The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of thick, overlapping brushstrokes in various colors including red, blue, yellow, and purple. Two white doves are depicted in flight, one in the upper center and one in the lower left, their forms rendered with soft, painterly textures. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and hope.

Volume 2

# City Prayers

30 DAYS OF ENCOURAGEMENT  
AND FREEDOM  
COMPILED BY WORLD IMPACT



# City Prayers

**30 DAYS OF ENCOURAGEMENT  
AND FREEDOM**

*COMPILED BY WORLD IMPACT*

**Editors**

Candy Gibson  
Adria Medlen  
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**Designer**

Kaitlyn Brown

**Artwork**

Ronnie Robles



*To the women and men who thoughtfully  
wrote these reflections, this book is to  
celebrate your freedom in Christ.*

Special thank you to:

Rich Esselstrom  
Adria Medlen  
Monica Pennington  
Matt Thomas



Artwork by Ronnie Robles  
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# INTRODUCTION

I believe that God calls unlikely people. This is shown all throughout the Scriptures, from Moses, to David, to Mary, and to Paul—God calls those the world often overlooks.

This book is filled with reflections and prayers from men and women the world may overlook, but God has seen and called to unique ministry opportunities. Every author in this book is either currently incarcerated, a returning citizen, or mentors of those coming out of prison.

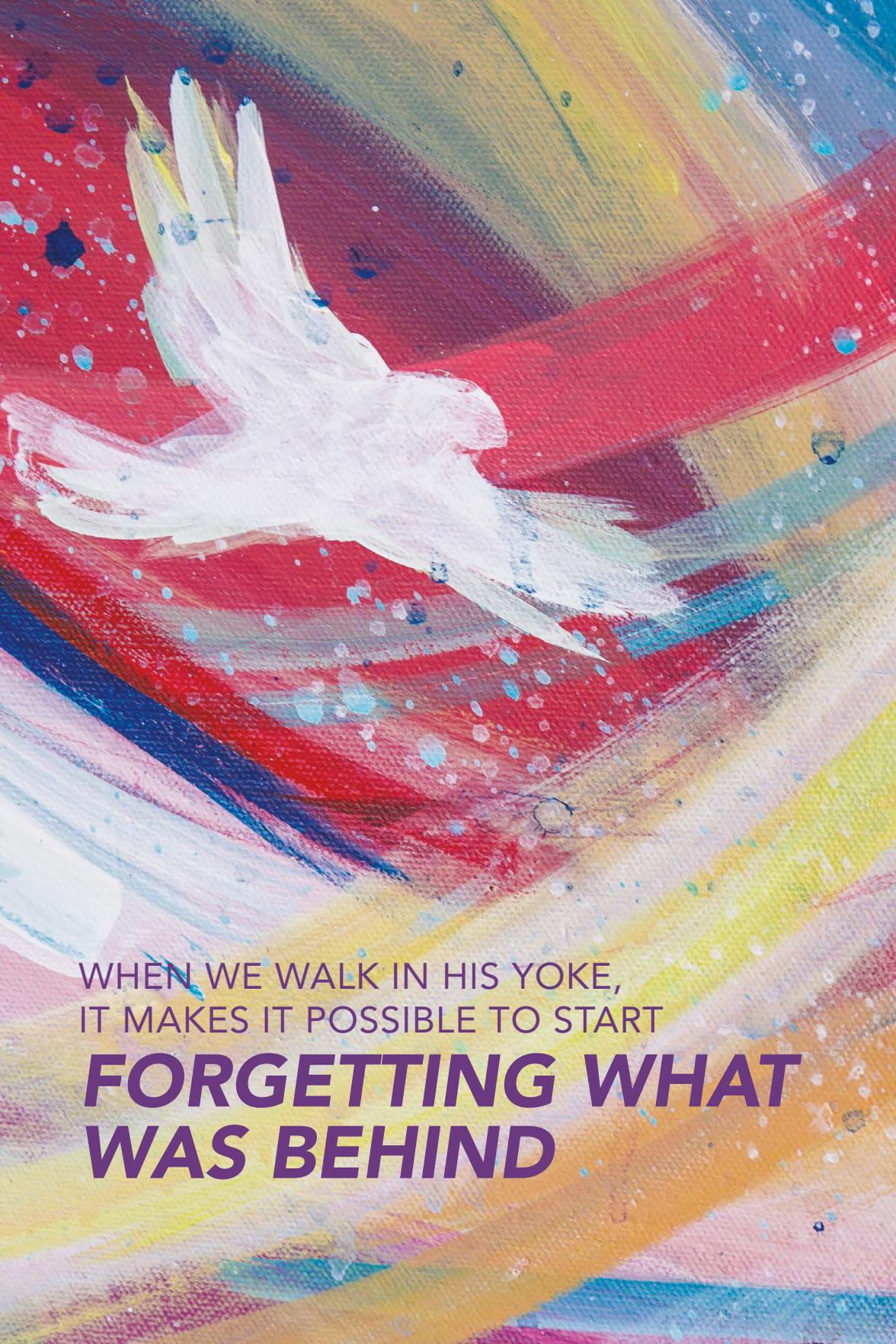
I am excited for you to hear from authors that may not get the opportunity to speak at your church, or who may sit in the pew at your church and feel unqualified, when in fact they are.

I also want to talk about the artist for this project, Ronnie Robles. He grew up doodling in church, and the Lord has used those doodles to call him into the arts. He has had mentors who were incarcerated and he used his knowledge of their experience to bring us this piece. The birds are free, they are flying off the page to where they are called, just like our brothers and sisters coming home from prison or jail.

The Lord is doing a great work in prisons and jails around the country and World Impact has the honor of standing with those on the inside and those being released. I hope these reflections, prayers, and artwork speak to your soul. May you hear the passion from our brothers and sisters.

In Christ,

Dr. Alvin Sanders  
President & CEO of World Impact



WHEN WE WALK IN HIS YOKE,  
IT MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO START

**FORGETTING WHAT  
WAS BEHIND**



# DAY 1

Read Philippians 3:13-14  
*“Forgetting what is behind and  
straining toward what is ahead.”*

## REFLECTION

In this passage I think we put much emphasis on the last part. We often focus on the *pressing forward* or, what I call, “the fight portion” for the future. We like to keep moving forward. BUT I think the part of these scriptures that needs more attention is *forgetting what’s behind us*. This can be the hardest and most difficult part of a journey forward. We allow shame and hurt to weigh us down. We carry past sin that we don’t need to. Jesus told us straight out, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Not that everything just changes in a snap, but when we do walk in His yoke, it makes it possible to start forgetting what was behind.

## PRAYER

Dear Father,  
Your love is gracious and kind, wholesome and pure. Thank you for thinking about me and loving me to the point that I don’t have to be anything I was before. Thank you Jesus for guiding me to the ongoing goal! Amen.

*Matt Thomas*



# DAY 2

Read Psalm 16:8-11

*“You will not abandon me to  
the realm of the dead.”*

## **REFLECTION**

As I sit in this jail, with the enemy all around, I am free in Spirit. I do not look to the left or the right, only looking toward The One I belong to, my Father Jesus Christ. With Him I am saved from the grave. I look forward to the path of righteousness, my heart is filled with surrender, joy and love. For I know this is only the beginning and temporary and I wait for the day I am called for eternal life forever.

## **PRAYER**

Father, I thank you that you love us so much you came to bring us out of darkness. You are our rock and salvation. As long as we trust in you, we will be on the path of life forever. I thank you for that in Jesus name, Amen.

*Bodette Algieri*



# DAY 3

Read Psalm 4:6-8

*“Let the light of Your face shine on us.”*

## REFLECTION

There are two major things that every human being seeks whether they realize it or not: Peace and Joy. Some people will go their whole lives seeking these two things but, unfortunately, will never attain them. They may get momentary happiness and some form of peace, but not like God gives it. We have countless celebrities, artists, and athletes that people look at and think, “Wow, how great it must be to be them and have all they have.” Yet tragically many of these people took their own lives.

In Psalms 4, David was going through a hard time yet understood that joy and peace were not found in physical things or wealth. King David had his own kingdom, but gave God the credit for the joy he had in Him in verse 7! And he ends the Psalm with something we all love at the end of the day, peace and safety. David was a true warrior and kept very skilled men in his circle, not to mention the great army he had, yet he knew he was safe and had peace because God was looking out for him in verse 8.

## PRAYER

Father, remind us that our reason for being comes from you. And all that we seek can only be filled by you. We fall short thinking that things in this world can bring us only what you can give us by your mercy and grace. And I pray also for those also who desperately seek peace and joy but don't know where to find it. I pray that you would minister to them and reveal your Son to them. And please remind us daily that you alone sustain us, not because you have to, but because you want to and you love us. In Your Name, Amen.

*Cesar J. Servin*



# DAY 4

Read Isaiah 58:11

*“You will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring whose waters never fail.”*

## REFLECTION

There are so many sun-scorched lands in life. When no one believes the abuse going on. When you cannot gain employment and feel the shame of not being able to provide for your family. When your spouse commits adultery and you feel the sting of rejection. When the doctor gives you the prognosis you don't want to hear. Sun scorched; a dry, barren place where you cannot find any source to drench your thirst for love, for appreciation, for help, for provision, for identity. Sun scorched; so dry your tongue sticks to the roof of your mouth. That is where God says He will satisfy your needs. Yet we avoid that hot, dry place of death. If we are in the sun scorched place, we often pretend we are not. We look to all sorts of people and things to fill our needs; people and things that can never meet our needs, as that is not their purpose.

God promises to satisfy our needs fully and He does not placate us with, “good enough for now.” We will exhaust ourselves trying to prove we can meet our own needs. We will become furious with those who can't or won't attempt to meet them. Yet God says He will meet us and satisfy us. Where is your sun-scorched and barren place? Go there. Admit your thirst. Seek the One who loves you and promises to meet you there and satisfy your thirst.

## PRAYER

We look to you to show us our sun-scorched places where only you can satisfy. Only you will actually meet us there to bring us the living water. Deliver us from denial. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear and directions to follow you to that place where you can satisfy our true needs and not just alleviate symptoms. Amen.

*Christie Summervill*



# DAY 5

Read 1 Peter 1:15-16

*“Just as he who called you is holy,  
so be holy in all you do.”*

## REFLECTION

Christ is Holy, therefore I am with Him! Once I gave my life to Christ, my identity changed to Holy. This holiness separates me from the power of sin. I am no longer who I used to be. God has made me a new creation and called me Holy. This holiness shall be in all I say and do. If I am Christ-minded, I am Christ-like.

This holiness means that I am set apart. Christ has a purpose for me. I want to move in the world and bring Christ with me. I want others to see the kindness I offer and the words I speak and be directed to Christ and his holiness.

## PRAYER

Father, I know I'm not perfect, but create in me your perfection. Let me lean into the holiness you have called in me. Let my heart be pure and my eyes be clearly focused on you. Amen.

*Michael Nickels*



# DAY 6

Read Deuteronomy 31:7-8  
*“Be strong and courageous.”*

## REFLECTION

Although Joshua proved himself time and time again in both battle and obedience before the LORD, Moses still started off his marching orders to him with, “Be strong and courageous...” When the LORD is getting ready to move us in a new direction, our fear would have us forget He doesn’t need our permission. When Moses said to Joshua, “you must go...” he was saying that God had already claimed the victory and He is going to use you to bring it to pass. God cannot fail, and when He chooses to use us this attribute remains intact, even under our human frailty. “And you (Joshua) shall cause them to inherit it.” For some of us it’s easier to look back on our life to see what the LORD has done, than to look ahead and see what the LORD can do. The LORD is not done. He is calling His people to Himself. His favor is undeniable. His power is proven. He is the One who goes before us. Our fear will always be misplaced. It doesn’t matter how many times we failed. All that is irrelevant the moment He calls us to go.

## PRAYER

Lord of Hosts, how gentle your voice is when you beckon us to come, and yet how loud the results when we do. Keep our hearts from fear and our minds stayed on you. The season of our retreat will never occur. We thank you for the bounty of privilege you have left us in this land. We show ourselves faithful at your word. Let us continue to gather together and move forward on your authority. We have been freed from bondage so now we are free to bond. We set ourselves with you. This valley and this mountain belong to you. You are the Good Shepherd. You lead and we will follow. In our Savior’s Name, Amen.

*Harry Grant*

The background is an abstract, textured composition of vibrant colors. It features broad, sweeping brushstrokes in shades of deep blue, bright yellow, and a diagonal streak of red. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is energetic and inspiring.

**BE STRONG AND  
COURAGEOUS**



# DAY 7

Read Colossians 3:12-14

*“Put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”*

## REFLECTION

In this passage, Paul urges us to walk in the new identity God has given us. This new identity involves a conscious effort to display specific character attributes. First, Paul reminds us that our position before God is, in fact, an act of God. We are chosen and beloved by Him. The attributes that Paul goes on to list are derived from this fact. This means that so long as we align ourselves with this truth and “put on” the traits that Paul describes, then God’s character will not fail to shine through. Compassion means empathy for the struggles of others. Everything else in this passage builds from that idea up to God’s ultimate characteristic: Love. Paul calls love the perfect bond of unity. It is so perfect that it binds us fallen men and women with our perfect Creator. In the same way, we are to allow it to bind us together with our brethren.

## PRAYER

Lord, I have come so far, yet have so much further to go. Help me to develop strong, healthy boundaries but do not allow me to lose sight of the needs of the people you have placed around me. Develop within me the compassion that you have shown me. Allow me to model at least a portion of the kindness, humility, gentleness and patience that abounds in your character. You have forgiven me for wickedness I don’t think I could have forgiven others. Overwhelm me with your Spirit so that I can walk in that forgiveness and give it to others. Make it natural for me to love as you love. Let it become as normal for me as it is for you. You are my Lord and my Father. Amen.

*Kenny Kniskern*

# DAY 8

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

*“For we were all baptized by one Spirit  
so as to form one body.”*

## REFLECTION

God sees and views all of us the same; we are one body and one spirit in him. He didn't divide us by Jew or Gentile, slave or free, black or white. He says we were all created equal in his sight and we share one body and one spirit. In the news you hear the name George Floyd. He was a black man that was judged and killed for his skin color. It is so devastating to hear this kind of news and be hit with the realization that division based on skin color is STILL happening.

I am so thankful that I serve a God who sees me for who I am and who sees my black sister for who she is and He did not make us to be judged by our skin color, but made us to link arms and become one body in Christ name.

## PRAYER

Dear God,

You see all and you know all. Lord I pray for the men and women that walk in fear because of this corrupt world. I pray for their safety! God I pray that you will also keep the police officers safe as they do their job to protect people. Let the corrupt cops be found out and judged accordingly and please let people see that there are men and women that became cops to truly help others and not use their authority in a cruel manner. God I thank you that you made all of us in your image and you do not see poor people as poor or people but that you love us all just as you made us, your children. God, give us your eyes to see each other with and your heart to love each other. I thank you Lord for all that you do! I love you! Amen.

*Monica Pennington*

# DAY 9

Read Ephesians 2:19-22

*“You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens.”*

## **REFLECTION**

Brotherhood. Not just a brotherhood, something more than that. Fellowship. Yeah, fellowship in the Spirit. That is what I have today with other believers. I can fellowship in the Spirit. There really is no word for something like this, at least to my knowledge, of being so close with someone in a spiritual way. The connection reminds me of Christ and His twelve disciples. They were more than friends. They were more than family. Their connection was built on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ. They grew together. They faced hardships together, they ate together, they starved together and they learned together. They came together for a greater purpose, bigger than the world had known to that point.

## **PRAYER**

Father,

Thank You for giving me the foundation of Jesus and placing people around me that have pointed me to you and have helped me grow in you. Please allow me to be the same for others as I enter their life. I want to learn your ways so that I may teach them to others. I don't have to be alone anymore. I now have a family. I give the glory to you, because only you could work such miracles in my life and in this world. Use me as a tool to do the same for others. Amen.

*Steven Murch*



# DAY 10

Read Colossians 3:1-3

*“Set your minds on things above,  
not on earthly things.”*

## **REFLECTION**

Sometimes it can be very difficult to maintain our identity as true followers of Christ, separate from the world. All around us we see constant reminders of a lack of faith. God calls us to be grounded in His Biblical truth and He calls us to declare that truth—The Gospel—to the lost in our cities. We have been raised with Christ. Let’s keep our mind on things above, and our focus on God and His Kingdom. The issues of the world will have no grip on us when we are setting our mind on things above. God’s way is the solution for the pain and suffering in the world. Our ministry is to partner with God and be ready for His return!

## **PRAYER**

Father God, in your Son Jesus’ name, we lift up all of your children everywhere and we pray that a hedge of protection and a wall of fire would surround us. Thank you for sending your warrior and healing angels into prisons, jails and cities. We bind up and command every evil thing—whether physical or spiritual—to be put under the feet of Jesus Christ, and forever be destroyed. Father, saturate every fiber of our being with the fruit of your Spirit and prepare us to minister to the lost. As we humble ourselves and seek your face, turning from our wickedness, Almighty God, hear from heaven, forgive our sin. Thank you for doing your will, and for victory in Jesus! All glory, honor, and praise to you! Amen and Hallelujah!

*Greg Florey*



THE TOXIC SHAME  
OF WHO I USED TO BE

***no longer holds  
any bearing to  
who I am today.***



# DAY 11

Read Galatians 2:20

*“I have been crucified with Christ  
and I no longer live.”*

## REFLECTION

When I was in prison, I became so angry at those who would tell me, “You just have to have faith.” There I was, being sentenced to 52 months without my wife, without my kids, and without my family. I got so mad at that phrase. Every time I heard it, I wanted to yell and scream and give the person saying it a piece of my mind. I wanted to tell them that you couldn’t have faith, because nothing good could come of this situation.

I am now eight months out and am a house manager for a Christ-centered transitional house for men who are just getting out of prison. I have shared my story at a church that is home to thousands of people, and I have friends around me who are closer than family. Faith can be a tricky thing because we want to see the results now. We crave answers just as we crave oxygen to breathe. But looking back, I had to be sentenced. I had to be broken. I had to go through every hurt, every tear, every pain, and every struggle. Because if I didn’t, I would have never found Christ and I most certainly would not have the faith that I do today—a faith so strong that I now know how David felt when he fought Goliath.

## PRAYER

God, I want to thank you for the pain that led me to you. I thank you for every struggle, every gashed lip, every bruise, every wound, because without that, I would have never been broken to the point where I needed you. I know that no matter what I face in the future, it is all to glorify you and your greater good. I pray that you remind me that the toxic shame of who I used to be no longer holds any bearing to who I am today. I am thankful of the unwavering, unmoving faith that I have today. Amen.

*Max Alcantar*



# DAY 12

Read 1 Peter 3:8-9

*“Be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.”*

## REFLECTION

Peter is writing to persecuted Christians who were scattered all throughout Asia Minor. At first, he tells them what the conduct and attitude towards one another should be. Then he tells them what the attitude and conduct should be towards those who are persecuting them. Peter begins by saying, “Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult.” He is telling them that, “Hey, you’re all in this together. You’re being persecuted because of your love for Christ.” Because everyone is going through this, they need to have compassion for each other, and love each other as Christian brothers and sisters. They must also be tender hearted and kind. These attitudes and actions apply to Christians today as well.

Then in verse 9, he says, “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.” When they make fun of you, when they call you names, when they blaspheme you—Christians are to give them a blessing.

## PRAYER

Father, teach us to love one another. Teach us to bless those who persecute us. Show us how to seek the Kingdom. Thank you for the inheritance you have for us, a heavenly home where no thieves can break in and no rust or moths can destroy. May we keep our eyes lifted high to you, knowing that you give us the strength to bless our persecutors. Amen.

*Richard Smith*



# DAY 13

Read Isaiah 43:1-2

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.”*

## REFLECTION

Fire and water are often used in the Scriptures to denote calamity—the latter because it overwhelms; the former because it consumes. They are proverbial phrases for the extremist perils. Because of the apprehensions of God’s wrath in our trials, sometimes we tend to think, “This is it! He is through with me,” but that is never the case. He will not let the floodwaters drown us or the fires consume us. We are His treasure sometimes tried by fire to burn off the dross. And yet, God has organized His people for great and important purposes, and that those purposes must be accomplished and nothing will interfere with His divine plan, not even fire or water.

## PRAYER

Lord, in 2 Chronicles 7:14, You said, “If My people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land.” We claim this promise. You also said in Psalm 91:6 that “surely you will deliver us from the pestilence that walks in the darkness” and in Psalm 91:10 that “no evil plague shall come near our dwelling.” We claim both those promises. You are never going to leave us nor forsake us because we are your people whom you have created for a purpose and saved from death for eternal life. We walk in the confidence that this too shall pass. Thank you Lord for delivering us. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

*Jeff Milton*



# DAY 14

Read Matthew 6:33-34  
*“But seek first his kingdom  
and his righteousness.”*

## REFLECTION

I would love to be able to say that in everything I do, I am seeking God’s kingdom and His righteousness. The truth is there are times that I seek my own wisdom and make decisions based on what I think would taste or feel good at that moment. Because the Holy Spirit communicates with me, I have opportunities to stop and pray. I take God’s hand and get focused. What does the word say? My ultimate goal is to follow God. He is always in the midst of everything that is happening, even if I caused it, just waiting for me to call on Him. When I seek out worldly things, I get worldly results like debt, disappointment, and frustration. When I am seeking God and His righteousness, I see Godly results like love for others, no reason to worry, and good sound decision making. He is asking us to look to Him today.

## PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you right now on behalf of myself and anyone that might be reading this. The reason we come to you, Lord, is because we trust you and we know you loved us enough to purchase us in exchange for your own life. We say thank you Lord for the rivers of mercy and grace that you continue to pour out. We seek you, Lord. Teach us to look for you in everything. Present us with opportunities to seek you in new ways. In seeking you, show us your hand in our situations so that we may tell others. Look closely upon us in these days of sickness, death and unemployment. Give us wisdom to navigate through these times without taking our eyes off you. Direct us to those we can’t hear who are crying out! Send us Lord! In Jesus’ mighty name we pray, Amen!

*Robin Lindsay*

# DAY 15

Read Psalm 139:7-10  
*“Where can I go from your Spirit?”*

## REFLECTION

2020 will undoubtedly be remembered as the year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It has literally circled the globe, leaving behind a growing death toll of over 300,000 people worldwide. To date, the United States itself has reached 1.5 million confirmed cases. And, while efforts to curb the virus’ transmission are yielding positive results, there is no cure yet. There seems to be no place on earth to escape this deadly disease. The future looks grim—until we realize that wherever we find ourselves in the battle against this unseen enemy, God is there also. God is still there and in control! In Psalms 139:7-10, King David understood that even in the highest of heights or the deepest of depths, the Spirit and presence of God would be there to lead and guide him. Similarly, as we pass through this crisis, we can be assured of God’s continuing presence and guiding Spirit to comfort us and bring us through.

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We humble ourselves in your presence. We glorify, honor and praise you, for you are worthy. We ask in the name of Jesus that you forgive us of our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness. We pray that you would move mightily on behalf of the sick and suffering and all who are affected by this pandemic. We take strength knowing that the battle is yours and that in your perfect timing you will glorify yourself in bringing deliverance. We ask, Father, that you would hear from heaven and forgive our sins and heal our land. In the name of Jesus, use even this crisis to touch hardened hearts and bring many to repentance. And we thank you for these things. In the mighty name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

*Martin Dawson*



# DAY 16

Read Habakkuk 3:17-19

*“Yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.”*

## REFLECTION

Have you ever noticed the Bible gives us examples? It shows us how to react to everyday situations in life. Also tells us why we should react that way. Like in our passage today. It gives the example of the way Habakkuk reacted when there was no food, and no hope. Habakkuk chose to rejoice and be joyful, he knew the Lord gave him strength and equipped him.

I really had to practice this when I was in prison for four years. I had a choice. I could go around focusing on terrible food, no freedom and lack of family. Or I could make the best of these circumstances. I could focus on the programs, the amazing volunteers who sacrifice to bring us services, or the library, or the sports and activities. I know this sounds crazy if you haven't actually been in that situation, but I am thankful today that the Lord set me down in prison and gave me that time to refocus and draw closer to Him.

Paul wrote most of his epistles from prison or in captivity. He made the most of the situation. He knew, just like Habakkuk, to rejoice because our strength comes from the Lord and He provides and equips us for anything we may face or go through. So, in good times and in bad, remember to REJOICE!

## PRAYER

Father God, I thank you for the strength you give me, to get through and to rejoice in the good and bad times. I thank you for your Word that is instruction to help guide me through everyday situations. I thank you that you equip me. I decree and declare today that I will only focus on the positive in every situation in Jesus name. Amen.

*Shannah Ikenberry*



The Lord gave him  
**STRENGTH**  
and equipped him



# DAY 17

Read Matthew 11:28-30

*“You will find rest for your souls.”*

## REFLECTION

These verses say to me: stay humble, know when to ask for help, and don't be too proud to ask for help. Life is hard! We get weary and burdened with its brokenness. Nobody can do it all alone, but through and with God, all things are possible. He will give you rest. He will renew you. Believe in Him, his burden is light.

## PRAYER

Dear God please help me to understand and accept your plan for me. Thank you for your promises of rest. We are burdened with the world. Only you can provide gentleness, humbleness, rest, and light. Thank you! In Jesus name, Amen.

*Elizabeth Spainhour*

# DAY 18

Read James 4:6-8

*“Submit yourselves, then, to God.”*

## REFLECTION

Get Humble! Submit to God! Resist the devil! If you didn't know, these guidelines are some of man's biggest challenges in life. We are often proud of many things in life and take pride in what our hands can accomplish. Therefore, becoming humble seems like weakness and no one really wants to feel weak. We often rebel unless a paycheck is involved or if the conditions include benefits. The point I'm trying to make is that we often live for our own pleasure in life. For this reason, resisting the devil is hard for all of us because he offers to us pleasures that are contrary to God. If you don't believe me then ask yourself why in the world would God send us a Savior if we have things under control? Or why would God demand repentance?

God loves us enough to give us guidelines for godly character and sanctification in James 4:6-8. God wants us to be clean from the evil of our heart just like any decent parent would want their kids to have pure motives in life. When we rebel it's often because we have a heart issue and don't want to put in the work and we want things our way. Today if you are challenged to follow God, then do not give up. Remember the end result, God's way is worth it because He is worth it!

## PRAYER

Father, help me to be humble, submit to you, and resist the devil. I repent of my wrong doings and will walk in your ways. So that my motives are pure and my heart is yours. Amen.

*Ricky Lopez*



# DAY 19

Read Colossians 3:9-10

*“You have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self.”*

## REFLECTION

As we submit ourselves daily to His will, we let His Spirit shine through us allowing us to show Christ to the world, even to our enemies and those who have done us wrong. One of the ways we submit to His will is by always speaking the truth.

We die to ourselves and let Christ live in us by being kind to even our enemies, maybe even those who have lied against us. As Christ lives in us, we put on a new self. We are able to show Him to the world and therefore draw others to Him, fulfilling the Great Commission.

## PRAYER

Father in heaven, thank you for the grace and mercy you so freely give your creation. Thank you for permitting us, even beseeching us, to come boldly to your throne room. Father, we're hurting. And many of us don't even know why. Help us to see through the nonsense and lies and to see one another as who we are: your sons and daughters. Sinners. Help us to listen, to you first, but to our neighbor as well. Give us the strength to give each other the grace and mercy and compassion You give each of us in abundance everyday. Father, we are hurting. Please help us heal. And those of us that know your Son, give us the courage to share Him with those who don't. Because He is the Answer to our hurt. He is the Healer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Tyler Leach*



# DAY 20

Read Proverbs 22:5-6  
*“Start children off on the  
way they should go.”*

## REFLECTION

Being in Christ, we are new creations and old things are forgotten. By accepting Christ in my life, I’ve been forgiven and I’ve been given His Word! All things written were inspired by Him and given for instruction. As a father, I see my children doing certain things and acting in such a way that I used to. I remember thinking that I would have to impress my peers by wearing the latest shoes and speaking the craziest things. As I grew older, that started to be a norm, I did not realize that trying to “keep up with the Joneses” would be detrimental to myself and to my family.

My wife and I have made a covenant with one another, dedicating our children to God. We try to explain to them the difference between the narrow path and the wide. We also understand we can plant the seeds, but it’s up to God to give the growth. We can’t write their testimony. As a parent raising a child in uncertain times, I can rest in confidence of the foundation that God has put before me. If my kids followed my past, they would find themselves in prison like I did.

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father God, thank you for all the blessings you continue to bestow upon me. Thank you for being so faithful to forgive and love a sinner like me! Father God, give me the patience to persevere through my trials and tribulations. Give me wisdom to grow in you oh Lord! With the blood of the Lamb and the words of my testimony, may you be glorified in all that I say and do. Amen.

*Joe Joe Raguro*



I PRAY THAT YOUR WORD  
**SPEAKS**  
**TO ME**  
WHEN I READ IT.



# DAY 21

Read 2 Timothy 2:2

*“Entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”*

## REFLECTION

Growth is probably the most important principle in life, second only to that of love. If we do not grow, then either nothing changes or we become dead, wilted and stagnant. Eventually, we slip back into our old habits and our old ways. The same thought patterns and processes that got us in trouble eventually show back up, in small ways at first, then in bigger ways and then in larger ways. Suddenly, without realizing it, we have fallen back into our old ways. But how do we grow? We learned to walk by watching other people and imitating what they were doing. The same goes with talking, someone had to say words to us and then we started to do the same. As Christ became the teacher to His disciples, we have to become the same to those around us. But for us to do that, we have to find a teacher ourselves to teach us how to have a relationship with Christ.

## PRAYER

I ask that you put someone in my life that will teach me your ways. I pray that your Word speaks to me when I read it. By getting to know you, I will obtain the knowledge of how to grow in you. If someone is already in my life to help me grow, I pray that you guide my eyes to them. Once I no longer eat the soft food of the immature, I pray that I may help others grow and help them learn how to walk in the light of you as well.

In your holy Name, Amen.

*Max Alcanter*

# DAY 22

Read Jeremiah 29:11-13

*“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”*

## **REFLECTION**

As I focus on God’s words in Jeremiah 29:11-13, I am encouraged by the promise given by our heavenly Father. Before our earthly parents ever even thought about us, our heavenly Father knew of us and had plans to give us peace. He made plans to bring us unto him. He tells us that he thinks of us. He lets us know that he will give us peace. He says that his love will bring us to him. God even knows and gives us an end, but this end is not the end of us. We can have hope that even when we leave this earth, it is the beginning of us being with our heavenly Father for eternity.

## **PRAYER**

Father GOD in Heaven, holy be thy name. THY Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. We come to you, through your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We ask for wisdom, knowledge, and strength to do your will. Let these troubling times not move us, because you did not create a fearful heart, but a heart of a conquering lion. Let us trust in you, and stand still, knowing that you are God. Your thoughts for us, from the beginning, have been of peace, not evil, to give an expected end to suffering, pain, illness, so that our new beginning will be eternal life with you. Amen!

*Mark Oliver*

# DAY 23

Read Ephesians 4:11-13

*“So that the body of Christ may be built up  
until we all reach unity in the faith.”*

## **REFLECTION**

God has given grace to everyone so we are able to teach, love and nurture all the holy believers as one in Christ. We need all the members to work in their gifting so that the Church can be equipped. When we work together in our gifting, we can more fully tell others about Jesus and disciple those who come to know Him. And together we all get to grow in Jesus.

I want the fullness of Christ for those who I go to church with. I want us to have all of Jesus within us and to display Him to everyone. We are unified in Christ so our friends, families, and strangers can see Him working in our lives. What a good thing!

## **PRAYER**

Dear Heavenly Father, I ask that you help guide all your believers and give them understanding of your teaching. Father, continue to remind us that we all have the power to show grace, and love to one another. Amen.

*Amber Peterson*

# DAY 24

Read Philippians 1:4-6

*“He who began a good work in you  
will carry it on to completion.”*

## REFLECTION

During tumultuous times of fear and mistrust it is always good to remember who is on the throne. God knows what He has in store for his children. Paul tells us that God will complete the good work He has begun in us. Even knowing this, we can allow negative thoughts to creep into our mind and we focus on change that seems impossible. But it is good to sit back, take a breath and remember that He is in control. He knows the beginning from the end. He knew about all the troubles before they ever came. Jesus said that not one sparrow would fall that he didn't know about. What does this say? It says that he is God. Yes, things can seem impossible, stress wants to run things, yet we must do as he says: “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father,  
You are God. I acknowledge that nothing escapes your never-blinking eye. Help me in my unbelief. When these dark times threaten to invade my mind with fear and trepidation, remind me who you are. Remind me of your majesty and awesomeness. Remind me that you are on the throne, remind me that you care for my life. Remind me how you faithfully brought me through. But most of all, Father, remind me to be still and know that you are God. Amen.

*David Snodderley*



# DAY 25

Read Psalm 121: 5-8

*“The LORD will keep you from all harm.”*

## REFLECTION

One thing that I have learned throughout the journey of my life is that no matter what comes our way, whether struggle or blessing, as one of God’s children we are firmly in God’s hand and there is no better place to be. There is no place on earth, no sin, no sickness, no prison that can move God’s children from Him. In a world stricken with uncertainty and fear, we as God’s children should be steadfast in our faith. We trust the Lord with all of our hearts because He is with us.

God is the great Protector and Helper. He has sent His helper the Holy Spirit to live in us. Oh, what a blessing this is. It is not me or we, it is He that protects and provides. It is our great God who surrounds us and seals our souls. To Him we must praise and give thanks this day. From this time forth and forevermore we rest securely in His hands.

## PRAYER

Dear Father God, how good you are to me. I praise you this day and give you thanks because you are so very worthy. I thank you for being my protector and my shield. Thank you for keeping me firmly in your hands. It is you who guides my steps and you who gives me breath. Every beat of my heart tells me that I am in your thoughts. May I make you proud this day by sharing your goodness with those around me and being steadfast in trusting you. Help me to be a living example of what it is to be truly free. In the name above every other name I pray. Amen.

*Gregory Olsen*

# DAY 26

Read Colossians 3:16-17

*“Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

## REFLECTION

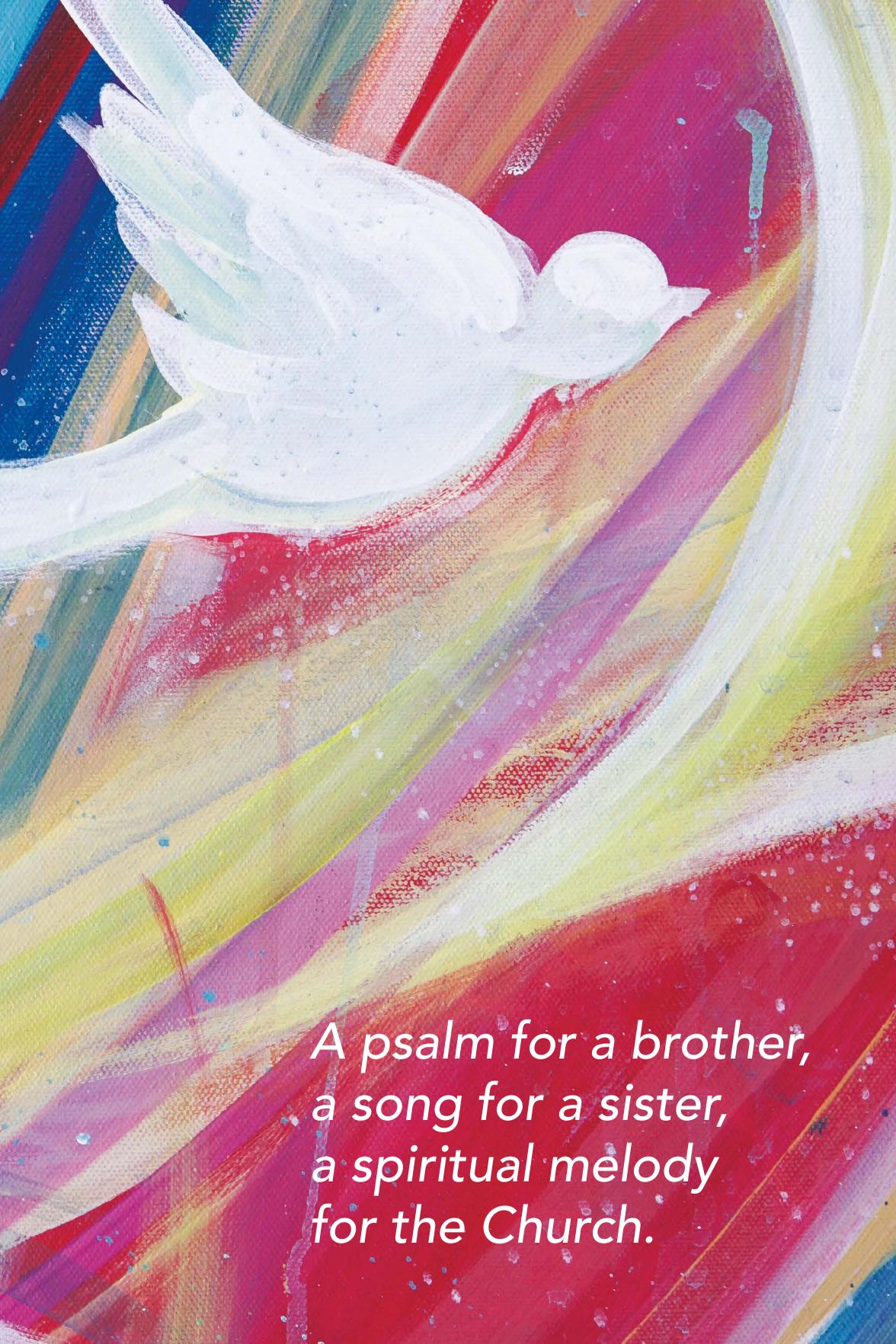
What wisdom within me,  
can I say is wisdom indeed.  
Except the Word which is Jesus,  
surely there is none.  
A psalm for a brother,  
a song for a sister,  
a spiritual melody for the Church.  
A wisdom we have within us  
The Christ we have within us.

In Colossians 3:16-17, the Apostle Paul emphasizes the reality that we are to encourage one another with the truth of Christ. We can and should teach and admonish one another, not in the manner of the world by belittling and degrading, but in grace and truth. Then Paul expounds on this, saying we are to also sing unto the Lord. We should be encouraged by our great potential in the wisdom of our great God.

## PRAYER

Father, humble me to your will so that the full potential of your Word be magnified. May I be wise in all things, teaching with grace and admonishing in patient resolve. May you ever place purpose before me, purpose to do all that I do, as if I was doing it for you. Thank you for making me rich in Jesus. In your dear Son's Name I pray, Amen.

*Hamid Bashir*



A psalm for a brother,  
a song for a sister,  
a spiritual melody  
for the Church.

# DAY 27

Read Zephaniah 3:17

*“The LORD your God is with you, the  
Mighty Warrior who saves.”*

## REFLECTION

What a picture of God’s intimate heart for His kids! He says that He lives right in the midst of us, that He is mighty to save us and that He rejoices over us with great joy and singing! This speaks of a Father’s delight for His children. I believe that God is not able to contain Himself with the joy that He has for us. God is excited over your life! He is so happy that He sings His love songs over you and me.

The promise of this is that because God really does love us and He has power to save us. We can rest in His love. We don’t have to be afraid any longer. He is big, He is strong, and He is mighty to save us! All we must do is yield to His love today and rest in His arms.

## PRAYER

Father, my prayer today is that each one of us would be able to let this image of his depths of love for us, go deeper into our hearts than it has ever gone before. I declare your love would touch our city, that your rejoicing would be heard in the streets. Father let the intimacy of your heart sing over our homes and our city. Thank you, Lord, that your love and shalom can quiet our hearts and minds and silence all those confusing voices and sounds of the world and its fears. Baptize us in your shalom today! I declare your shalom peace upon the readers this day and upon our city. For the love you bring forth to us, we will be safe and secure; because you’re the King of kings and Lord of lords! We love you, Lord, because you first loved us. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

*Kristi Highwalker*



# DAY 28

Read John 15:12-14

*“Love each other as I have loved you.”*

## REFLECTION

These are the words Jesus spoke to his disciples a few hours before he was arrested. And the next day, which we celebrate as Good Friday, he laid down his life for us all. He gave up his life willingly, with humiliation and suffering when they put him on the cross. He died the death of a criminal.

Earlier that evening, as he ate his last supper with the disciples, Jesus had said “You are my friends if you do what I command.” This commandment was prefaced in John 13:34 by Jesus telling his remaining disciples, as little children, that he will be with them for only a short time, then will leave them. In the commandment Jesus told the disciples: “Love one another; as I have loved you.”

How do we love our friends? We look to Jesus as our example. He went willingly and obediently. He laid down his life for his disciples, his friends. He made the ultimate sacrifice. Do you see Jesus as your friend?

## PRAYER

Jesus, what an amazing thing that we should be called your friend. May we follow all that you command us to do, and in the power of your Spirit, may we love others as you love us. Thank you for being my friend and Savior, Amen.

*James Scaia*



# DAY 29

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

*“The old has gone, the new is here!”*

## REFLECTION

Who was I before prison? Did I change? Am I the same person today as the person that committed my crime? No, I am not because I have found Christ and He lives through my actions and my thoughts. Because I have accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior, I can rest my head on my pillow at the end of the day knowing that the sins I have committed in my life no longer define who I am today. I am a new person in God.

Today, I have family around me who love and support me. I have friends who can walk with me in the light, and provide accountability where and when I need it. The thoughts of worthlessness and self-pity no longer plague me—they have been replaced with love, patience, tolerance, and acceptance. I can accept other people for where they are at, as others did for me. I can be the gentle hand that God uses to reach out and touch others, leading them to Him, just as others were that hand for me.

## PRAYER

Please allow me to live your love through my actions, desires, thoughts, and behaviors. Help me to celebrate who I am today as I let go of the guilt and shame that I have been holding on to. Help me be honest with myself and others, so that I may be surrounded by a brotherhood that will hold me accountable to walk in your light. God, I know the miracles you’ve shown in my life. Allow me to be the same gentle and guiding hand to others. Allow your love to surround me and that whomever I come across will notice that love and that will be the first step into leading the sheep to you. In your heavenly name, Amen.

*Jesse Hale*



# DAY 30

Read John 13:34  
*“Love one another.”*

## **REFLECTION**

Each of us was created by God. We are all connected. We must remember that God created us to love each other the way He loves us. It is easy to lose sight of this because of our preconceived notions about others. I have felt forgotten, unseen and even judged by others, and it hurt. Those who are in prison are locked away from the rest of society; it can physically, mentally, emotionally break you down so much that you want to die. You miss human connection, that connection is needed to want to survive. God put those feelings in us so that we would not hurt each other and break His heart.

I cannot let anyone feel the pain that I have felt through my experience. I want to see every other human as a part of me. Sometimes that means sending a card to a friend still in prison, or giving a homeless panhandler the dollar, or repenting when my own sinful thinking wants to make fun of another person. I cannot let anyone think that they are forgotten, unseen, unloved or judged by me, because I must love others as Christ loves.

## **PRAYER**

God, I pray that my eyes will always be opened to your love. We break your heart when we don't love each other well. Allow me to extend the grace you've given me to others. Every human is your creation made in your image and you love us—help me love others well. Amen.

*Emily Jordan*







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