eyes remain on God. And where we still see part of their old nature, let us remember that God chooses to overlook the parts of our old nature that still shine through. May we be ready with grace and kindness too.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, thank You for covering me with the blood of Your sacrifice. I know that I am hidden with You. Please help me to keep my eyes fixed on You, my Saviour.*



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**"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.  
The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."**

~2 Cor 5:17



## 11 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Yesterday we talked about how we need to see others through the filter of God's love. These are also people made in God's image.

Sometimes the way we see the ones we see is through some brokenness in our hearts, minds, and spirits.

If we find ourselves becoming angry or frustrated with others, and particularly a special kind of 'others,' let us be prepared to come before our Triune God that this splinter or log may be removed from our sight and vision (Luke 6:42).

*Pray: Dearest Triune God, please forgive me for not seeing You in my brothers and sisters. Please cleanse my vision.*



## 12 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

You may be familiar with the story of the young woman who complained to her husband about the clothes hanging on the clothesline over the fence. She harboured all sorts of opinions about how the washer should wash harder and better. The next morning, there was a significant difference. It was not because the washer had tried new strategies. Instead, it was because the husband had washed their windows. Their vision of the neighbour's washing had changed.

Before we begin to offer opinions on how the lives of others may be improved, let us be confident that we have heard and seen with clarity, and be wise in what we choose to share. *"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry"* (Jas 1:19 NIV).

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for restoring my vision.*



## 13 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

When our instinct leans more toward responding with frustration, it may be that we are not resting in God (Matt 11:29), rather than seeing through dulled vision.

Are you living your life as if **you** are God?

You are not indispensable. You can, and should, take time off.

God is sovereign. He is in charge, and perfectly capable of fulfilling all His plans according to His perfect will.

Our part is to rest and trust in Him. Yes, God calls us to work with Him, but He also wants us to know rest in Him. Take time to rest.

Pray: *Dear Father God, please forgive me for those times when I refused to stop and rest. Please grow my trust in You.*

## 14 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

God does not just invite us to rest. God commands it.

*... you must always observe my Sabbath days of rest. I am the Lord your God"* (Lev 19:3 NLT).

Do you obey God's command to observe Sabbath rest?

Do not hear this as a direction from a commanding officer. This is a direction coming from the loving heart of God.

God knows us. He created us, and knows our frailties. We were not created to work without stopping. God did not create us to be Energiser Bunnies! Hear instead our Loving Father's invitation to work and rest in Him (Col 3:3).

*Pray: Dearest Father God, thank You for the life I live in You. You are my resting place, my shelter.*



## 15 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Our lives are not meant to be lived in a workaholic treadmill. God seeks much richer experiences for His beloved children.

God delights in us, and He wants us to know delight in Him (Ps 37:4).

The prophet Zephaniah tells us that God sings over us. *"The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing"* (Zeph 3:17).

Life is not meant to be a chore to be endured. God created us for much more than that, and now *"your life is hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3), opening your life to greater richness in Him.

Know rest from work times, seek times of creativity and play. Have fun!

*Pray: Dearest Father God, thank You for times of work, rest, and play.*

## 16 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

When we take times to rest and recreate, our sovereign God continues to fulfill His plans in faithfulness. Does that mean that all things will come together according to our perfect plans?

Not necessarily.

It may mean giving up our sense of control over the situation. It may mean that others step in to help while we are resting. It is likely that they will do it differently. But we need to remember that 'different' does not have to be viewed negatively.

Our part is to rest in God and to trust in His faithfulness. He is faithful to us and also to His plans.

*Pray: Dearest Triune God, thank You for how You are working all things together for good.*



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You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

~Ps 139:3



## 17 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Delegating our work to another can be challenging, as we considered yesterday. They may not follow "the way we do things around here." But is that truly a negative outcome?

It is likely that there are aspects of your work that you find challenging. Another person may take joy in exactly those aspects. Further, through experiencing filling this role, they may come up with creative solutions you had not considered. Trust that God is sovereign, and hold your role loosely. God may have bigger doors open ahead for you. Keep your eyes on Him.

*Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, please guide me by Your wisdom, with grace.*

## 18 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Our lives are now *"hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3 NIV). Our old life is gone, our new life is in Christ.

Consider with me for a second that you have died. Let's suppose that you stood outside your body for a moment. Now let's take it a step further and suppose that there was medical help nearby to resuscitate you. You are alive again.

This is your true life, with Christ, in God. Live into the richness of this.

On this fantasy trip, let us suppose that you remember that moment of being outside your body. But now you are fully alive again. If that happened, you may have had a "wake-up" call. You may commit to making changes in your life. I believe that this is a lot like being born again to life in Christ.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, thank You for bringing me to newness of life in You.*



## 19 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Continuing to consider our lives in Christ, how different would your life be if you consciously lived in Christ each day?

As you meet with others, you see them through the eyes of Christ. Their faults and failures would fade away and you would see them in all their richness, clad with God's grace and love.

Seeing with the eyes of the Lord would also mean recognising the hurt, grief, and pain that people are carrying in their hearts, minds, and spirits.

Rather than responding to their outer behaviour, let us commit to a readiness to offer grace and kindness, being the Lord's instruments.

*Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, please continue to soften my heart toward those who are hurting. Please open my understanding on ways to help.*

## 20 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

We have been asking the Lord to give us new eyes to see as He sees.

When Mary saw Jesus near the rolled-away stone, she did not recognise Him. *"Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus"* (John 20:14).

Are you prepared to recognise others as God's image-bearers? We are not called to be kind and loving only to those who are kind and loving. In fact, Jesus called us to love our enemies, those who have been unkind, punished, neglected, betrayed, and gossiped about us.

*"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you"* (Luke 6:27). Love is God's directive.

Pray: *Dearest Triune God, please forgive me when I am unloving, and please help me to love as You love.*



## 21 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

God's image-bearers do not always act in line with God's character. All people carry God's image within them (Gen 1:26-27). But they may not yet know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. They have not yet died (Col 3:3).

Does that mean that we do not need to love them as God loves us?

No! We are *"hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3), so there is a call on our lives to love and show grace as God has loved us.

While they may not yet know Jesus as Lord and have come to saving faith, God may be inviting their trust in Him through us. As we live in obedience to God's call and character, we can offer to others God's hands, feet, shoulders, and heart.

Pray: *Dear Father God, I seek to be Your faithful servant in the lives of others. Please guide me by Your Holy Spirit.*

## 22 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Yesterday we recognised that those who do not yet know Jesus as Lord and Saviour may not live in alignment with God's Holy Spirit.

Unfortunately, there are also those who claim Jesus as Saviour who live out of alignment with God's will for them. What is our part?

As we live out of our hiddenness in God (Col 3:3), God can draw them closer to their true lives in Him by our obedience.

*"As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend"* (Prov 27:17 NLT). Let us be willing to be God's sharpening iron.

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, please guide my steps in obedience.*



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*"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil."*

~ Luke 6:35



## 23 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

Just as there are some who claim Jesus as Lord but walk in disobedience, there are also those who have strayed away from faith and the Lord. In his epistle, James speaks of the one who *"wanders away from the truth and is brought back,"* (Jas 5:19 NLT).

May we be God's instruments in bringing another back.

Does that mean that God is putting us in the place of judge? No! James affirms that God is the Judge (4:12) and our part is to show mercy (2:13).

Pray: *Thank You, Lord, for the mercy I receive from You.*

## 24 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

We have spoken recently about being God's hands and feet in the lives of others. That is our calling. But, while our lives are "*now hidden with Christ in God*" (Col 3:3), is Christ visible in us?

There may be times when other people will struggle to recognise Jesus in us (John 20:14).

Are we living out our lives in obedience to God and consistent with His character?

As we recognise areas of our lives where we have failed, let us bring them to the Lord in confession. As we confess, our Lord Jesus "*is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9).

Pray: *Thank You, Dearest Lord, for Your forgiveness and grace.*



## 25 July

*"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."*

Col 3:3 NIV

When the sinful woman washed Jesus's feet with her tears at Simon's home, Jesus pointed to the differences in response to grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

*"Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little"* (Luke 7:47).

As we recognise areas in our lives and hearts where we are not walking in obedience and in alignment with God's character, our hearts are opened to a deeper portion of the Lord's grace and forgiveness. As we are humbled in the recognition of our sinfulness, our hearts are softened toward showing mercy, grace, and forgiveness toward others.

The Lord is perfecting our love as we are moulded through His love.

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for opening my eyes to see my sinfulness.*

## 26 July

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

We have talked about how our lives are *"now hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3). But how did that come about?

In his letter to the church at Galatia, Paul told how his life is now lived *"by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"* (Gal 2:20).

Jesus is the reason why our lives are now hidden in God. Through His sacrifice at the cross, we are given the opportunity to receive new life in Him. Jesus took all our sins upon Himself, gaining freedom for us.

Have you experienced this freedom? Do you know that you can receive Jesus as your Saviour?

If you have not yet, speak to a Christian friend or a pastor today, or email me directly. We would love the opportunity to introduce you to the God *"who loved [you] and gave himself for [you]"* (Gal 2:20). He is calling you to Himself, as a Shepherd calls His flock (Isa 40:11).

Pray: *O Dearest Lord, thank You for calling me to Yourself.*



## 27 July

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

Jesus, the Son of God gave Himself so that I could have new life in Him (Gal 2:20). Take a moment to reread that.

The God who created us remains faithful to us, even though we have, in many ways and forms, chosen to be unfaithful to Him.

If your heart, mind, or spirit are burdened with guilt for the ways that you have strayed, follow the example of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24).

Resolve to confess where you have stepped away from His will (vv 18, 21), and rush into His loving arms (v 20; 1 John 1:9).

Pray: *Dearest Triune God, thank You for all that You have done, and for receiving me back into fellowship with You. I seek to live in ways that bring You glory. Thank You for forgiving me, and restoring me to righteousness.*



## 28 Jul

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

If you experienced reconciliation with the Father yesterday, today is a new day! Draw closer, Beloved. *"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you"* (Jas 4:8a-b). God loved you enough to give himself for you (Gal 2:20). What does that tell us?

We are important and beloved to Him, and He wants to live in relationship with us. God wants to have a real relationship with you. Keep your eyes on Him, as your life is *"now hidden with Christ in God"* (Col 3:3). Delight in Him as He delights in you (Zeph 3:17).

Pray: *Dearest Triune God, thank You for Your example of self-giving love.*



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*"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

~ Gal 2:20



## 29 July

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

Even if our miracle of salvation did not happen two days ago, we can still recommit to knowing God in deeper relationship.

What does that look like?

Think of any other relationship you have in your life. The more time you invest in it, the better and smoother it usually becomes. Our commitment to having good human relationships is usually self-fulfilling.

So too, as we love God generously, His generous love will flood and overflow from our hearts in greater proportions. Recommit today

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for how You are refreshing my love.*

## 30 July

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

During Covid you may have experienced the costs of less fellowship time with others.

So too, if we do not spend valuable times with God, our relationship with Him will not grow. So what can we do to strengthen this relationship?

We need to spend quality time in God's Word. This will enable us to grow in our understanding of God, His character, His faithfulness to His promises, and His love for us.

As this month draws to a close, let us commit to a renewed Bible-reading program or plan in August.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, thank You for inviting me to meet You in Your Word. Please help me to plan my time well and to be faithful to my commitment.*



## 31 July

*"... the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal 2:20*

Yesterday we talked about building a Bible-reading plan for next month. This will help us to know God better. Added to that, we will also grow to know His plans for us.

As we spend more time reading God's Word, we will get a better sense of His call on our lives. We will have a clearer instinct for how He would have us behave. As we lean in more, we can better answer the old WWJD question, What Would Jesus Do?

As we read more, God's Word also begins to be buried more deeply in our hearts. Like the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24), when we step away from close harmony with God's will and voice, our eyes are opened to the emptiness outside of God's will (v17). Our eyes are opened to how we have strayed. Let us commit to walking closely instead.

*Pray: Thank You, Triune God, for the opportunity to spend time with You in Your Word. I seek to grow closer to You.*

# 1 August

*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”*

John 8:12

Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12).

As we live in Him, where and how can we shine His light? Through His light, we can push back the darkness that others may be facing.

No matter how small the light of Christ we carry may seem, even a single match shines brightly in total darkness, and leads the way forward.

Within our circles of influence, *do* we shine the Lord’s light?

As we practise spending time with God in His Word this last month of winter, let us look for new ways to shine brightly for Christ. It may be sharing a smile or word of encouragement. It may be going above and beyond for those with whom we have had rockier relationships. It may be offering them a second chance, the light of a new day, as a way of moving forward.

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for the light You shine in our lives.*



# 2 August

*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”*

John 8:12

As we mentioned yesterday, we are both called, and seek, to carry the light of Christ in our lives. However, sometimes expressing the light of Christ before your friends and family can be challenging. *“The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it”* (John 1:5 NASB1995).

It can be challenging to explain an experience that is important to you using only words. Think about sharing something as simple as the smell of freshly brewing coffee to a non-coffee drinker. Yet, how much richer is the incredible joy of knowing Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour!

Pray: *Thank You, Dearest Lord, and please help us to persevere in our attempts to shine the light of Your grace and love.*

## 3 August

*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”*

John 8:12

How can we explain the light of Christ to others?

Maybe it could be as simple as reminding them of natural darkness.

Darkness can make sight difficult. Stumbling can happen, plus people can become disoriented or even lost.

From there we could remind them of times when there was a darkness over their lives, such as illness, financial concerns, or disconnection in their relationships. As they come to recognise how a natural light can push back darkness, they may see that Christ’s light of love can sustain them in their other times of darkness.

Pray: *Dearest Lord, please lead me by Your wisdom and Holy Spirit.*



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In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

~ Matt 5:16 NIV



## 4 August

*“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”* John 8:12

As those beloved to us begin to hear about Jesus, they can begin to experience more and more of His love and grace in their hearts, minds, and spirits. Then, they will not simply be depending on our experience of the light of Christ. Instead, they will have their own experience to guide them.

Let us be quick to share our Lord, that others may no longer “walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Pray: *O Lord Jesus, thank You for the opportunity to bring others to You, that they may know You as their Lord and Saviour. Please guide my words.*

## 5 August

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12*

Earlier we mentioned attempting to explain the aroma of brewing coffee to non-coffee drinkers. It is possible, and even probable, that they will not be interested in any explanations you might make. It does not interest them.

When sharing the wonder of our faith and how Jesus Christ is the Light of the world and our Lord and Saviour, we may meet the same level of disinterest.

The Apostle Paul provides the explanation. *"In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God"* (2 Cor 4:4). The enemy of our souls is keeping our friends in darkness.

What can we do? We can pray.

*Pray: Dear, Heavenly Father, please reveal Your light to our loved ones. Please guide us in how to intercede that they may know You.*



## 6 August

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12*

Is there anything else that we can do to show the light of God's love?

We can continue to be witnesses to how God's light and love has changed our lives. More than words, the changes that our family and friends can see with their own eyes will speak to their hearts, minds, and spirits.

Let us continue to pray for them, and let us continue to raise them before our Father God for His intercession. He is their Creator and He knows what will speak most deeply to them. Trust in God and be obedient to His directions.

*Pray: Dearest Triune God, thank You for how You have worked in my life. Please bring my loved ones into Your light.*

## 7 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

In this final month of winter for this year, you may also be experiencing a time of winter.

Yours may be a winter where activities, such as sports, are stripped back or have fallen away, like deciduous leaves. You may be missing some exercise or social outlets. Like the buds of spring leaves, they will likely return soon.

Meanwhile, we can trust in the Lord to nurture new social connections and ways of staying engaged. Spend daily time with Him, singing songs of praise, dancing as you are led, and praying for those whom He places on your heart. God draws nearer as we come closer (Jas 4:8).

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for Your steadfast love.*



## 8 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

Today, let us be particularly attentive in how the Lord is at work in our lives.

Yesterday we talked about how seasonal changes can represent a type of winter experience in our relationships and exercise routine. We may not be catching up with people we usually regularly see. Even if they are not close friends, the banter can be fun and engaging.

During this winter season, let us be receptive to how our Loving Father may be nurturing us toward other activities and relationships. We can start by thanking Him for those He has brought into our lives, and especially raise up in thanksgiving those qualities which nurture our souls.

Pray: *Thank You, Father God, for walking with me in my winter seasons. Please show me where I might be Your instrument in the lives of others.*

## 9 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

For some, the winter of loss cuts deeper. It may be a sense of feeling excluded from a group where you were previously accepted.

Could it be that you are over-reading the words and actions of others?

The enemy of our souls loves to cause disunity (John 10:10). Perhaps a first step would be to reach out to the one or two people in this group to whom you feel closest. An in-person get-together will give you a better sense of any disharmony between you. Trust in the Lord (Isa 40:31).

*Pray: Dearest Heavenly Father, thank You that You are always available to listen, to comfort, to strengthen, to be near, and to lead in growth.*



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My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your  
splendor all day long.

~ Ps 71:8 NIV



## 10 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

Are you experiencing some distancing in your social relationships?

Do you know what might have caused it?

If you sense the disharmony but cannot place the cause, come before the Lord and ask Holy Spirit to reveal any part you may have contributed to this disengagement.

If Holy Spirit brings to mind some words or actions of yours which might have contributed to a drawing apart, confess. Ask the Lord for His forgiveness (1 John 1:9), and ask Holy Spirit to help reconciliation.

*Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, please help me in nurturing reconciliation.*

## 11 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.”* Isa 40:31 NLT

Yesterday we considered how words and actions can contribute to disharmony in our relationships.

In his epistle, James directs us to *“be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry”* (Jas 1:19 NLT).

If our words or actions have caused angst, let us lean into Holy Spirit for His wisdom in the work toward reconciliation.

Yes, it is important to confess our part before the Lord, but taking responsibility and confessing our shortcomings or failures before others may also be necessary for healing.

*Pray: Dearest Holy Spirit, please guide me on how I can take a part in Your reconciliation work.*



## 12 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.”* Isa 40:31 NLT

Yesterday we touched on why it might be important to make confession to those from whom we are now experiencing separation. It is important that we follow God’s leading.

It can happen that mentioning old hurts again may lead to more angst for those whom we have unintentionally hurt. Their healing, protection, and safety needs to be prioritised over whether we reconcile with them.

When we commit them and this relationship to God’s perfect plans, He will bring about the best possible outcome for all concerned. We can trust in His goodness, mercy, and grace.

*Pray: Dearest Father God, I seek to make amends and achieve reconciliation, but I also seek the better good for my friends. Please guide.*



## 13 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

We have been considering the pain and disconnection which can be caused by thoughtless or unintentional words or actions. Sometimes whole families can be torn apart, as each member tries to painfully consider how they can bridge the gap.

If others have spoken words or acted in ways which have caused your exclusion, is there a way that you can work toward reconciliation?

Our God is a miracle-worker and is able to reunite family, friends, and other relationships in ways that are incredible and unfathomable.

As our first step, let us go to God in prayer.

*Pray: Dearest Triune God, I need You. Only You could bring reconciliation where there is currently such grief, pain, and anger. I wait on You.*



## 14 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

Earlier we had tried to nurture reconciliation after an experience of exclusion.

Maybe you are currently experiencing exclusion, but already know why you have been excluded.

Would an apology be helpful if you were the one whose actions caused the exclusion?

Sometimes pride makes it difficult for us to apologise and ask for forgiveness. In some ways, what we shared may have been deserved. However, given the offence it caused, could we be willing to humbly retract what we said? Come before God for His wisdom.

*Pray: Dear God, please help me to know which steps to take..*

## 15 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

Winter time is drawing to a close. Soon we will be celebrating the blessings and beauty of Spring!

Until we experience the warmth of raising temperatures, we can continue to trust in God’s faithfulness, and know that they will come.

If you are currently facing a winter of a different kind, you can trust in God’s faithfulness and blessings with just as much hope and confidence. God **is** faithful.

Pray: *Thank You, Lord, for Your amazing grace and faithfulness.*



Every time your name comes up in my prayers, I say, “Oh, thank you, God!”

~Phm 4 MSG



## 16 August

*“But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isa 40:31 NLT*

Have you noticed that Spring is in the air, or have you been too preoccupied with worries, frustrations, or concerns?

If you can, stop and take a few deep breaths now, and take a walk in the great outdoors. Ask God to be tangibly present to hold you.

Yes, we can all get bogged down with concerns, but then we need to stop and turn our eyes afresh toward our Gracious God.

He is the One who offers fresh strength, and will help us soar high on wings of eagles (Isa 40:31 NLT). Give Him all your troubles (Ps 55:22).

Pray: *Thank You, Lord, for Your strength, grace, and blessings.*

## 17 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

As believers, we belong to God. We know that we are *“hidden with Christ in God”* (Col 3:3). We also know that we *“were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body”* (1 Cor 6:20).

We belong to our Triune God and we know that we are beloved to Him. But how do we glorify Him in our bodies?

When we honour Him with our faith, we glorify Him.

As we live out our lives with faith in the Lord, being strong, holding courage in our hearts, and waiting for the Lord (Ps 27:14), we honour Him. Through our faithful trust, others can know that God is trustworthy.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, I seek to honour You and bring You glory through my life. Thank You for all that You are and do for me.*



## 18 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

There can be seasons when waiting for the Lord seems to be taking longer than usual (Ps 27:14). How can we be good witnesses for God’s glory when that happens?

Although we may be waiting for the Lord, we can still be faithful witnesses as we wait patiently. Through our patience, others may know that God’s answers sometimes take time to come to fruition. God is not late.

James reminded his readers that waiting can sometimes become second-nature, as for farmers. *“See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains”* (Jas 5:7c-f).

Our patient trust can help others to remain patiently trusting.

*Pray: Dear Father God, thank You for holding me through waiting times.*

## 19 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

We have been considering how we can bring glory to our Triune God. Trusting patience in God’s perfect plans is a good way to be witnesses before others. But what if you really struggle with being patient yourself? What happens if you become frustrated and blurt that out before others? For many observers, you will simply be demonstrating that you are human and not God. This may not diminish their trust in God. And if, after your bout of frustration, you can again return to trusting patience, you are likely to inspire them to do likewise.

God is not asking you to have a super-human personality. Paul, knowing that we were bought with a precious price, was instructing those in the church in Corinth to glorify God. We can do likewise, even if we occasionally remind our friends that we are still being transformed.

Pray: *O Dearest Father God, I seek to bring You glory.*



## 20 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

Yesterday we touched on the fact that we can sometimes struggle at being patient. We may see this as failure.

Yet as we continue to walk in our faith journey we are continuing to demonstrate faithfulness to God.

Also, as we continue to push through with God, He continues to push through with us. He continues to mould, transform, and shape us according to His perfect plan.

In fact, in many instances, the thing that caused us frustration in the past is the thing that we would reject now. We can see God’s better plan.

Pray: *Dear Father God, thank You for giving me far more than I expected or deserved, and in Your perfect timing.*

## 21 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

God works in incredible ways in fulfilling His perfect plans. These are *“plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”* (Jer 29:11).

As we see and recognise God’s perfect plans coming to fruition, this is how we can glorify God. We can share with others the news of what God has done in our lives. Then they too can begin to wait in trust in the Lord and they too can begin to believe and know that God has good plans for them too.

As we witness, we bring glory to our faithful God.

Pray: *Dear Lord, thank You for the faith we can have in You.*



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He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our  
God. Many will see and fear, and put  
their trust in the Lord.

~ Ps 40:3



## 22 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

When David wrote Psalm 27, he finished it by saying, *“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!”* (Ps 27:14).

This verse begins and ends with *“Wait for the Lord.”* Between this repetition, David instructs any reading this Psalm to be strong and let their heart take courage.

David’s writing may well have been in the form of a journal, where he was instructing himself in that moment and for later readings. David knew the importance of waiting, having waited a long time for his promised kingdom (1 Sam 16:1, 13; 2 Sam 5:4). Let us wait faithfully too.

Pray: *Dearest Holy Spirit, thank You for inspiring David to write these words.*

## 23 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

Yesterday we were engaging with David’s writing in Psalm 27:14.

Between the two *“Wait for the Lord”* instructions, David had written about strength and courage.

Are you currently in a season of waiting?

Waiting takes patience.

We do not know how the final outcome will work out. We do not know if our plans, wishes, and hopes will come to pass and be part of God’s faithful plan.

David instructs us to be strong while we wait. Although we do not know how things will come together, we know the heart of the One whose hands are bringing things together. We can confidently hope in the One for whom we are waiting – the Lord.

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You that I can have full confidence in You.*



## 24 August

*“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!” Ps 27:14*

Waiting also takes courage.

At the end of this waiting time we may be asked to step into a new future reality. We will need courage to do this well.

As we wait on the Lord, we can bring to mind past ways when He has been faithful, kind, trustworthy, and good. This will help us to keep our courage strong.

While we wait, with courage, our trust will build new strength in us. As the Prophet Isaiah reminds us, *“those who trust in the LORD will find new strength”* (Isa 40:31).

Pray: *Dear Triune God, thank You for how You walk with us, strengthen us, shelter us, and carry us.*

## 25 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.”*

Psalm 78:7 NLT

As we have seen, waiting on the Lord means being patient. David also recognised the need for courage and strength.

From today’s Psalm, let us add the reminder that *“each generation should set its hope anew on God”* (Ps 78:7).

In our seasons of waiting, we are not to lose hope. Instead our eyes are to be directed afresh to God, with new hope. God is our sovereign Lord, and He is bringing all things together for His perfect purposes.

We can rest our hope anew in God.

*Pray: Dearest Father God, thank You for how You hold us and all the details of our lives in Your sovereign hands. Thank You.*



## 26 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.”*

Psalm 78:7 NLT

Our hope is to be set anew on God. Yet, this is not an instruction for us alone. The Psalmist wrote that *“each generation should set its hope anew on God”* (Ps 78:7).

And how can they know?

Our hope is to be shared afresh with the coming generations. We are to keep our faith and hope in God burning brightly so that our children and our children’s children might witness our faith in our everlasting and faithful God.

Do you have opportunities to share your faith? Ask Holy Spirit where you might be God’s witness before others.

*Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, please guide my steps in witnessing my hope in You.*

## 27 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.” Psalm 78:7 NLT*

Yesterday we mentioned how we can be God’s witnesses before the coming generations.

Do you have opportunity to share your faith with others? Is teaching religious education at schools an opportunity you could pursue? Are there helpers needed at the weekly children’s ministry programs or could you offer support at children’s holiday activities?

Jesus said, *“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God”* (Luke 18:16). Can you help them?

Pray: *Dear Lord, please show me how I can guide others toward You.*



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*“And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!””*

*~ Rom 10:15 NLT*



## 28 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.” Psalm 78:7 NLT*

During His earthly life, Jesus said, *“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God”* (Luke 18:16).

Yesterday we explored how we might be able to help the next generation to know Jesus, whether at school or church. This may not mean that you need to take on a teaching role. There are usually many support roles involved in enriching ministry to our children, such as hospitality, in both food management and welcoming, resources, in creating and managing, and usually much administration, in registrations, record-keeping, etc.

Pray: *Dearest Holy Spirit, please show me whether You are drawing me toward serving in children’s ministry. Please open the door. If not, I gladly pray for those serving in this important ministry. Please guide my prayers.*



## 29 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.”*

Psalm 78:7 NLT

Do you believe that Holy Spirit is drawing you to serve in children’s ministry but you are still hesitating?

Serving in this important ministry may be as simple as showing schoolchildren God’s kindness, grace, and mercy as you help to serve them breakfast at school. Your actions of loving care will speak loudly, even if you do not share a single word. You showed up, were there as God’s instrument to help meet their needs (Matt 6:11; 25:35), and were a loving witness to God’s faithful care (1 Cor 13:4-7).

Even if you do not yet feel ready to commit to regular service, you can show appropriate kindness and care to each person you meet, refreshing their hope in God (Ps 78:7).

Pray: *Dearest Father God, thank You for each opportunity to love others.*



## 30 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.”*

Psalm 78:7 NLT

Within our own families, circles, and spheres of influence, how can we encourage *“each generation [to] set its hope anew on God”* (Ps 78:7)?

The psalmist gives us the answers. We are not to forget God’s glorious miracles and we are to obey His commands.

How do we avoid forgetting God’s glorious miracles?

We recount them again and again, affirming God’s faithfulness, and drawing another generation toward hope in God. When our children are younger, we can share children’s versions of God’s amazing miracles. As they mature, so can our stories, and we can also share of how God has been so faithful in our lives and tell of our miraculous breakthroughs.

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, thank You for guiding how I share with others.*

## 31 August

*“So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.”*

Psalm 78:7 NLT

Holy Spirit guides us in how to share God’s glorious miracles, even from a young age (Ps 78:7). Likewise, even from a young age, our children can be nurtured toward obedience to God’s commands. The best and simplest way to do that is by our own obedience.

James reminds us, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves”* (Jas 1:22). What a wonderful witness we can be when we are true to Thee!

Winter draws to a close. Let us pray for openness to God’s new season.

Pray: *Dearest Triune God, I recommit to You anew.*



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Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

~Isa 43:19



## 1 September – Father’s Day

*“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.” Ps 103:13*

Today we celebrate fathers. We know the important role that fathers and mothers have in the lives of their children, and today we especially honour fathers.

We praise God for the fathers in our lives and, if we are fathers, we praise our Heavenly Father for entrusting us with this special responsibility.

For those standing in the place of father, or those who wish they could, be assured that God sees how you love those God brings into your life. Point others too to God the Father’s faithful love.

Pray: *Thank You, Lord, for each father You have placed in my life.*

## 2 September

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." 2 Cor 5:17*

As the buds of spring appear, their shades of green can remind us of the unceasing faithfulness of our God.

But God is not just with us in Spring. He is not just here during the warmer weather, spending His winters in the tropics. He is not just here in the Summer, soaking up the sun's rays with us.

No, our God is always with us, faithful and true.

Let us rejoice in God's sweet faithfulness. He has brought us through another winter season. Let us rejoice and be glad, holding hope in God anew and ready to share with others (Ps 78:7).

*Pray: Oh Lord, I praise You for Your constant presence and tender care. I rejoice to be a part of the new things that You are doing.*



## 3 September

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." 2 Cor 5:17*

Is your spirit experiencing the joy of unfolding Spring?

Like the young lambs who will jump in the meadow, our spirits may be experiencing new joy. This may be contagious from the sense of Spring unfolding around us. On the other hand, God may be drawing us more deeply into the newness we have in Him (2 Cor 5:17).

Earlier in this devotional we read "*For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God*" (Col 3:3 NIV).

Newness belongs to us too, our newness in Christ.

As we continue this month, let us explore what this newness looks like.

You can also explore "newness" in your Bible, Bible app, or Google. And if your daily Bible time fell away some time last month, now is a good time to begin again, even just five-ten minutes each day.

*Pray: Thank You, Lord, for my newness in You. Please help me to live into that newness, drawing closer to You and knowing You more fully.*

## 4 September

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” 2 Cor 5:17*

What does ‘new’ look or seem like?

With physical items, ‘new’ can represent fresh and exciting, with its own ‘new’ smell, such as a new book, car, or clothing.

Some ‘new’ things need ‘breaking in’ or a time of adjustment, such as the softening of new shoes or the adjustments needed with new technology.

For me, ‘new’ with God is a broad and sundrenched landscape after time in a tunnel. This may be the first ‘new’ of coming to faith, where life and the world make sense in a whole new way. This ‘newness’ can happen when old beliefs are drawn back and a new understanding opens to the sundrenched landscape. Sometimes this happens through a time of winter.

*Pray: Dearest Lord, thank You for bringing me to this new plateau of understanding and to a deeper level of relationship with You.*



## 5 September

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” 2 Cor 5:17*

How have you experienced God’s newness?

As a new Christian your mind, heart, and spirit may have known incredible freedom, lightness, and joy in discovering the unfathomable love of God and knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour.

It is difficult to describe the discovery of new life in God (2 Cor 5:17). It changes so many different aspects of your understanding that, for many, it is a real water-shed moment.

It is like discovering that our life fits into God’s plan. It is discovering how God has ordained a special plan, place, and purpose for us (Jer 29:11). It is the discovery that we have a Loving Father who created us.

*Pray: Thank You, Father God, for the joy and wonder of Your love. I seek to soak in it and offer it generously to those You have placed in my life.*

## 6 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

For some, the water-shed moment of newness in faith began earlier as a saturation in body, mind, and spirit. We who grew up in Christian homes or knew God through the Christians around us are the blessed beneficiaries of the Psalmist's instructions. *"So each generation should set its hope anew on God"* (Ps 78:7).

We can praise God for His grace in bringing these witnesses into our lives, and we can ask Holy Spirit how we can do likewise.

*Pray: Dear Lord, thank You for surrounding me with Your witnesses from an early age. Please guide me in being Your witness too.*



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For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.

~ Isa 43:19 NLT



## 7 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"* 2 Cor 5:17 NLT

For those of us who have grown up in a Christian home, and have always known the love of God, we are indeed blessed. We knew God as our Loving Father and, as we matured, we received Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

Through Holy Spirit we came into the newness and fullness of our own personal faith in Jesus as Saviour. This was an important step in belonging to Christ and becoming a new person (2 Cor 5:17).

*Pray: Thank You, Holy Spirit, for how You brought me to my own experience of newness in Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour.*

## 8 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Have you personally accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?

For those who knew childhood faith, the love of God was freely shared with us, and we likely worshipped God with our family, at home and with others.

But, now that you are older and making choices for yourself, have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?

This is an important step in your faith journey. God is not a Father to us through the faith of our parents, like a Heavenly Grandfather. We ourselves need to step forward in personal faith. We need to accept that we are sinners in need of a Saviour, and that Jesus died for us. If you have not yet taken this step, today is the day. Recognise that you share sinfulness with the rest of us (Rom 3:23), and delight to know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. If you do, tell a Christian friend, a pastor, or email me.

*Pray: Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for dying to save me from my sins. I accept You as my Saviour and my Lord.*



## 9 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

For all who have known childhood faith, and have accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour, Holy Spirit still bring a fresh recognition of newness in God, and a fresh experience of God’s personal grace.

Like the seasons of the year, there will be seasons in our journey of faith. Some of these seasons will be longer than others, while some will be akin to our journeys up and down the mountains and valleys of daily life.

Wherever you are now in your journey, thank God for being with you and for the new things He is teaching you.

*Pray: Thank You, Triune God, for all that You are and do in my life.*

# 10 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

We have been exploring how we have come to newness in Christ.

Before we go further, it is important to recognise that for those who have newly stepped into faith, you will need a community of Christians around you. God is all that we need for salvation, but He places us into communities so that we may learn and grow together (Prov 27:17).

Although you are new in faith, you still have a valuable contribution to make. Holy Spirit may be revealing new truths to you which you can share with others. These may be new for these believers too, or they may reignite their minds, hearts, and spirits into a time of refreshment. We may also be called by God to turn another back to the way of truth (Jas 5:19-20).

*Pray: Dearest Holy Spirit, thank You for how You are moulding and shaping me through God’s Word and through Your prompts to fellowship with others*



# 11 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

During His life on earth Jesus told the parable of the seeds (Luke 8:4-15).

For those new to faith, this is a time of joy in the newness of claiming Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. As we mentioned yesterday, it is good to have a community of believers around us. We do not want our seed of faith to be snatched away from us because we are walking alone and have not yet had an opportunity to tell other. Peter warns us, *“Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour”* (1 Pet 5:8).

*Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, please direct me to a community where I may be nurtured in my faith by fellow Bible-believing Christians.*

## 12 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

Like the seeds of Jesus's parable, some of us will briefly blossom in faith but then our joy quickly fades when times of testing come (Luke 8:6, 13).

Those facing these trials alone can quickly fall away from faith. The teacher in Ecclesiastes teaches, *"And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken"* (Eccl 4:12).

In community, we are there to *"encourage one another and build one another up ..."* (1 Thes 5:11). Let us do so, for God's glory.

Pray: *Dearest Father God, thank You for my community of faith.*



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*Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

~ 1 Pet 5:5



## 13 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"* 2 Cor 5:17 NLT

The Lord's third example in the seeds parable is of those *"... which fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it."* (Luke 8:7).

Jesus explained these as *"those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature"* (Luke 8:14). Both good times and bad times can be instrumental in drawing them away from the Lord. Yet others walking beside them can encourage them to trust the Lord (Eccl 4:12; 1 Thes 5:11).

Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for Your parable and for those whom You have drawn into my life. Please help to form an enriching community.*



## 14 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

The author of Hebrews also knew the importance of meeting together in a community of fellowship as believers. *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”* (Heb 10:24-25).

Do you meet regularly with other believers in a Bible-believing community of faith?

If not, could you take steps to find one within your local community or worship with fellow believing friends? Ask Holy Spirit to guide you.

Pray: *Dearest Holy Spirit, I seek to be obedient and to worship our Triune God with fellow believers. Please prompt my choices and bring beside me those who will draw me closer to God.*



## 15 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

Maybe someone in your life has recently come to faith. Can you invite them to join you in worship?

Maybe instead you know some friends who are drifting away from their faith community. Could you encourage them to be among those who worship God in word and deed, and who could be their community for this season, or in growing in faith?

Let us be those who encourage others in their faith (1 Thes 5:11).

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, please guide me in travelling well with my friends, and in helping them to find the right church community for this time.*

## 16 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Some time ago we considered how new faith in others can reignite our faith. But what if it has the opposite effect?

When our friends come to a true acceptance of Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, the light of Christ in them may shine a light of truth on our faith. We may begin to realise that we have been depending on our parents’ faith journey. We were being carried along in the worship, but not actively worshipping God ourselves.

Is that you? If we find ourselves in that space, let us re-read the Parable of the Seeds (Luke 8:4-15).

What happened? Are you now able to receive the seed, the Word of God (Luke 8:11), afresh? If so, share with a brother or sister in Christ and pray to be the good soil of *“those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop”* (Luke 8:15 NIV).

Pray: *Dearest Lord, thank You for giving me new ears to hear.*



## 17 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Did you experience an “Aha” moment yesterday? Have you confided in a close friend who will help you to remain accountable in our faith journey?

If not, could personal pride be holding you back?

Our friends may believe that we have been living the Christian life for some time, but we, and the Lord, know the true state of our hearts. Confess this deception to the Lord, as we strive to be humble, and let us also share with a trustworthy friend.

Pray: *Dearest Holy Spirit, thank You for bringing me to this realisation. Please help me to confide in my close friend so that I may have an accountability partner as I strive to live my faith with greater integrity.*

## 18 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Yesterday we talked about a growing awareness that you may not have stepped fully into faith in the Lord Jesus.

What if, instead, one of your friends came to you, asking if you would be their accountability partner. First, this is an incredible honour, and we can thank God for how He is at work in their life. Next, we ask Holy Spirit to guide us in being an encourager in presence, word, and deed. Let us commit, as we feel led.

Pray: *Dear Triune God, please guide me in following Your will.*



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My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins. ~ Jas 5:19-20 NIV



## 19 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Suppose one of your friends asked you to be an accountability partner, but you do not feel equipped for the role.

Remember that God is the One who will be doing the transformative work in their heart. Remember too that God can use a donkey to bring about His will (Num 22:28-30). God can also equip you to be His instrument of accountability for your friend. Trust in God.

Remember that God will direct your steps. Depend on God’s wisdom (Jas 3:17) rather than speaking from earthly wisdom or pridefulness.

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, please guide me in how I can be Your instrument in the life of my friend. Please keep me from false modesty and false pride.*

## 20 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

James, the Lord’s brother, knew the risks of believers wandering from the way of truth (5:19-20). Could we be God’s instruments in turning another back to His truth? What would that look like?

As the author of Hebrews reminds us, *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds”* (Heb 10:23-24 NIV). The instructions include *“not neglecting to meet together (v25).*

Are any missing from your regular community? Could you check on them? Perhaps they are suffering illness or have no means to gather? Check.

Pray: *Dearest Lord God, please help me to remain mindful of the needs of my community members..*



## 21 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

As we live in newness with Christ, let us also be aware of those who are struggling to find a way to belong. Maybe the enemy is distracting them from faithful attendance (Jas 4:4). Maybe they are wandering further from the way of truth without even realising it (Jas 1:13-14). *“Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death”* (v15).

In place of death, we can be God’s instruments saving a soul from death (Jas 5:20). Let us be attentive to Holy Spirit’s guidance, listening well to Holy Spirit and to our brothers and sisters (Jas 1:19).

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, please open my eyes to how I can make Your difference in the lives of others.*

## 22 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

We have looked at the ways that we become a new person in Christ. We have also considered the importance of remaining close to the Lord and each other (Jas 5:19-20; Heb 10:23-25). But what does Paul mean that *"The old life is gone"* (2 Cor 5:17 NLT)?

Remember some time ago we met the person who was part of the worship but not actually worshipping God? They had not fully opened their heart, mind, and spirit to the Living God.

Similarly, we can still be living in some of the 'old' aspects of our lives. Over the next few days we will begin to unpack that some more and how we can instead step into the newness which Jesus's sacrifice has achieved for us.

*Pray: Thank You, Lord, for the victory and freedom You achieved through the cross and Your resurrection.*



## 23 September

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

We may acknowledge that Jesus is our Lord and Saviour, but are we living in the reality of His saving grace?

Perhaps instead we are continuing to trust in the good works that we are doing **for** the Lord as a way to win His favour?

Our Lord Jesus has done **all** that was needed to achieve salvation for us. Through His work at the cross, Jesus has made a way for us to be reconciled to the Father. We know that we have sinned, but Jesus *"bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness* (1 Pet 2:24). In newness, we live to righteousness.

*Pray: Thank You, Lord, for taking my sins upon Yourself.*

## 24 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

Our Lord Jesus has done **all** that was needed to achieve salvation for us. Does that mean that we can go on sinning, knowing that our sins are covered by the blood of the Lord (Eph 1:7).

Certainly not! As Peter reminds us, Jesus *“bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness (1 Pet 2:24).*

We do not need to work for our reconciliation but the new life which has begun (2 Cor 5:17) is *“a life of righteousness” (1 Pet 2:24).* We do good works to honour the Lord, not to save ourselves.

Pray: *Dear Lord, thank You for the opportunity to honour You.*



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He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

~ Eph 1:7 NLT



## 25 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.  
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”* 2 Cor 5:17 NLT

We were set free to *“live to righteousness” (1 Pet 2:24).*

We know that *“The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (2 Cor 5:17 NLT),* but old ways of thinking may still linger or be deeply ingrained, especially if we come to faith later or after a worldly life.

Holy Spirit is transforming us, but He will not overwhelm us by bringing all things to mind at once. Let us commit to taking one step at a time, knowing that we have forgiveness in Christ. Each day is a new day, with new mercies (Lam 3:22-23). Follow as Holy Spirit leads.

Pray: *Dear Holy Spirit, thank You for how You are guiding and transforming me to embrace my new life.*

## 26 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

It can happen that an addiction, such as to drugs or gambling, can be taken away in a heartbeat once a new believer comes to faith.

However, in other cases, a slower progress toward ‘newness’ may be how Holy Spirit transforms us. Through the valleys we traverse, more and more of our old nature is being stripped away. Through continuing to trust the Lord in lean times, we come to a place of deeper acceptance that God is all we need (2 Cor 9:8). *“Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow” (Jas 1:17 NLT).*

Whatever we are facing, and however long it takes, we can trust Holy Spirit to be our prompter (2 Cor 3:18). Trust Him with your transformation.

Pray: *Thank You, Holy Spirit, for how You are transforming me to newness.*



## 27 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”*

2 Cor 5:17 NLT

Holy Spirit can also do a transformation in our hearts, minds, and spirits through our engagement with others, as He guides us into newness.

We may be transformed through the positive impact of engaging with others (Prov 27:17) or in interactions with those to whom we have made ourselves accountable.

Our Faithful Father may also transform us through our negative experiences with others. For instance, as we perceive the fires which our hasty words have started (Jas 3:5, 1-12), we gain greater control over our attentiveness in hearing and speaking (Jas 1:19).

Pray: *Thank You, Triune God, for how You use my engagement with others. Please nurture me in living more regularly from my newness in Christ.*

## 28 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

Holy Spirit, whether directly in our hearts or through direct engagement with others, also transforms us internally. Our hearts, minds, and spirits begin to shine more directly with the light of Christ.

In order for this to happen, though, Holy Spirit needs access to all areas of our lives. There cannot be spheres, such as our fun, our finances, or our sexuality, where we tell Holy Spirit that He has no say. Before we state that, let us remember *“The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”* (2 Cor 5:17 NLT).

This means that there is no space in our lives for those ‘old’ practises, habits, or excluded spheres. Holy Spirit is to be given access to all.

Is Holy Spirit attempting to get your attention about a current practise? If so, you will be experiencing a level of discomfort whenever you think about or do it. Do not ignore Holy Spirit, that fullness in Christ may be yours. Pray: *Dearest Triune God, thank You for Your transforming work in me.*



## 29 September

*“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Cor 5:17 NLT*

As you begin to live more fully in your new life, take time to keep short accounts with Holy Spirit. Taking a daily time of Examen at the end of the day can be helpful with this.

As the day comes to an end, be still before God and ask Him how He has been at work in your life today. Ask Him to bring to mind times when you were in tune with His will. Ask Him too to bring to mind times when you rejected His soft voice. Confess those things you need to confess (1 John 1:9) and rest in God’s grace in readiness for a new day (Lam 3:22-23).

Remember too to pray, both for those who encouraged you and those who failed you, that each may know God’s mercy, peace, and grace.

Pray: *Dearest Triune God, thank You for Your mercy, peace, and grace.*



# 30 September

*"... my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." Isa 56:7*

Now that another devotional is ending, my prayer is that you have been inspired to walk in faithfulness to God each day for His glory.

Spend time with your Lord each day, consciously seeking His will, and worshipping Him with gladness.

Be faithful in gathering with others in community, encouraging and being accountable as you are led. Be faithful too with God's Word.

Confess your shortcomings as soon as they happen (1 John 1:9). He is the God of second chances. Be bold in sharing your faith, reflecting the light of His love wherever you go, with purity, humility, gentleness, kindness, wisdom, and grace. Glorify God, and thank Him.

*Pray: Dearest Lord Jesus, thank You for being my Lord and Reconciler. Please help me to honour You in all my ways. Thank You for fellowship.*



*"Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.*

*God has given each of us a gift from [H]is great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.*

*Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to [H]im forever and ever! Amen. (1 Pet 4:8, 10-11 NLT)*

*The Holy Spirit was the inspiration behind these thoughts and we pray that they will encourage, challenge and stretch you in your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the will of the Heavenly Father.*

*Gelly McAuliffe-Bunker for PURE Devotional Ministry*



# Notes

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