

# City Prayers

**30 DAYS OF REFLECTION  
& RESTORATION**

COMPILED BY WORLD IMPACT



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*Dedicated to transformation  
heroes—the urban leader, the  
local church, and our faithful  
ministry partners.*

Special thank you to:

Tina Busenitz  
Bryan Cullison  
Daniel Davis  
Ryan Funkhouser  
Adria Medlen



Artwork by Ronnie Robles  
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*We commissioned Los Angeles-based artist Ronnie Robles because he paints vibrant cities filled with hope and joy. That is what we at World Impact long for and what we as followers of Christ will have in the New Jerusalem. Zechariah 8:4-5 prophetically set a redeemed city in motion—may the streets be filled with people, laughter, and hope.*

When you think of the city what comes to mind? I think of a big, jam-packed, diverse place of centralized power of human culture both for and against God. Cities draw life into their orbit, spreading influence far past geographical boundaries. As the saying goes, if Paris sneezes France blows its nose. Whatever you may think, one thing is for sure—cities need to be reached with the Gospel.

The Apostle Paul understood this. We know from his missionary journeys he imagined cities as mission fields. His strategy was to reach the biggest ones in a specific region, lay the foundation for a Christian community, and trust that the influence of the believers of that city would carry the Gospel to the surrounding towns and rural countryside. We should follow his lead.

1st Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to pray continually, or in other words pray all the time. Frequent, spontaneous, short, long, etc. it doesn't matter. The point is to just do it. When we have this attitude, we are acknowledging that we depend on God and have determined in our souls to be obedient to Christ.

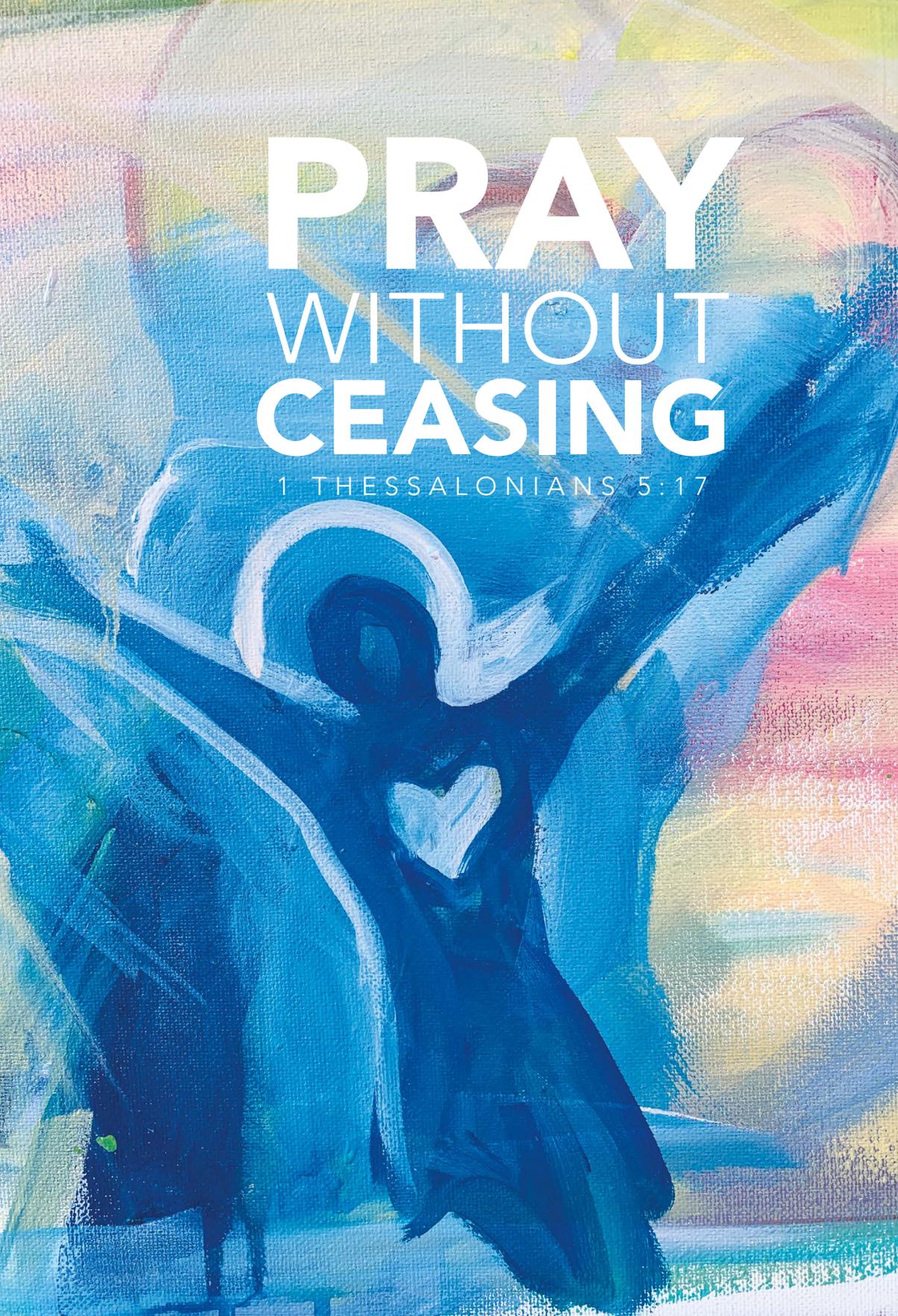
For close to 50 years we have partnered with thousands of churches in many cities located around the globe. We hope you will join us in praying through this 30-day guide. Let us cry out for the transformation of our cities together.

In Christ,



Dr. Alvin Sanders  
President & CEO of World Impact



An abstract painting on a canvas texture. The background is a mix of soft, blended colors including light blue, yellow, pink, and green. In the center, there is a dark blue, almost black, silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a prayerful gesture. The figure is outlined with thick, expressive white and light blue brushstrokes, giving it a sense of movement and depth. The overall mood is spiritual and contemplative.

# PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17



*...I was thirsty and you gave me  
something to drink...*  
MATTHEW 25:35-36

### REFLECTION

In John's account of Jesus' Crucifixion, he recounts the last words of Jesus: "I thirst" (John 19:28). Most of us would have wanted to bring a drink of water or do anything to ease that thirst.

Matthew speaks to satisfying the thirst of Jesus. Matthew 25:35-36 reminds us that when we serve the least of these, whether it be feeding someone who is hungry, welcoming a stranger, caring for the sick or visiting someone in prison we, in fact, have done this as unto Jesus.

How quickly it is that we can imagine helping the thirst on the cross, and yet, how slow we can be to step in with a neighbor in need. Sometimes, it can be very convenient to look the other way, instead of visiting someone in the hospital or prison or whatever it may be the Lord brings our way. Today is the time to respond to the voice of our Master. Love for Christ always moves our hands and feet to serve those around us.

### PRAYER

Our heavenly Father we are most grateful for the sacrifice of Your Son on the cross. Indeed, the penalty of our sin is forever taken care of. Please forgive us for those times we have walked around those You brought to us. Would You help us to follow the nudge of Your Spirit when opportunity is before us to be Your hands and feet? And may all we do and say be for the glory of Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.

*Al Ewert  
Wichita, Kansas*



*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.*

PSALM 34:17-18

### **REFLECTION**

One of the things that can be overwhelming to many in the city is the loneliness and isolation they experience, especially those who live in poverty. In a time in which we can easily connect electronically and in an environment where we are surrounded by so many, the irony is that many of us find ourselves alone and afraid.

Isolation can come in many forms and for many reasons. Some are isolated by their mental illness. Some are isolated because of dysfunctional or abusive relationships. Some are isolated by poverty and homelessness. Some are isolated because they are elderly and have no family left. The good news is that no matter what has caused them to be isolated and alone in this world, the God of the universe will hear them when they cry out.

### **PRAYER**

God of the universe, the one who is faithful when we are not, be faithful as Your word says to hear the cries of the righteous. Lord, create in us a listening heart. May we hear like You hear, with an ear to the cry of the broken and the crushed. When we hear as You hear, may it spur us to love as You love. May our listening and loving be an example of Your grace and mercy to the least of these in our cities. May those who feel as if no one listens to them, know that their cries do not fall upon deaf ears. And when their cries are heard, may they know the love and peace that can come from only You. Amen.

*Chad Phillips  
Topeka, Kansas*



*Come, see a man who told me everything  
I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?*

JOHN 4:29

### **REFLECTION**

When I look at the woman at the well, I see a woman who was more than likely poor, moving from man to man, had no father to return to and no family money. She was most definitely marginalized and, by all means, someone I could encounter in my neighborhood on the way to the corner store. And yet the LOVE of Christ was so overwhelming that she felt no shame when her sin was revealed. She RAN back to the community that shunned her and proclaimed that there was a man who knew all she had done wrong. Her sin was forgiven, her shame clothed in righteousness and she was empowered to tell others and bring them to Christ. This is the openness of the poor when they encounter the truth of Christ. This is the power of true righteousness, this is the power of the incarnation, this is when we are able to see God's goodness and Christ as bigger than our own sin, shame, and status.

### **PRAYER**

Today we pledge our ultimate allegiance... to the Kingdom of God. To a peace that is not like Rome's. To the Gospel of enemy love. To the Kingdom of the poor and broken. To a King that loves his enemies so much He died for them. To the least of these, with whom Christ dwells. To the transnational Church that transcends the artificial borders of nations. To the refuge of Nazareth. To the homeless rabbi who had no place to lay his head. To the cross rather than the sword. To the banner of love above any flag. To the one who rides a donkey rather than a war-horse. To the revolution that sets both oppressed and oppressors free. To the Way that leads to life. To the Slaughtered Lamb. We pledge allegiance.  
(Modified Litany of Resistance composed by James Loney)

*Candy Gibson  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...To act justly and to love mercy and to  
walk humbly with your God.*

MICAH 6:8

### **REFLECTION**

In our cities, we see a lot of homelessness, addiction, and crime. Sometimes we tend to lean more towards judgment, hatred, or looking down on people. When instead, we should show more love, forgiveness, willingness to help—basically show more of God. We should never assume that just because we are not facing homelessness or addiction that people who do are worse than us or that they don't deserve a second chance. In my city, we have a lot of people on corners holding signs and I have heard more times than I can count that we should never give them money because they will buy drugs or alcohol. We don't know these people or their situation. Who are we to judge and think that just because they are holding a sign that they are going to use the money for evil? I give what I have while praying for that person and their situation—that they use it for what they need. In other words, trust God and trust that He is in every situation that you come upon. Love everyone, no matter what. You may be the only one who has shown them love or a smile for a long time.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, I pray that we will have the courage to be more like You when it comes to loving people. I pray that You show us what people need when we come across every situation. Remind us to stop and pray whenever we see anyone in need. Speak to us when we are near someone that needs prayer and show us how to help in the right way. Please don't let us turn away when we are needed. Please show us how to be more like You, O Lord. In Your name, we pray, Amen.

*Christina Thomas  
Kansas City, Missouri*



*...uphold the cause of the poor  
and the oppressed....*

PSALM 82:1-4

### **REFLECTION**

“Thou art” in the face of injustice (Prov. 16:8, Psalm 82:1-4). How do you face and overcome injustice or the “lack of fairness” in a world that will never be fair? By becoming like an unbreakable reed in the windstorm. This attitude will allow us to boldly march, sit defiantly at a counter, or shout at a border for the oppressed and downtrodden. Understanding that we are whistling into the tornado should not stop us from using our voice for justice.

Where do we find our strength? Thou art. Who will bring justice to the world? Thou will. When will justice be accomplished? On God’s time on earth and in eternity. One of our Christian Church fathers Athanasius faced persecution, exile, and oppression in his life. Yet, at the end of his life, he declared his “Thou Art” prayer in the windstorm of the world. May we pray it with him.

### **PRAYER**

Thou art Jesus, the Son of the Father, Yea, Amen. Thou art He who commandeth the Cherubim and the Seraphim, Yea, Amen. Thou hast existed with the Father in truth always, Yea, Amen. Thou rulest the Angels, Yea, Amen. Thou art the power of the Heavens, Yea, Amen. Thou art the crown of the Martyrs, Yea, Amen. Thou art the deep counsel of the Saints, Yea, Amen. Thou art He in whom the deep counsel of the Father is hidden, Yea, Amen. Thou art the mouth of the Prophets, Yea, Amen. Thou art the tongue of the Angels, Yea, Amen. Thou art Jesus my Life, Yea, Amen. Thou art Jesus the object and boast of the world, Yea, Amen.

(St. Athanasius the Great)

*David Estrada  
Dallas, Texas*



*...for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

GALATIANS 3:27-28

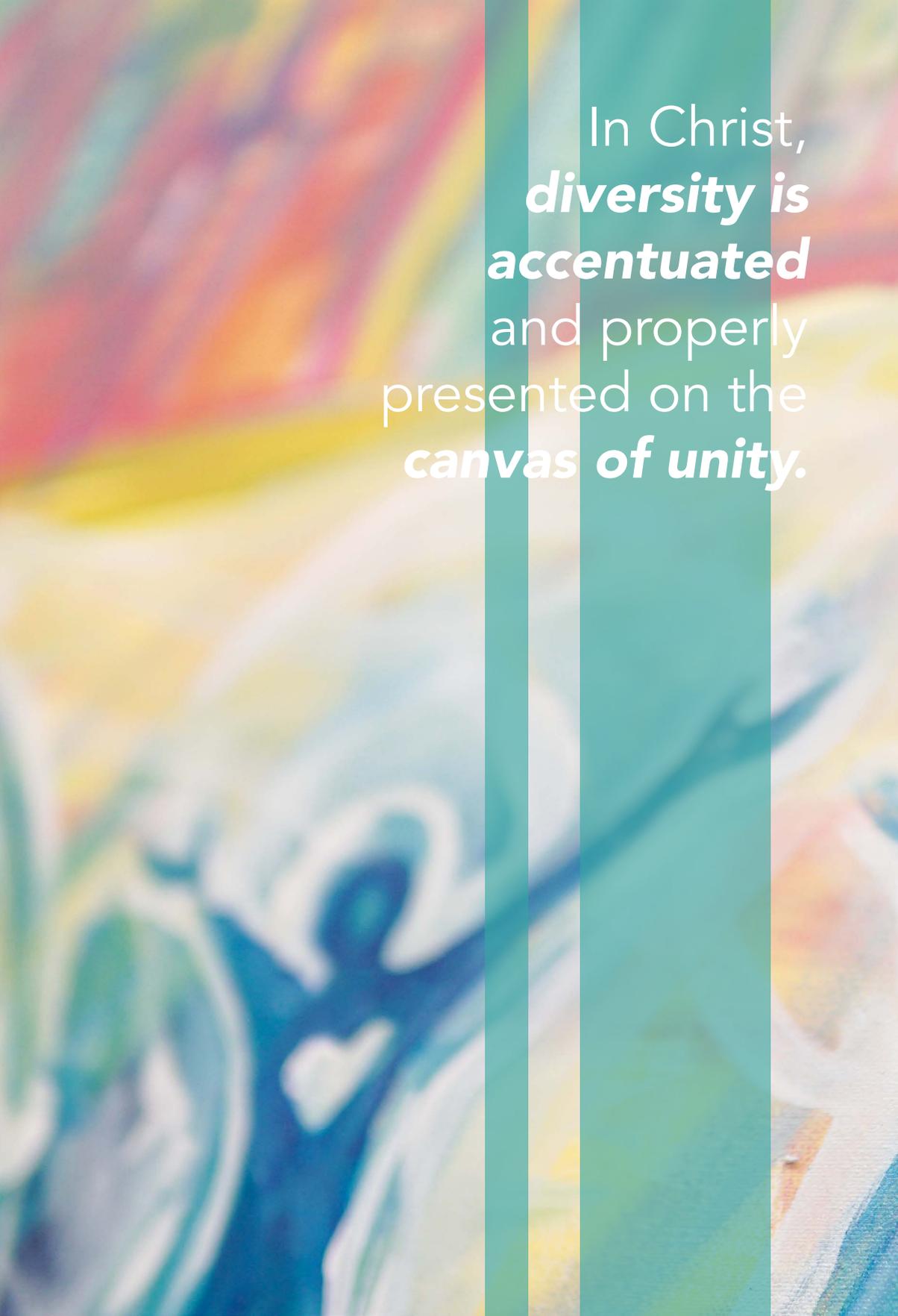
### **REFLECTION**

I am peculiarly urban and I belong. Galatians 3:27-28 doesn't suggest we become ambiguous or homogeneous in Christ but that we focus more on what unites us. Our need for belonging is primarily answered in Christ. We too often settle on external descriptors to inform our decisions about ourselves, others and our community. Who has decided their ethnicity? Who has chosen the economic environment or neighborhood they were born into? Who has informed God on their gender? Christ does not want to erase the differences in humankind or our communities. Instead, He wants to inform our perspective on ethnicity, economics, and gender. Being baptized into Christ does not wash away diversity. In Christ, diversity is accentuated and properly presented on the canvas of unity. Be encouraged! When we chose to put on Christ, we get a bespoke fit of purpose and gifting from heaven. He only makes masterpieces. And He doesn't own a copier!

### **PRAYER**

Father make us more aware of our identity in You. May we embrace the unifying cover provided by Christ but not lose sight of the fact You have made us individually peculiar. May our distinctives no longer divide and distract us from our greater purpose in You. Make us bold enough to tell the truth about systemic issues that plague the under-resourced. May we be courageous enough to help bring about necessary change, especially when it is inconvenient. You don't play favorites, and neither should we. Let us not forget the ethnic, economic, and gender inequalities that exist in our world. Give us the resolve to quiet our fears and lean into the tough conversations that need to be had. May equality and access be byproducts of the Gospel being lived out in our urban centers. For Your glory. In the name of Jesus, we pray.

*Dioane Gates  
Wichita, Kansas*

The background is a colorful, abstract painting. It features a central figure with arms raised, rendered in dark blue and white. The overall color palette is vibrant, with shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. A vertical teal bar runs through the center of the image, partially obscuring the text.

In Christ,  
***diversity is  
accentuated***  
and properly  
presented on the  
***canvas of unity.***



*See that you do not despise one  
of these little ones....*

MATTHEW 18:10

### **REFLECTION**

Here we see the true Father's heart of God, One who loves all of His children. One who protects, defends, loves, knows and *sees* them.

Our cities are full of children that society doesn't see or doesn't want to see. Children lost in the Foster system. Children wandering the streets stuck in cycles of homelessness with their parent(s). Immigrant children being criminalized because they were born on the wrong side of a border. Children living a few blocks away who don't get the same education our children do. Children in need who expose our selfishness because we don't want to deal with what caring for them might mean to our schedule, our life, our politics, or our bank balance.

### **PRAYER**

Father, forgive us for neglecting, ignoring, or even despising these little ones. Little ones caught in crossfire between ideologies, systems with cracks, and corrupt industries that would seek to grind them to nothing for the sake of financial profit. Break our hearts for them. Embolden and encourage our will and creativity to take steps of action that demonstrate Your love for them in the most practical of ways. Reveal to us the all of the little ones in our own scope and reach and sight who are despised and oppressed and abused and dehumanized. Help us really see them, and help us to shine a light on their situation to bring others in as well. We ask You to protect these little ones. Bring conviction on those who seek harm. Inject justice into our systems that perpetuate evil. Open Your Church. Amen.

*Bryan Cullison  
Los Angeles, California*



*...Truly He is my rock and my salvation...*

PSALM 62:1-2

### **REFLECTION**

Silence is rare these days. More and more research has come out that tells us how important being silent and being in a place of silence is to our mental health. In my life, there are times I can remember clearly being in a place of deep silence and waiting for the Lord to come to me. Times of crisis when I could not utter a prayer but just abided in silence clinging to the Lord. Other times when things seemed dark and hopeless around me, I sat in silence and waited on the Lord. I have found that as I learn to wait in silence, I am more comfortable waiting with others, also, in silence. I do not have to have the answers. We wait in silence, not for silence sake; we wait in silence knowing the Lord, our rock, is coming to our aid and comfort.

### **PRAYER**

Holy, loving Father, God of peace and everlasting love; we come to You. We cling to You alone. As the foundation gives way we climb upon the rock that is higher than ourselves and our circumstances. Our eyes are upon You, we do not look frantically around, our eyes stay upon You. Hold us tight, Lord, even in our silence talk to us and reassure us. Though the winds of discouragement, fear or change blow around us, we are secure in You and we have confidence that You are our fortress, we shall stand and not be shaken. You are our peace.

*Lisa Entz  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...And surely I am with you always,  
to the very end of the age.*

MATTHEW 28:18-20

### **REFLECTION**

For many years the fuel for my efforts to share Christ flowed from a desire to follow the “Go” part of the Great Commission. I completely missed the part about knowing that Jesus was with me. He didn’t command me to do this and leave the scene. He wants me to know that He intends to be intimately involved; I am joining Him in His work, at His invitation.

Jesus’ interactions with others take on new depth. He needed to go through Samaria to meet a woman at a well. He called a woman “Daughter” who silently cried for healing in the midst of a crowd. And who can forget that strange conversation with the woman in the region of Tyre and Sidon when he declared that this foreign woman had greater faith than any he had seen in Israel! Now I realize that I don’t have to fulfill His command alone.

### **PRAYER**

God of grace, no one is beyond the reach of your love, or outside your limitless mercy. Move us toward those the world despises and people reject, so we may venture to follow Christ, and risk showing his love. Stand with those who are outcast; strengthen them in peace; encourage them by your presence; and use them to build on the cornerstone of Christ, until differences are honored and respected, and all people together give you glory. Amen.

(Book of Common Worship)

*Kim Contreras  
Fresno, California*



*...its parts should have equal  
concern for each other.*

1 CORINTHIANS 12:24-25

### **REFLECTION**

Sometimes, in pastor conferences, pastors like to joke about God moving hard-to-love members on to other churches. Truth is, pastors are just like any other human beings—they have a hard time loving everyone. Certain types of people get under our skin. It may be a certain personality, a certain cultural trait, a certain pedigree, and so on. And these individuals are hard to love.

What strikes me about Paul's description of the diversity of our churches is that God is the one who has composed them. That means God actually wants the person I can't stand to literally stand right next to me, on a weekly or even daily basis. God! And He loves to honor those we would rather not. What a blessing to be taught how to love well through the challenging people in our church families.

### **PRAYER**

Sovereign God, maker of all things, compassionate and kind: You composed my church family, with each and every person. Some I enjoy, others I do not. Some I even hate and avoid. Break me, change me, mold me, shape me. That I might love \_\_\_\_\_, who always gets under my skin. That I might love \_\_\_\_\_, who I have to actively forgive every day. That I might love \_\_\_\_\_, for what seems to be the 70th times 7th time. God, you died on a cross, that these would not have to. You died on a cross, that I would not have to. Fill me with your Spirit today, renew my mind, empower my heart. I surrender each part of my body, to be a vessel of love to these and others. In Jesus' powerful and holy name, Amen.

*Yucan Chiu  
New Brunswick, New Jersey*



*Against the dark  
backdrop of the city,  
the light of the church  
shines all the brighter  
and our Father is*

***glorified.***



*...Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven...*

MATTHEW 5:14-16

### **REFLECTION**

One of my first interactions with urban ministry was a block party event that World Impact held in Chester, Pennsylvania. It was complete with cotton candy, games and performances from community and church members. My favorite picture from the event was one of a young woman dancing in front of a large mural of the sun, its rays spreading wide behind her. Her arms were raised high, and her face was tilted upward. The overall impression of the picture is one of joy and light.

Many people believe that the inner-city is a place of deep darkness, and there is much darkness to be found. However, it is to these dark places that God calls His people, and it is out of those places that God raises up leaders to shine. Against the dark backdrop of the city, the light of the church shines all the brighter and our Father is glorified.

### **PRAYER**

Father, thank you that your light cuts through the deepest darkness. Please continue to raise up leaders to and from our cities to take Your light into the darkest places so that You may be glorified.

*Kathryn King  
Indianapolis, Indiana*



*...He has sent me to proclaim  
freedom for the prisoners...*

LUKE 4:18

### **REFLECTION**

As Christians, especially those called to serve Christ and the poor in the city, it can be easy to forget that we are beneficiaries of good news. We have all been pulled from the fire by Christ's sacrifice for humanity, but that sacrifice isn't just what set us on the path to serve others. It is, quite literally, the promise of freedom and forgiveness for all who believe in and trust in the Lord.

Let us never forget to be open vessels for the Holy Spirit, and to carry His promise of salvation, with joy in our hearts, to the oppressed, imprisoned, and forgotten in our cities. Most of all, it is our responsibility to never lose the energy and excitement of the promise of liberation through Christ. He is truly the path to set the prisoner free.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, let us remember that You are our salvation and that our freedom from sin and death is all wrapped up in the gift of Your promise. Let us be filled with the Holy Spirit, and let It move us to proclaim that promise that not only sets us free but anoints us to share that freedom wherever we go. Let us live out the good news of eternal life through Christ for everyone we meet. Let us be courageous enough to keep your blessings with us, and to live our lives in ways that truly proclaim your love to all people. And especially in the city, where so many cry out for mercy and freedom from sin, let us be bearers of truth and hope through salvation in Jesus Christ.

*Daniel Davis  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...As I have loved you, so you  
must love one another...*

JOHN 13:34-35

### **REFLECTION**

“Well done.” Don’t we all yearn to hear those words? I certainly do. As I was growing up I craved to hear those words from my father. It didn’t have to be a long conversation, just the words “good job” or “I’m proud of you” would cause my heart to swell because it was important to me to be a good son. Nowadays I am touched when I hear my daughters say “you did a good job” because being a good father is important to me.

We, as Christians, all long to hear our Heavenly Father say, “Well done my good and faithful servant.” What does it take to be a “good and faithful servant”? Is it that we tithe? Is it going to church every Sunday? Is it that we eliminate all curse words from our speech? Maybe it’s having a fish symbol on the back of my car? While all these things may be pleasing to God, it’s probably wise to search the scriptures to learn what things God thinks are important. What better way to determine what God thinks is important than by looking at how He ultimately judges us?

God is very clear in John 13:34-35 that loving one another is not only what pleases Him, but it is the reason for our existence. We aren’t called to just love the lovely, we are to love sinners. Sometimes that’s not easy, but what a better example than Christ’s love for us. We are all sinners and yet He loved us enough to die for us.

### **PRAYER**

Father, give me the heart to love. Give me opportunities to show Your love. Move me to seek the lost, the hungry, the imprisoned, the sick. Help me to focus on what’s important to You. Let Your love shine through me. In Jesus name, we pray all these things, Amen.

*Chip Gramke  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...The foreigner residing among you must  
be treated as your native-born...*

LEVITICUS 19:33-34

### REFLECTION

The produce aisle of a neighborhood grocery store in the city is a great place to hear the languages of the world. We don't understand one another's words, but the courteous smiles, pressing fingers, and scanning eyes speak the same language of provision for our families.

The truth is that people from all over the world are coming to our cities. They may be pursuing opportunities or fleeing devastation. Regardless of our life experiences, we all share the same need of belonging to a community.

As followers of Christ, this human need for belonging should remind us of who we are. Just as the Israelites were rescued from a foreign land, we were once foreigners who found a home in the family of God (Eph. 2:19). When we remember who we are, we can't help but open our arms and embrace others, as God did for us. We don't need to share the same language to know that we share the same needs and desires and the same God who loves us all.

### PRAYER

Holy God, there is always room for one more at your banquet table. We pray to live in such a way that each person we meet knows they are welcome among your people. We welcome You as we welcome others this day. Amen.

(Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals, Shane Claiborne)

*Adria Medlen  
St. Louis, Missouri*



# DAY 15

*Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner,  
for you were foreigners in Egypt...*

EXODUS 22:21-23

## REFLECTION

From the beginning, God has demonstrated His heart for the oppressed and marginalized. When first giving His commands to the people of Israel, He made it clear that they were to show kindness and justice toward foreigners, widows, and the fatherless. This was their duty and His expectation. But like all of God's commands, this wasn't a command for its own sake. No, this was Him revealing His very heart, overflowing with love for the outsiders and outcasts. His care runs so deep that He will always hear their cries and act to defend their cause.

Let us seek to have this heart formed within us. Let us feel and act upon this love towards those in need and on the outside. Yet as we seek this, let us never forget that we cannot muster up true love in our own strength, but only find this love of God manifested in our hearts when we realize first how much He has loved us. We were once the outsiders, and Christ has welcomed us in, so let us also show love and welcome those in need.

## PRAYER

It is thy will that I should love thee with heart, soul, mind, strength, and my neighbor as myself. But I am not sufficient for these things. There is by nature no pure love in my soul; Every affection in me is turned from thee; I am bound, as a slave to lust, I cannot love thee, lovely as thou art, until thou dost set me free... May I grow in thy love and manifest it to mankind. Spirit of love, make me like the loving Jesus; give me his benevolent temper, his beneficent actions, that I may shine before men to thy glory. The more thou doest in love in me and by me, humble me the more; keep me meek, lowly, and always ready to give thee honor.

(Valley of Vision)

*Ryan Funkhouser  
Bellingham, Washington*



*...You, Lord, have never forsaken  
those who seek you.*

PSALM 9:9-10

### **REFLECTION**

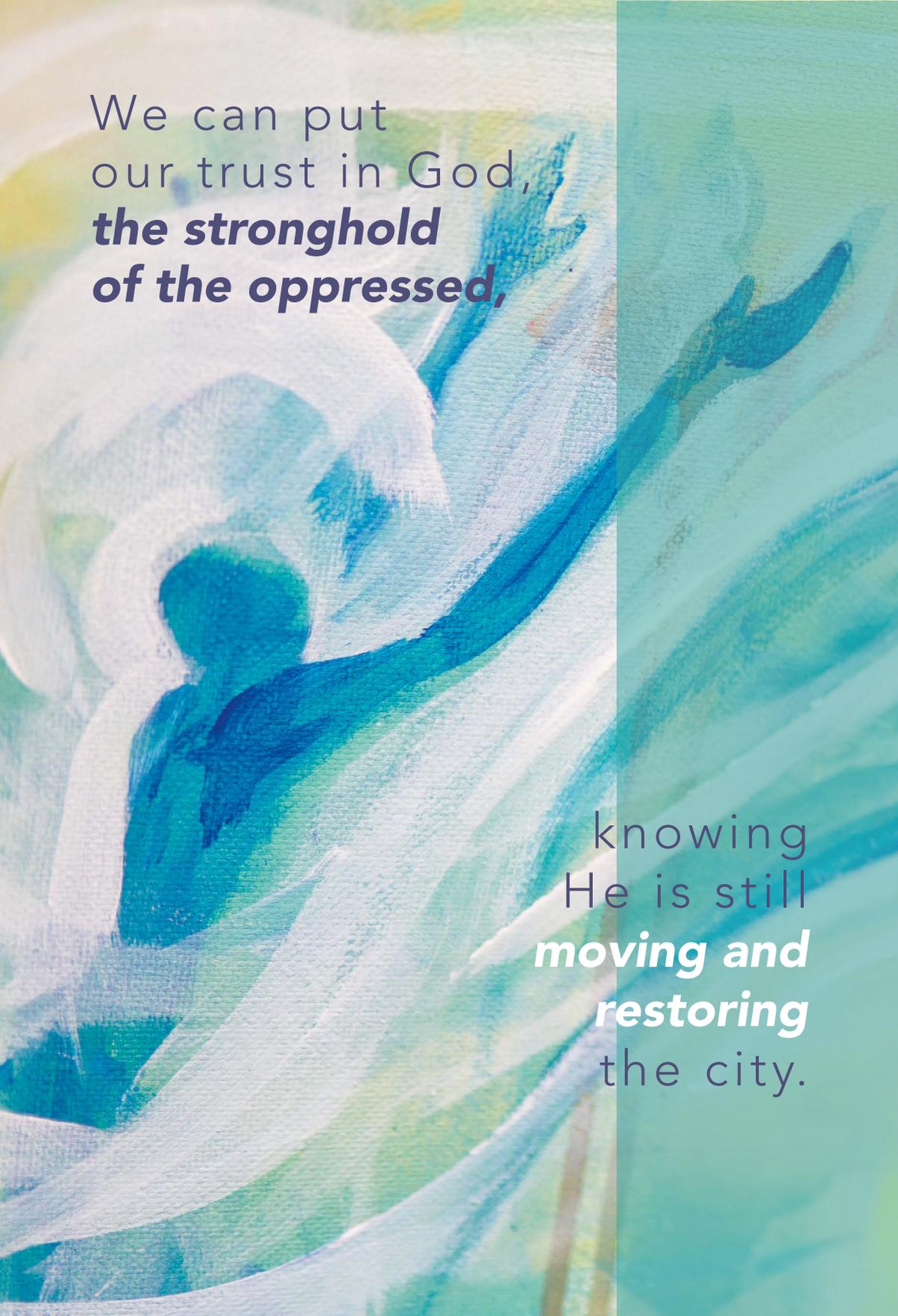
Less than half a mile from where I live, in the heart of Los Angeles, stands a tiny memorial for a young boy who was killed on a normal afternoon a few months ago. He was not murdered in an alley or in some sketchy warehouse, but on a street I use on mornings when I want to take a walk and to get to the grocery store. Tragedy in the city has a way of pushing you into a corner in fear. Everyone starts to hold their lives a little tighter and walk on city streets with more caution. It would seem that there is no refuge for the oppressed in a place like this.

However, Psalm 9 reminds us that, though there is no real physical shelter for the oppressed, there is a stronghold in times of trouble. While we know the evidence of a fallen world is to our left and to our right, we are reminded that God does not forsake us. This then moves us to roam the city, not with fear, but to move from the conviction that where we go, God goes too. We can put our trust in God, the stronghold of the oppressed, knowing He is still moving and still restoring the city.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, You love our cities. Your heart breaks when people lose their lives to violence, when fathers walk out on their sons, when people are evicted from their homes. Even still, You are the God of the city. You surround it and You protect it. You have good plans for the city, You have not forsaken the city. May we continue to look up in times of despair. We need not fear. You have not and will not let us go. We love You and we trust You. Amen.

*Sheila Guevara  
Los Angeles, California*



We can put  
our trust in God,  
***the stronghold  
of the oppressed,***

knowing  
He is still  
***moving and  
restoring***  
the city.



# DAY 17

*And should I not have concern for  
the great city of Nineveh...*

JONAH 4:11

## **REFLECTION**

Jonah has one of the strangest endings of any book in the Bible. And yet in this simple, profound question at the end of Jonah, God reiterates His special care for the city.

Cities get off to a rough start in the book of Genesis. Cain is commanded by God to wander and instead, he settles and builds a city. A few chapters later, we read that as the population of the young world grew, people began thinking more of themselves than they should and sought to “build a city with a tower.” We know what happened to that plan! So if God is concerned for the city, what is our concern for it?

God shows us what He does with His concern as He fully redeems the city with the future creation of the New Jerusalem. What is the role that we can play in joining God’s great redemption plan for the city?

## **PRAYER**

Lord, we pray that You would give us your heart for the city. May we take the time to understand what You say in Your Word about the city and the many poor who make up its inhabitants. Show us how we as Your people can be obedient to demonstrate the same concern You have for the city, especially those who are marginalized. Give us eyes to see as You see, to hear as You hear, to feel as You feel. Give us a passion to minister Your love in the most difficult places and to fully expect that You are already at work and raising up leaders for these communities from within. Remove our pride and ignorance and instead give us compassionate hearts that beat with Your concern for “that great city.” Amen.

*Daren Busenitz  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...you may fight the battle well, holding on  
to faith and a good conscience...*

1 TIMOTHY 1:18-20

### **REFLECTION**

This is an interesting text due to the level of authority that is offered to Timothy by way of Paul. Paul lets Timothy and us know that we are engaged in warfare. This warfare is, on the one hand, good for the sake of the faith. On the other hand, it warns us that the warfare for our faith is one that will be a daily process. Paul lets us know that there is a clear divide between choosing faith and not choosing faith.

Our faith is what will keep us connected to God. Our faith is what we need to fight for on a daily basis. Our faith is the substance of our core and the evidence of hope in our tomorrows (Heb. 11:1). Our faith is what has been entrusted to us as a conduit between us and our Lord.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, open unto me  
Open unto me — light for my darkness.  
Open unto me — courage for my fear.  
Open unto me — hope for my despair.  
Open unto me — peace for my turmoil.  
Open unto me — joy for my sorrow.  
Open unto me — strength for my weakness.  
Open unto me — wisdom for my confusion.  
Open unto me — forgiveness for my sins.  
Open unto me — love for my hates.  
Open unto me — thy Self for myself.  
Lord, Lord, open unto me!  
Amen.  
(Howard Thurman)

*Cedric Nelms  
Los Angeles, California*



...“Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

LUKE 8:42B-45A

### **REFLECTION**

In Luke’s Gospel account we read the story of a brief exchange between Jesus and a woman whom he heals.

Other Gospel accounts depict Jesus’s public ministry after He began drawing a crowd, in some cases, it simply records that “power went out of Him” and “people were healed.” This one is particularly personal.

How many times do I go through the course of my day, often in crowds and among people, so focused on my stuff, my needs, and my goals? Too many times I am totally oblivious to others, that God may sovereignly be putting in my path, that would benefit from a healing touch—even a word of kindness. May we open our eyes to those around us and look for moments God has for us to share His love.

### **PRAYER**

Holy Spirit, Make me alert to those around me. Nudge me in the direction of those who Jesus would have me engage with, encourage, and offer words of life. To the Glory of the Father and advancement of the Kingdom. Amen.

*Tom Kemner  
Burlison, Texas*



*...my hope comes from Him...*

PSALM 62:3-8

### **REFLECTION**

Hope is the flower miraculously growing through the concrete. It is seen in the unexpected smile of a stranger walking by. Hope is passed through countless meals and handshakes at the nearby shelter. It encourages us through the stories of single moms, resilience, and freedom. Hope is not natural, and if we are not careful, we quickly trade hope for anxiety. We walk past the homeless, wanting to help but not knowing how. We focus on the broken windows behind barbed-wire fences. Our hearts become like the garbage-filled streets and polluted air, tainting the good wherever we go. But it does not have to be so!

As we dive deeper each day into worship, God releases hope within us. Hope that offers peace in the unknown. A deep joy in the midst of suffering. Hope that awaits the restoration of creation. As our cities cry out, we need to stand firm and be a beacon of hope.

### **PRAYER**

Father God, May you fill me with your joy and peace. May I trust in you, so that I may overflow with your hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Mindy Francisco  
Los Angeles, California*

An abstract painting with vibrant, textured brushstrokes in shades of blue, green, yellow, pink, and purple. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall style is expressive and modern.

**I KNOW**

MY GOD IS GOOD

**I KNOW**

MY GOD CAN BE TRUSTED



*All this is from God, who reconciled us  
to Himself through Christ and gave us  
the ministry of reconciliation.*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18

### **REFLECTION**

At the end of every year, I remember wearing a rope around my neck and walking under a chicken that was tied to a branch as the elder of my clan performed a cleansing ritual. My mother told me it was to take away the bad luck that we had accumulated over the year.

To this day, this Hmong tradition is the culmination of the year. My mother continues to walk under the chicken, but no longer accompanied by her youngest son. I wonder how many sons and mothers will continue to walk under insufficient sacrifices? If only they knew what the chicken could not pay for, Christ has paid in full. “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

### **PRAYER**

Oh Lord, when will the day come when You redeem my people? When will the day come when they are reconciled to You? Will You lift the veil from their eyes that blinds them to You? Will you soften their hearts so that they will understand You? How long must I wait to see the day my people are free from the generational lies and traditions they’ve been given. I long to see my mother, my family, and my people free from the oppression of the enemy. He taunts me and laughs at me, saying, “Your people will never be free.” But I know my God is good. I know my God loves my people more than I ever could. And my God can be trusted. So I plead with my Lord to break chains, traditions, and strongholds that my people have been shackled to for generations. Amen.

*Doua Her  
Lake Hughes, California*



*There is a time for everything, and a season  
for every activity under the heavens.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

### **REFLECTION**

It's beautiful how the earth naturally cycles through different seasons, and how specific environments can change depending on the seasons. The earth rumbles with the cycle of change. This world is unsure of itself, and even tomorrow is not guaranteed. But as we live day by day, Ecclesiastes 3:1 evokes a great reassurance and remembrance of how our Lord sees our lives. Through the eyes of Solomon, we see how our lives, like seasons, change through cycles. At times, it can feel chaotic, but as a good Father, He knows these things. He knows that there will be a time to mourn and a time to dance. A time to tear and a time to sew. The human condition is not foreign to Him; this is a hope and assurance that He extends to us. The hope that the cold of winter will end and the birth of spring will come. Day by day His understanding is our fortitude and rest.

### **PRAYER**

Our time here is brief, and as a society we are obsessed with controlling the resource of time. Father let us look to you for control in our lives. This earth is fleeting, and the many pitfalls of this world leave us at times with confusion on where we stand. And more so in our cities, where time seems a scarce resource. Help us learn to lean on Your understanding and reassurances, that our lives are known to you. We are so needy, yet Your word says that You think upon us, that You rejoice in getting to understand our lives. Bless the cities, that their people would come to know You as a God of understanding. As the seasons in our lives cycle let us daily rest in You alone. Amen.

*Ryan Espina  
Los Angeles, California*



*...you know that your labor in the  
Lord is not in vain.*

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

### **REFLECTION**

One doesn't need a perfect vision to see the great work that needs to be done in our cities. The effects of sin are greatly felt, from the brokenness in our hearts to the weariness in our souls. Even some of Christ's workers remain pessimistic. Fear seems to have a grip on us, and self-preservation takes priority over answering the call. Some workers didn't count up the cost, simply signed up with the thinking, Christ's death paid for their best life now. Some are far too self-consumed, that denying themselves to truly follow after Christ, is a thought rejected. While some put all the responsibility on Christ without realizing that we also have an active role in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Yet there are a few workers for this plentiful harvest and we are instructed to pray for more.

### **PRAYER**

Father God we come to you in the name of Jesus, thanking You for salvation, and your unfailing love. Thanking You Jesus for the fulfillment of your work on the cross, and all that You endured for us to be reconciled to the Father. Thank You for the Holy Spirit living in us, giving us the ability to accomplish the work planned for us and allowing us to co-labor with Christ. I pray for the workers of Christ in our city, may we have a heart and mind to follow faithfully after You, may we be grounded and committed to the great commandment and follow the great commission, with passion. Continue to touch the mind, heart, and hands of your workers, so that we may find ourselves flourishing in the work, knowing that it has eternal significance. Help us to continue to make the choice to enter into the work. And while we are working please touch the minds and hearts of your children, who are off mission. Give us servant eyes and servant hearts, to not only see the need but to meet the need. In Jesus name, Amen.

*Terri Madison  
St. Louis, Missouri*



*Anyone who has two shirts should share  
with the one who has none, and anyone  
who has food should do the same.*

LUKE 3:11

### **REFLECTION**

The city may be known as a place where more is always craved. To some, it seems as if the “I have” really means “I don’t have enough.” This craving is hardly satisfied and the one searching for more is oftentimes left in dismay. What many in the city fail to ask is, “What do I already have?” Seeing those in need is unavoidable in the streets of the city. The need may be different for each person but one thing I’ve learned is that generosity is the only way to meet any person’s need. Being a generous person requires us to look at what we have and find a way to use our “have” to help someone who is in need. Generosity demands that we look beyond our view of our “have” and set our sight on how our “have” can be more than enough to someone else.

### **PRAYER**

Father, Help us see that all we have comes from You. Show us the joy of sharing the gifts You’ve given to us. Let us not hold on tightly to the things in our hand. Help us to let go of the thought that what we hold is not enough. May we give generously with cheerful hearts knowing that what we share builds Your Kingdom of love. Amen.

*Keren Peña  
Los Angeles, California*



*“The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”*

PSALM 34:10

### **REFLECTION**

Psalm 34 was written by David and most likely when he was on the run from Saul in some of the most difficult conditions one can imagine. Even in the throes of people seeking to take his life, David’s trust in the Lord does not waver.

David blesses and praises God for His deliverance and goodness. In verse 10, David gives a word of comfort and a word of truth. He writes that young lions, symbolizing strength and self-sufficiency, will want and hunger, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. What an example to all of us who are going through times of need or difficulty. In the city, there are a number of challenges and difficulties that people face on a daily basis: from visible to invisible forms of oppression and lack of resources. But regardless of our circumstances, we are to trust the Lord for His complete provision.

### **PRAYER**

Father, we bless you and thank you for your sovereign care for us. Forgive us O Lord, when we place our confidence in ourselves or in the world. Help us to be like the birds of the air and the lilies of the field who have no concern for their daily needs. We trust you to meet all of our needs according to your riches in your Son, Jesus Christ. We pray for your justice and righteousness to roll down like a mighty river through the city and that many would come to know you as their Savior and Lord. May they, in turn, give their lives fully to you so that you can use them to bring many more out of the dominion of darkness and into the kingdom of light that has no end. We pray this in the strong name of Jesus our Lord, Amen.

*Andy Entz  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...to look after orphans and  
widows in their distress...*

JAMES 1:27

### **REFLECTION**

Sometimes when we look at our cities and neighborhoods we become overwhelmed by the need, children in need of loving parents, the elderly in need of care and companionship. As followers of Christ, it is right that our hearts are burdened by the “least of the these”: the parentless and those without the support of family or community.

In Luke chapter seven, we see Christ raise a widow’s son from the dead. We read about Jesus welcoming little children to Him. What does it look like for us to follow the example of Jesus when we are overwhelmed by the need in our cities? Mother Teresa once said, “Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.” Let us seek out opportunities to show love—whether it be visiting a house-bound neighbor or getting to know the names of the kids on our block. Let our faith shine by the love we show.

### **PRAYER**

O Lord, who though you were rich yet for our sakes became poor, and has promised in Your holy gospel that whatever is done for the least of Your brethren You will receive as done to You: Give us grace, we humbly beseech You, to be always willing and ready to minister, as you enable us, to the needs of others, and to extend the blessings of Your kingdom over all the world; to Your praise and glory, who are God over all, blessed for ever.  
(Augustine of Hippo)

*Tina Busenitz  
Wichita, Kansas*



let our faith

**SHINE**

by the

**LOVE**

we show



*...be transformed by the  
renewing of your mind...*

ROMANS 12:2

### REFLECTION

There is order and structure in the way our world was set up from the beginning. This order is cosmic in nature and social in practice. The primary systems are political, economic, and religious. Our cities need to be liberated from the evil forces that control these primary systems.

Our theology and action-oriented justice movements have lacked clarity around the demonic forces (principalities, powers, and authorities) that sit in high places. The forces we face are not flesh and blood. The battles we fight in our cities are not flesh and blood. These forces lie at the heart of every city. These forces permeate from the courtroom to the classroom, from politician podiums to preacher's pulpits.

God is the one who wins the city. Liberation must include the task of community building. Whether it's liberating our families, ourselves, our churches, our businesses, our cities our nation or the world, we must do it under God living a new way of life as liberated people.

### PRAYER

"Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace." Teach me how to order my days that with sure touch I may say the right word at the right time and in the right way—lest I betray the spirit of peace. Let me not be deceived by my own insecurity and weakness which would make me hurt another as I try desperately to help myself. Keep watch with me, O my Father, over the days of my life, that with abiding enthusiasm I may be in such possession of myself that each day I may offer to Thee the full, unhampered use of me in all my parts as "an instrument of Thy Peace." Amen. (Howard Thurman)

*Peter Watts  
Los Angeles, California*



## DAY 28

*...He will never leave you nor forsake you.*

DEUTERONOMY 31:6

### REFLECTION

It is easy to say that I am strong, to make others believe I'm courageous. Look around: I have no enemies actively attacking or trying to kill me like the Israelites had. But there are moments when I wonder if God is present, if He cares, if He has abandoned me. I may not have an army of enemies at the door, but the Enemy can twist my thoughts into isolation and fear. Thankfully, that is not who God is!

These thoughts, fears, and anxieties do not come from the Abba Father we see in Scripture. He is ever-present, He cares for us, He will never forsake us. In the times when the Enemy manipulates and convinces us otherwise, we take those thoughts captive and return to Scripture. We can truly be strong and courageous because we know we have the one True Victor in our corner.

### PRAYER

Father God, I get upset during the storms and fearful in the desert. I forget to listen to You and let the lies infiltrate my heart. I underestimate the power of Your peace. Lord, speak truth to me today. May I acknowledge Your presence—for You never leave me—and allow Your Spirit to wash away the fear and anxiety. Thank You for never forsaking me. Amen.

(Eugene Peterson, adapted)

*Kaitlyn Brown  
Wichita, Kansas*



*...since the day we heard about you, we  
have not stopped praying for you...*

COLOSSIANS 1:9-10

**REFLECTION**

The Apostles were like parents to the Colossians. They prayed for them constantly—even as they went about their daily tasks. The Apostles recognized that all truth comes from the Holy Spirit and followed the Spirit's prodding when it came to the Colossians. They wanted to share the riches of the Spirit just like a parent desires his or her children to bear fruit for the Kingdom. How are we listening to the Holy Spirit in our daily life? Is there anyone the Holy Spirit is urging you to pray for or lead?

**PRAYER**

Father, thank you for your Holy Spirit's presence even in the mundane. I pray that we listen to the Spirit's prodding as we seek You for wisdom, strength, and grace. Who should I show Christ's love to today? Our daily lives are filled with challenges, but may You radiate through us to reach others desperately in need of You. Amen.

*Karen Rogers  
Los Angeles, California*



*And this is my prayer: that your love  
may abound more and more...*

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11

### **REFLECTION**

Jesus is Love. He is the origin and sustainer of love. Christ followers, Jesus people, are called to walk in Love, live in Love, be in Love more and more each day. We learn how to be one who loves, as we commune with and follow the commands of the One who is Love, Jesus. The continual effect of our abiding in Love is that we become so connected with Love that we live rightly, making godly decisions from a pure heart, not out of ritual, but relationship, and from our relationship with Jesus we produce righteous fruit.

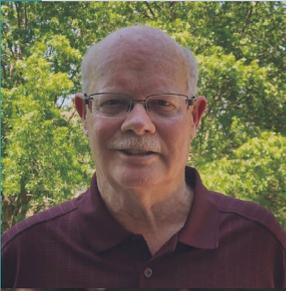
All of this happens not because we are strong but because we surrender. Our prayer is to be more like Jesus. We choose daily to set our affections above where Christ is seated and allow Him to be the one who gets glory and praise from our lives.

### **PRAYER**

Father, in the name of your Son whom we find life in and live for, make us more and more like Jesus. Let the same love that we have received from You compel our hearts to live for You fully and freely. Father, my prayer is that we love You most. More than anything or anyone else. That we seek You first and find delight in knowing more about You each day as we live in Your love, by your grace, through Your Spirit. May our actions be an accurate reflection of the intimate time we have spent with You. Let love overflow from our hearts to our hands and to those we are called to serve. Father, may we live in love and learn from You always. In Jesus name, Amen.

*Jamaal Watson  
Wichita, Kansas*

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