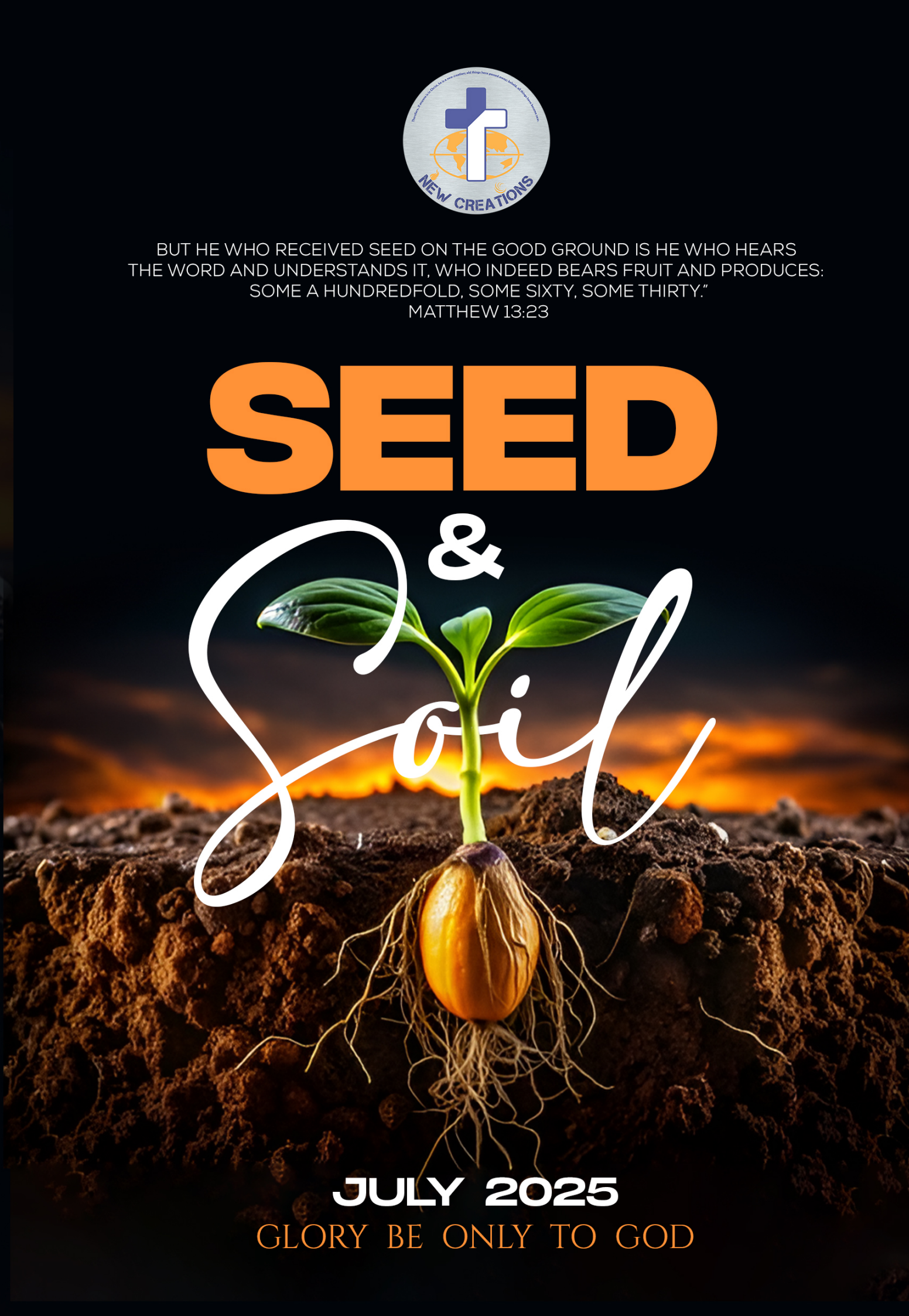
NEW CREATIONS

BUT HE WHO RECEIVED SEED ON THE GOOD GROUND IS HE WHO HEARS
THE WORD AND UNDERSTANDS IT, WHO INDEED BEARS FRUIT AND PRODUCES:
SOME A HUNDREDFOLD, SOME SIXTY, SOME THIRTY."
MATTHEW 13:23

SEED & Soil



JULY 2025

GLORY BE ONLY TO GOD



The Christian life is a journey of daily surrender, quiet reflection, and meaningful growth. Just as a seed needs good soil to take root and bear fruit, our spiritual lives flourish when we consistently nurture our relationship with God. That's the purpose behind this tiny devotional guide, "Seed and Soil" — a daily devotional crafted to help us grow in spiritual maturity, remain deeply committed to Christ, and stay connected to the Giver of every good gift.

Each devotion in this book is designed to plant God's Word in the soil of our hearts, encouraging us to reflect, respond, and realign our lives with His calling. It is our prayer that these reflections will not only strengthen your personal walk with God but also stir you to recognise and use your God-given gifts to touch the lives of others.

Jonathan, a young man, the Author and Editor of this Seed and Soil, is someone deeply committed to God's call — one who carries a sincere burden to write not for personal gain, but to edify and bless others. With a passion to see people grow and a heart devoted to serving, these writings are a humble offering sown in faith, with the hope that they will bear fruit in the lives of many.

May every page be a moment of encounter — a seed of truth planted in willing soil — and may your spiritual journey be enriched, renewed, and realigned as you draw closer to Him each day.

Rev. J. Stanley Manickaraj,
Senior Pastor,
AG Church, Vellore.

The First Martyr

- Full of faith and Holy Spirit
- Overflowing with God's grace and power
- Walking in wisdom
- Courageous and fearless
- Radiating the light of Christ



- Eyes fixed on the eternal
- Fully dependent on God
- A heart that forgives
- Martyr
- God's Word was rooted in his heart

In **Acts 6,** Stephen was chosen among seven men to serve, described as **"a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit."** What made **Stephen fearless and able to forgive even as he was being stoned?**

As we read **Acts 7,** we see Stephen boldly recounting the stories of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and the people of Israel. This shows that he was a man with **God's Word** deeply **rooted in his heart.** His faith came from **knowing/hearing the Word.** His wisdom came from the **fear of the Lord.** He knew whom he served, understood his calling, and saw with **spiritual eyes that beheld Jesus standing at the right hand of God.** It was the Holy Spirit who empowered Stephen to love his persecutors, forgive without bitterness, and surrender his spirit with peace.

Even for the simple task of serving food, the early church chose men filled with the Holy Spirit. **This invites us to reflect deeply on our walk with God. So we must ask ourselves:** Do we have the **Holy Spirit** as Stephen did? Do people **see Jesus in us?** Are we **bearing fruit, loving others, and forgiving** those who wrong us?

If not, let us meditate on His Word and allow it to take root within us. Let us seek His presence and ask the Holy Spirit to fill us, so that, like Stephen, **we too may be transformed and serve Christ boldly and fearlessly.**

Obedience

Most of us first learned obedience as children, often when we were mischievous. We were taught to follow directions to avoid trouble or to meet expectations.

But does the Bible speak of obedience in the same way?
Deuteronomy 11:1 says, **"Love the Lord your God and keep his requirements, his decrees, his laws, and his commands always."** This demonstrates that biblical obedience is not merely about adhering to rules, but about **embracing love**. Similarly, **1 John 5:3** says, **"This is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome."** When rooted in love, obedience becomes a joyful response, not a heavy obligation.

So, how do we develop that kind of obedience? Through **faith**. Trusting God leads naturally to obedience. Faith isn't blind; it's **confident trust in God's character and promises**, even when we can't see the full picture. As **James 2:17** reminds us, **"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."**

Faith, love, and obedience are deeply connected. If one is missing, the others cannot stand. Obedience isn't about earning favour; it's about responding to God's grace with a willing heart. We're not expected to obey by our strength. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live in obedience, even when it's difficult.

Let us choose to **obey, not out of fear, but out of love**, trusting God's wisdom above our own and walking faithfully with Him every day.

An Overflowing Vessel

"She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her, and she kept pouring."- 2 Kings 4:5

In this story, a widow comes to the prophet Elisha in desperation. Her husband has died, and a creditor is coming to take her sons as slaves. Elisha asks her, "What do you have in your house?" She replies, **"Nothing except a small jar of olive oil."**

How many times have we felt like that, like a **small jar of oil? Not enough. Not important. Not worthy.**

But God does not ask for greatness. **He asks for willingness.** And if we offer even what little we have, He can do something miraculous. **That small jar of oil kept pouring and pouring, filling every vessel brought to it because God was behind it.**

He is the same God who used five loaves and two fish to feed five thousand. The same God who can take our **"not enough" and make it more than enough.**

There is no limit to what God can do through a **life surrendered to Him.** The vessels only stopped filling when there were no more vessels to be filled. Imagine how many lives **He can touch through us if we just keep bringing Him our hearts.**

So do not hold back. **Bring your small jar and offer it to Him in faith.** Watch as He causes it to overflow. As it overflows, those in need will be satisfied through you, and they will begin to experience His love and power, by Him, through you.

God Turns Graves Into Gardens

Beloved, **Psalm 126** is a song of triumphant joy: **"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed."**

This psalm is not just a memory; **it is a promise of what God still does.**

God brought restoration to Israel through **three divine expeditions,** each reflecting your journey of healing in body, mind, and purpose.

First came Zerubbabel, who led the people to rebuild the Temple. It wasn't just stone and wood; **it was the heart of worship.** Like the temple, **God begins His restoration in you by rebuilding your broken spirit.** Your body, worn by pain or sin, He reconstructs as His holy dwelling. Your healing is His blueprint.

Then came Ezra, bringing the **Book of the Law, the Word.** Not just rules, but the living Word, Jesus Christ. The Word washes your mind, rewires your thoughts, and renews your identity. Through Scripture, you don't just remember who God is; **you remember who you are in Him.**

Finally, Nehemiah rebuilt the wall. After healing the heart and mind, **God surrounds you with protection,** not to isolate, but to defend. Even in your weakness, **He becomes your shield and refuge.**

Psalm 126 says, **"Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy."**Maybe you have been weeping. Maybe your dreams are buried.

But our God turns graves into gardens. Wait on Him. **The God who restored Zion is restoring you.**

Love Equals Obedience

John 21:15 *When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."* **16** *Again, Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."* **17** *The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?"He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."*

As we reflect on the passage from **John 21:15 to 17**, why did Jesus ask Peter the same question three times? Was it to make Peter feel ashamed? Or to imply that Peter's love wasn't genuine? No. Jesus wasn't dissatisfied with Peter's affection—**He was pressing deeper.** Each time Jesus asked, "Do you love me?", He immediately followed it with a command. **"Feed my lambs." "Take care of my sheep." "Feed my sheep."**

If, the second time, Peter had replied, "Yes, Lord, I love You—and I will feed Your sheep," perhaps Jesus wouldn't have needed to ask a third time. It's easy to rhapsodise—to say, "Jesus, I love You. I'll die for You!" These words flow freely. But true love is not proven by passionate declarations alone. **It is proven through obedience.** The real answer to Jesus' question "Do you love Me?" lies not in our words, **but in our willingness to fulfil His commands.**

We cannot protect God or provide for Him as He does for us. We cannot repay Him with gifts or strength. But there is one thing we can offer: **Obedience**. So the next time you say, "Jesus, I love You," make sure you're also ready to say, **"Yes, Lord, I obey You." Because in the kingdom of God, to love is to obey.**

Godly Character

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." Titus 2:7

Believers are called to be examples of good works in every aspect of life. Our lives must reflect the truth we proclaim, walking in a manner worthy of the calling we've received.

1. **Believers are called** to be examples of good works in every aspect of life.
2. **Sound doctrine** must be upheld with consistency and conviction.
3. **Sincerity in faith** demonstrates the authenticity of our relationship with God.
4. **Gravity** reflects the seriousness and commitment required in Christian living.
5. **Integrity in all matters** builds trust and honours God.
6. **Teaching and mentoring** others in faith are vital responsibilities for every believer.
7. **Words and actions** must align to reflect the light of Christ.
8. **Godly character** includes humility and respect for others.
9. **Older believers** should guide the younger in righteous living.
10. **Faithfulness in small and great matters** reveals true stewardship.
11. **Living as an example** draws others closer to the knowledge of Christ.
12. **The grace of God** teaches us to deny ungodliness and to live righteously. Keep the faith. Victory belongs to the Lord

Let's pray and ask God to help us reflect Him in all that we do, so that we may be a light to those who are in darkness."

Why Do You Love Me So Much, God?

Tears rolled down my face one ordinary day after a long, exhausting Day. Three more hours passed, and my heart felt burdened. I was afraid to begin something I had always dreamed of. Doubts clouded my mind. Will it ever happen? Am I even capable?

I felt helpless and hopeless. But after all the crying, something unexpected settled in peace. It didn't make sense at the moment, yet it was undeniably there. In the quiet, **God whispered a promise from Revelation 21:4: "God shall wipe away all tears."**

When I sought encouragement from the world, **it fell short.** But He, the One who knows me by name, met me. **He called me His chosen.** We serve a God who loves us not because **we're perfect, but because He is love.**

It still amazes me **why You would love even me, Lord?** And His answer remains: **"Just surrender. I'll take care of everything."**

He has never put me to shame. **His grace carried me when I couldn't walk.** That same grace strengthens me to run for Him. So, in response to this undeserved, unrelenting love, I want to serve and glorify Him with all I have and with all I do.

The **least and most powerful thing** we can do is to give our all to the One who gave everything for us. **This is what true submission looks like.** It is a humble and powerful act of saying, **"I cannot do it on my own; You are the One who will do it for me."** As we patiently wait for the Lord to act, we begin to experience His **love, grace and favour** more deeply.

Walking In Purity

Psalm 119:9

"How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word."

This verse from **Psalm 119** speaks directly to the deep desire to live a **life of integrity and holiness, especially during youth**, a season filled with choices, challenges, and influences. The psalmist poses a timeless question and immediately answers it: the **key to a pure life is living according to God's Word.**

Purity is not simply about avoiding sin; it's about **intentionally pursuing God's standards.** When we root ourselves in Scripture, it **transforms the way we think, act, and respond.** God's Word becomes the guiding light that helps us navigate through temptation, peer pressure, and confusion with clarity and confidence **(Psalm 119:105)**.

In a culture that often blurs the lines between right and wrong, the **Bible remains a steady foundation.** It speaks truth into the noise and shows us how to live with purpose, respect, and righteousness. True purity flows from a heart aligned with God, a heart that listens, obeys, and seeks Him daily.

God's Word is not just a guidebook, **it's our protection and our strength.** When we live by it, we walk in purity and grow closer to the One who calls us to be holy.

You Are Mine

We face countless battles, day by day
Some loud, some buried deep away.
The world throws names and labels that sting,
And we start to wonder, **“Am I worth anything?”**
Our hearts grow heavy,
We question our worth.
“Am I wrong?” we silently cry,
“Is life even worth living, or just passing by?”
We withdraw, we isolate, **searching for peace,**
Thinking that loneliness might bring some release.
But that weight you carry, all that ache
Is it truly yours, or just a heart that breaks?

Matthew 11:28 says, **“Come to Me, all you weary and wait, All who are burdened, and I will give you rest.”** Not just comfort, but peace. The wounds left by names they cut so deep, they haunt your days and steal your sleep.

But hear the truth in **Isaiah 43:1: “I have called you by name; you are mine.”** What a joy, a privilege to be claimed. By the One who made all this universe. Still, doubting if you’re worth the light? Still, stuck in labels that shadow your sight?

Matthew 6:34 reminds your soul: “**Do not worry about tomorrow, I’m in control.”** Let go of the burden that’s crushing your chest, and let **GOD hold you, give you His rest.**

Embracing God's Unhurried Work

Feeling stalled? Like you're falling behind while others race ahead? Breathe. God isn't tapping His foot, waiting for you to reach some "usable enough" status. He doesn't grade your prayers or your faith to take you to the next level. What we impatiently label "falling behind," **He often calls being rooted. (Psalm 1:3) You are not behind. You are becoming.**

We resist that word–rooted. It feels painfully slow. We are prone to comparison, chasing visible proof of progress. But look at God's pattern: **Jesus spent thirty years in obscurity before His public ministry. Moses waited forty years in the wilderness before leading. David was anointed king long before he sat on the throne. (Luke 3:23, Acts 7:30, 1 Samuel 16:12-13)**

God was never in a hurry. Why? **He was building something invisible yet essential: character, intimacy, resilience.**

Isaiah 43:5 whispers of treasures found in the darkness. These are essential discoveries God entrusts to you precisely when you feel unseen. **"I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord..."**

Some roots grip tight when no one is watching. God is walking alongside you, exactly as you are. He is fully present with the one reading this devotional.

If you are someone grieving **"lost time,"** like me, embrace this phase. **This sacred slowness is where true becoming begins.** Rest in His unhurried, faithful work.

Grace In The Daily Bread

Many of us pray as routine **"Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11).** Yet, how often do we grasp their profound weight? This isn't merely an elegant phrase; it's a posture of the soul. It's the humble admission that we don't know it all, we can't control it all, and we desperately need an all-knowing, all-providing God.

We crave the full blueprint, the start, the finish, every detail mapped out. We demand quick answers, straining to pull tomorrow's worries into today's burdens. **But God, in His perfect wisdom, operates differently**. Like the manna given to the Israelites fresh each morning, just enough for that single day, never stockpiled **(Exodus 16:4)** His provision is daily, specific, and perfectly timed.

He rarely hands us everything in advance, not because He withholds, but because **He invites us into the moment-by-moment reliance.** His "bread" may surprise us. It could be unexpected strength instead of removed struggle, unexplainable peace amidst unresolved tension, or simple provision where we begged for abundance. **He sees our hidden longings, our quiet fears, the discouragement that weighs us down. He tenderly collects every tear (Psalm 56:8).**

Every dawn is a fresh invitation: **"Trust Me for this day." Trust Him with this moment. Trust Him with this breath. Trust Him for today's bread. As surely as the sun rises, His mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23)**. Take the bread He offers now. It is exactly what you need.

Metamorphosis

We live in a fractured reality. Pain, division, and despair stain our headlines, communities, and hearts. Yet into this darkness, God speaks a defiant truth: **He has the power to heal what is shattered, and He chooses us as His healing agents.**

Crafted in His image, we weren't made to merely exist, but to **reflect His light and goodness** to a wounded creation. Too often, however, we resemble disconnected bulbs, holding potential light but lacking power. To illuminate the world, **we must first be transformed.**

As **Romans 12:2** urges, **"Do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."** The Greek word **"metamorphoō"** implies a radical **metamorphosis**, like a caterpillar dissolving into a butterfly. True change isn't cosmetic; **it's a surrender of our deepest brokenness to God's renewing fire.**

We cannot radiate His light while harbouring darkness: bitterness, regret, or hollow obsessions that promise fulfilment but leave us empty. God's promise cuts deeper than behaviour modification: **"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you."** He breathed His Spirit into locked-away places, healing wounds, dissolving fears, and igniting fresh purpose.

Authentic transformation reshapes our words, choices, and actions. It's seen in patience with the difficult, kindness toward the hurting, and hope amid despair. This metamorphosis is gradual. Some days we stumble. Some days we hide. **Yet God persists, renewing us "day by day."**

So, beloved, shine. Keep shining. Keep yielding. Keep being transformed.

The Instant Sanctuary

One moment: crushing weight on your chest, heart racing, mind-melting. Every step feels like a trapdoor, plunging you into the next crisis. Chaos reigns. Then, you pause. **A worship song starts. A mumbled prayer is more a helpless cry than polished words. A Bible verse catches your eye.** A sudden wave of calm washes over your soul. A spark of inexplicable joy ignites within. The oppressive heaviness? It dissipates like morning mist before the rising sun (**Psalm 30:5**).

This is the undeniable power of God's presence. He doesn't always rearrange our circumstances. Often, the storm still rages. **But His presence changes us in the midst of it (Isaiah 43:2).** He quiets the frantic restlessness **(Psalm 94:19).** He whispers: **"You are held. You are loved. You are not alone" (Isaiah 41:10, Deuteronomy 31:8).**

No eloquence is required. **No perfect words (James 4:8). Just the raw cry, "Abba, I need you!"** And He draws near not with cold judgment, but with the tender comfort of a Father **(Romans 8:15).** He meets us precisely where we shatter **(Psalm 34:18).**

This nearness isn't just emotional relief; it's an encounter with Reality, knowing who He is **(Psalm 46:1, Psalm 121:1)** and who we are in Him: **seen, secure, beloved.**

You don't need perfection. Just one song. Just one verse. Just one honest prayer. **His nearness changes us, reorienting our hearts, restoring our breath, reminding us we are eternally safe.** Whisper His name. Feel the shift begin. **His presence is your peace.**

Peace Unshakeable

Life often feels like navigating treacherous seas. Work pressures mount, daily responsibilities rush like relentless waves, health concerns loom, and relationships grow strained. Our hearts grow heavy, burdened by anxieties we can barely name. Our minds become restless seas themselves. In the tumult, a desperate cry rises: **I need God's peace to settle me, to quiet the deafening noise, to anchor me firmly in His presence.**

We instinctively crave calm waters, believing peace means the absence of conflict or trouble. Yet Scripture reveals a profound truth: **God's peace is not dependent on calm circumstances; it's a divine gift that transcends them.** It's a deep, abiding stillness within the storm, knowing that He reigns even when chaos seems to rule.

Before facing the ultimate storm of the cross, Jesus said: **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).**

The prophet Isaiah gives the key: **"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you" (Isaiah 26:3).**

The Apostle Paul echoes this in **Philippians 4:6–7:** when we bring our worries in prayer, **His peace... guards our hearts and minds.**

Friend, are you caught in the storm? Turn your gaze to the One who walks on water. Cling to His promise: **He gives His peace.** He keeps you in perfect peace as you trust Him. His peace is your shelter.

14 July 2025 - Monday

Unshakable Hope

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful." **Hebrews 10:23**

In life's storms when relationships falter, health declines, or uncertainty looms, it's easy to loosen our grip on hope. But the writer of Hebrews reminds us: **"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess."**

Not half-heartedly.

Not just when things are good.

But **unswervingly without wavering**.

This hope isn't rooted in our circumstances, our strength, or even our faithfulness. **It's anchored in God's faithfulness.**

"He who promised is faithful."

When God promises peace, **He gives it.**

When He promises presence, **He stays.**

When He promises eternal life, **He delivers.**

What promise are you clinging to today?

Maybe it's healing.

Maybe direction.

Maybe simply the strength to endure.

Whatever it is, know this: Y**our hope is safe in His hands.** Hold on, He's holding you too.

15 July 2025 - Tuesday

Answered Prayer

Sometimes our heartfelt prayers receive a **"yes"** from God. Sometimes, it's a **"no."** And at other times, the answer is simply **"not yet."**

Have you ever heard someone quote today's Scripture, saying that **God will give us the desires of our hearts?** Some interpret this to mean that a Christian can ask for anything—health, money, possessions, you name it, and get exactly what they want. **But this passage teaches something much deeper.**

Notice the first part of **Psalm 37:4: "Delight yourself in the Lord."** A woman or man who truly delights in the Lord will naturally have the desires of their heart, **because their heart desires only God and His will.**

Our Father takes no pleasure in the things of this world—things that will all wither and die. **Neither should we.**

So, what pleases God? He loves it when we witness for Him, live righteously, and instruct others in His Word. If those are the things we truly desire, won't He grant us the **"desires of our heart"** by letting us see people brought into His kingdom?

Won't we then have a life rich in spiritual growth?

So, let's begin to grow more in Christ and take delight in His Word and presence. As we draw closer to Him, He gently begins to shape our hearts. Over time, **our desires shift from being self-centred to Christ-centred.** When we truly find our joy in Him, He aligns our hearts with His purpose, and **what we long for begins to reflect His will.**

Guard Your Heart

Proverbs 4:23 states, **"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."** This verse emphasizes the utmost importance of guarding our hearts, it is to be our highest priority.

As human beings, we have a **natural tendency to fall into sin.** To stand firm and remain protected, we must guard our hearts with the Word of God and seek His grace and mercy. Without His Word and mercy, we are defenceless and vulnerable.

Our heart is the source from which all our actions and behaviours originate. Everything we do is influenced by what **we allow into our hearts, be it good or bad.** What we see, hear, meditate on, and believe ultimately shapes our decisions and actions.

The phrase **"above all else"** underscores how critical this command is. Guarding our hearts is not just a suggestion; **it is a vital instruction** that must be our primary concern.

This verse is a reminder to be intentional about what we allow into our thoughts, what we speak, and how we act. These things are not separate from our hearts; they are a direct expression of them. If our hearts are unguarded, our lives become susceptible to negative influences and ungodly decisions.

Let us therefore be mindful, watchful, and prayerful, allowing only what is godly, true, and pure to take root in our hearts. In doing so, we not only protect ourselves but also live lives that honour God.

A Divine Invitation To Revelation

Jeremiah 33.3 "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."

This verse is more than a simple promise; it is a profound invitation from God Himself to enter into a deep communion with him. **It is a verse of invitation, promise and revelation.**

It teaches us that **God is not distant or silent,** but near and willing to speak. He reminds us that **He is listening to us.** This reminds us that prayer is not a spiritual ritual, **but a personal conversation with God.**

He promises to answer us. He doesn't just listen to answers. Even in times of suffering, sorrow, temptations or being broken, His promise stands firm. **He will respond in His way, in His time, for our Good.**

This reminds us that our comprehension and knowledge are limited, **but God's wisdom is limitless.** And most importantly, **He is willing to share it with those who seek Him earnestly at free of cost!!!** God has things to show us that we cannot yet imagine.

So, let us call to Him, listen to what He wants to say, and trust Him with all our hearts. As the Bible says, **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.** Fearing Him is not about being afraid, but about knowing who He truly is. We come to know Him by reading and meditating on His Word and spending time in His presence. This will eventually increase our faith, because the Bible says that **faith comes by hearing His Word.** Through faith, **we begin to grow closer to God, we begin to walk with Him,** and He will start to **reveal great and unsearchable things we do not know.**

Clean Vessels

As beloved children of God, we all desire to be used for His glory. But **how often do we realize that God can only fully use us if we are clean and holy?** Can we cook with a dirty vessel? **Even broken vessels can be used but not unclean ones.** They must first be cleansed.

Jesus said, **"You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence" (Matthew 23:25).** He continued, **"First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean" (Matthew 23:26).** Are we clean both inside and out? Many of us focus only on external appearance, but **Jesus reminds us: that inward cleansing leads to true purity.**

The Gospel shows that Jesus cleansed lepers, the lame, and the sick by forgiving their sins. **Sin separates us from God** and opens the door for the enemy to harm our lives.

Yet our merciful God has made a way. **"In Him, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).** Jesus shed His blood so we may be cleansed within. Every word we speak, every act of kindness we offer, flows from a heart that has been made clean. **We are the temple of the living God (2 Corinthians 6:16).**

As God said in **Jeremiah 32:38: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."** Let our lives reflect His holiness and love.

19 July 2025 - Saturday

En route To En Gedi

There is this place in the **Bible, En gedi - a place full of green grass, quiet waters, clusters of dates, vineyards & olive groves.** This spot is a haven where flocks gather to graze & rest alongside their shepherd. Therefore, En gedi is called as **"The spring of the kid goat"**

Fleeing from King Saul's pursuit, David sought refuge in the **Judean Desert (the Killer desert),** which is full of rugged caves, scorching heat, sandstorms & deadly valleys.

Weary from his desert journey, David walked on, craving relief from his thirst. As he approached a tranquil oasis, he spotted a quiet waterfall with still waters. A goat rushed into drink, with a shepherd close behind with a stick.

As David gazed at the goat, realisation dawned on him. If a goat has a shepherd to guide it to still waters and correct its paths with a stick, **who guides me when I walk through the valley? Who is MY shepherd?**

David's spiritual eyes opened....and he began to sing

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD...."

Your life might seem like the **Judean Desert,** but remember **God is leading you to En gedi,** where your green pastures await....

Now, rewind Psalm 23

Redeemed and Restored

"Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins." Psalm 130:7–8

The psalm begins by urging Israel to place their hope in the Lord. This verse calls for a complete and unwavering trust in God. It highlights His nature **as a God full of mercy, grace, and redemption,** offering not just forgiveness, but **complete deliverance from sin**.

It gives us this powerful assurance: **God doesn't merely forgive**; He also **acts to deliver His people** from the consequences of their sins. His love is not partial or momentary; it is **unfailing**, and His redemption is **full and final**.

So now, it's our time

To walk righteously.

To place all our hope in the Lord.

To taste His unwavering love.

To receive His redeeming grace that **sets us free from all our sins.**

Let your heart rest in this truth today: You are never beyond His reach. His love is steadfast. His redemption is sure. But one thing you need to do is call upon His name, surrender yourself fully to Him, and accept Him as your personal Saviour.

In Spirals?

The average person has about 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts per day.

95% are the same repetitive thoughts as the day before, and about 80% are negative!!

How do you feel after reading this fact about the human mind? We all deal with these battles every day in our minds, isn't it? And if you've sinned, whether the gravest or the smallest, it mars us and eats us up. Are you able to relate to King David when he says, **"And my sin is always before me." Psalm 51:3.**

Doesn't this relate to the above-given fact of the nature of our thoughts?? It's negative and repetitive, i.e. my sins ever before me!!

But Jesus came to deliver me and you so much more than the nature of our thoughts.

He came to deliver me from that very sin that keeps me from being who He really made me to be, and that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly and be reunited with Him.

Do you feel trapped in the spiral of your past sins? Remember this: **Hebrews 10:17** says, "**Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."** So, submit yourself to Him, confess your sins to Him, and He will forgive you. Ask for His grace and strength, which will empower you to overcome a life of sin.

Do Not Give Up

"And let us not grow weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." - Galatians 6:9

A woman volunteered to lead a small youth group at her church. At first, only two teenagers came, and they hardly paid attention. Week after week, she prepared lessons, prayed, and created fun activities. Still, the group stayed small, and some days, no one showed up. **She felt like quitting, thinking her efforts were useless.**

But she remembered **Galatians 6:9:** ***"Let us not become weary in doing good…"*** and chose to stay faithful.

After a year, one of the teens brought a friend. Then another. Soon, the group grew to twenty. The original two teens started helping lead. Eventually, several of them dedicated their lives to serving others, and some even became youth leaders themselves.

Years later, one of them told her, **"If you had quit, I might never have known God's love. You showed me what it means to live with purpose."** Her faithfulness bore fruit in God's perfect timing.

This story illustrates how **patience and perseverance,** particularly in spiritual endeavours, can transform lives even when progress appears slow. **The harvest may be delayed, but it is guaranteed for those who remain faithful.**

Your prayers, acts of kindness, generosity, and sacrifices are not wasted. Even if no one applauds you, **God is keeping a record.**

For The Sake Of His Great Name

I Samuel 12:22

For the Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people.

How many times have **we rejected Christ in thought, word and deed?** We can agree that we have run out of all excuses for our shortcomings, and **God has all sovereign authority to wipe us clean off the face of the earth!** Then why in the world doesn't he do it??

The **prophet Samuel,** when referring to the Israelites **(I Samuel 12:22)**, says **God accepts them, because of His great name and because He was pleased to make them His own.** The great name of our God includes that of being a **promise keeper.** He had promised the Israelites He wouldn't leave them, and through Christ, we are promised that for all who believe, **He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the coming of Christ Jesus.**

This Sovereign God of the universe, who holds all power and can do whatever He pleases with His creation, **chose to love and nurture rather than destroy and recreate.** Even when we felt imprisoned or lost in a deserted place, **His love and helping hand were with us.** It is **His grace that has carried us** this far without letting us be destroyed.

So, how much more can we trust Him? How much more should we **surrender ourselves to Him each day**, who loves us because of His great name?

Seek Divine Wisdom Daily

The Bible reminds us in **James 1:5, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”**

Each day presents **choices, challenges, and moments** that require more than human knowledge; they require divine wisdom.

Wisdom can never be connected with knowledge of the world because its purpose comes directly from above without any mediation or tweaks like worldly knowledge. The Bible clearly says that **it will be granted to His children.**

God invites us to come to Him, not with fear, but with faith, trusting that He delights in guiding His children. **His wisdom** is not confusing or harsh, **but pure, peaceable, gentle, and full of mercy.**

I was always told to read a chapter in **Proverbs** daily due to its relatable number of chapters with that of the days of a month(almost),31. It's amazing how something so **divine as wisdom is being granted to mere mortals like us,** and it is totally our responsibility to gain it the right way and use it with confidence and faith.

As it says in Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." This fear is not about being afraid. It is about knowing Him more, understanding who He is, what He has done, what He is doing, and what He is going to do. It is about truly recognising the One we worship.

So, start now, ask of him and don't be like the fools that King Solomon has mentioned in his book, the Proverbs. Have a great day!

True Alignment Begins With Reverence

Inspired by **Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."**

In our modern world, everyone is searching for balance, direction, and purpose. We want to live **"aligned"** with our goals, with others, with our values. But the Bible tells us there is only one way to true alignment: **it begins with reverence for the Lord.**

Reverence Is the Foundation:
The **"fear of the Lord"** is not about being terrified of God; it's about **holding Him in awe, giving Him the honour and weight He deserves.** When we revere Him, we acknowledge that His ways are higher than ours. Without this reverence, we will build our lives on human logic, pride, and shifting values.

Alignment Requires a True North:
Just as a compass aligns to magnetic north, **our hearts must align to God's character.** Reverence anchors us. It keeps us from drifting into compromise or confusion. When we revere God, His Word becomes our guide, not our opinion or the culture around us.

Wisdom Flows from Worship:
Reverence leads to wisdom. When we honour God first, He orders our thoughts, priorities, and actions.

True alignment isn't found by accident; **it's cultivated by a heart bowed in worship and a life yielded to Him.** Do I honour God with my decisions, or just include Him when convenient?

The Peace Of God

Have you ever felt **“too anxious”** for something you shouldn’t feel that way? Most of us grow **impatient** with the situation that surrounds us. Staying on edge has become everyone’s cup of tea, as we tend to handle things in the worst way possible. **God sees things differently** from us, which we fail to acknowledge, and hence the **‘impatient’** mind.

Philippians 4:6 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God”. Every situation in life demands **calmness**, which helps you think clearly for a better understanding of the situation. Here, through this verse, **Paul gives us a glimpse** of how people feel when they undergo hardships in life. Let’s take a moment and think for ourselves, are we keeping everything, **even the smallest thing, in prayer?** Are we thanking God back for all the wonders he has done? Prayer is the **ultimate weapon** that we need to wield to **handle our worldly anxieties**.

Philippians 4:7 “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”. Surrendering every little situation to God will provide us with a better understanding and peace of mind. This allows God to work through us in difficult situations. And when he takes matters into his own hands, we can simply watch his miraculous wonders as in **Exodus 14:14.**

Prayer: Our loving heavenly father, we thank you for all the guidance that you have given in our lives. God, help us to remain patient and handle things from a different perspective. Let your peace surround our hearts and help us be grateful for the things you’ve done for us. **Amen**.

A Cup Overflowing With Blessings

As **Psalm 23** comes to a close, the psalmist paints a scene that is both dynamic and ironic: a lavish banquet is prepared right in front of his enemies.

Imagine God laying out a feast before you in the presence of adversity and fear. God gives abundantly in the middle of hardship. **“You anoint my head with oil,”** the psalmist adds, **“my cup overflows.”**

Anointing with oil demonstrates divine **favour and strength.** It's like a warrior receiving a blessing before battle. Every obstacle and doubt is met with God's presence. The psalmist’s cup isn’t just full, it’s running over! In God, **we have blessings that overflow into the lives of others.**

The psalmist concludes with wholehearted trust:

"Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” -Psalm 23:6

God's goodness and love are our constant companions, following us everywhere we go. **God’s goodness and love surround us and lead to the perfect presence of our Shepherd, forever.** There, we will live **"in the house of the Lord."** Now and forever, we are always welcome in His presence.

Trusting God In Prayer

2 Chronicles 20:12 captures King Jehoshaphat's humble prayer: **"We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."** This simple yet profound statement reflects deep trust in God through prayer.

When we face challenges, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and unsure of what steps to take. **Yet Jehoshaphat's prayer reminds us that admitting our limitations and choosing to trust God is a powerful act of faith.**

His words reflect vulnerability before God, a humble acknowledgement of his lack of understanding, and a complete dependence on God's wisdom and guidance. **He accepted his weakness** while recognising what God can do and whom he serves. He was not self-dependent; he was fully dependent on **Jehovah Jireh**, the God who provides. He surrendered himself and his situation completely to God.

Such vulnerability **opens space for God to move.** When we stop striving to control every outcome and surrender our uncertainty to Him, **we invite His perfect will to unfold in our lives.**

Trusting God in prayer lifts the burden of figuring everything out on our own. It brings freedom and peace, reminding us that God is sovereign and always at work for our good.

Let our prayers be marked by humility, honesty, and hope. May we fix our eyes on God, just as Jehoshaphat did, confident that His faithfulness and goodness will carry us through whatever lies ahead.

Hold On To What's True

Reading Scripture is vital to our intimacy with God. God's Word is our weapon. **It's alive, active, and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).**

And when we hide Scripture in our hearts, **it helps us battle the forces of evil.** We have an enemy, and the **last thing** he wants us to do is trust God and His Word.

Our spiritual enemy wants to keep us in a place of doubt and insecurity. But when we know who we are, we can confidently demolish every lie that distracts us. **Just like Jesus did, we can use Scripture to remind ourselves of the truth and fight back against the devil's schemes.**

Think through some of the lies you've believed. Maybe it's "I'm a failure, I'll never do anything right," or "God doesn't care about me, it's why these bad things happen." **It's easier to entertain lies when we allow them to become a part of us.**

But once you recognise the lies you've internalised, you're halfway to victory. **God gave us His Word so that we could know the truth, and it's His truth that sets us free.**

So, let us begin to meditate on His Word and allow it to take root in us, so that we may be set free and begin to bear fruit for Him. As we do this, we will become a light to others and begin to lead those who are in darkness into the light.

30 July 2025 - Wednesday

Unity With Others In Christ

“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:1-3

Unity is more than a good idea; **it's a divine calling.** Writing from prison, Paul urges believers to live in a way that reflects their calling in Christ. Why? **Because we’re not meant to walk alone.** The body of Christ is made up of many members, each unique, yet called to live as one.

Paul reminds us there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all (vv. 4–6). Unity doesn’t mean sameness; **it means love in diversity.**

God calls us to protect unity through:

- ➤ **Humility** – putting others first.
- ➤ **Gentleness** – letting kindness guide strength.
- ➤ **Patience** – giving space and grace to others.
- ➤ **Love** – staying committed, even when it's hard.
- ➤ **Effort** – actively working to maintain peace.

Unity is a powerful witness to the world that we belong to Christ.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for calling me into Your family. Help me reflect on Your grace. Teach me to be humble, patient, and loving. Strengthen me to protect the unity You’ve created. May I walk in peace with my brothers and sisters. Amen.

The Mission Of God

All of our lives are spent on something. Most people spend their days focused on growing a family, building their career, or amassing possessions. While none of those things are necessarily wrong, they can become distractions from our ultimate goal in life.

In the book of Acts, we see **Paul's transformation into Christ.** As a result of meeting Jesus and being **changed by His grace,** Paul spends the rest of his life **preaching the good news of Jesus.** For Paul, God's grace and salvation are so great that **nothing on this earth is as important as God's work.**

Paul says that nothing in his life matters as much as telling others about **God's grace.** His goal in life was to **finish his race well by faithfully** accomplishing as much of the mission of God as possible: **"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."- Acts 20:24**

The mission of God is not opposed to growing families or building careers. **God desires for us to use those opportunities to faithfully** accomplish the mission of God. We can raise families in the way of God, and we can tell our coworkers about God's grace. Any place we find ourselves can be an **opportunity to accomplish the mission of God.**

Take a moment to consider your own life and where you spend your time. **Are you using every opportunity you have to spread the good news of Jesus?** Does your life, like Paul's, point toward God? Consider a few ways that you can begin to change your perspective and live your life on a mission for God.

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