

When it comes to family, it's not uncommon to have a whole mix of emotions. There's so much goodness in God's intention for families and yet, we find broken people who make messy, complicated families. Often times, we need a shift in our perspective to remind us to look to Jesus instead of our circumstances and to ask the Holy Spirit to intercede when we're at the end of our rope.

New to daily devotionals? Here are a few tips for this week:

- A word of warning: When we uncover things about our families and relationships, we can often feel tempted to reveal them to others. Remember that not everyone in your family may be ready to hear your realizations. So, go slow and perhaps start by sharing your insights with trusted people outside of your family and always move forward in prayer and communicate with grace.

Monday, January 28th

Read 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Recall Roxann's preaching from the weekend message. When have you realized your own weaknesses? In those moments, how have you found God's grace to be sufficient for you? How might you need to shift your perspective and see Christ's power at work?

What do you think about the idea of delighting in your hardships and difficulties? Does it seem foolish or relieving to you? Why or why not? How would you need to shift your thinking in order to delight in hardships knowing that Christ's power can dwell within those moments?

If Christ's power was fully seen in your life, what impact would that have on your family and relationships? How might God be inviting you further into that picture?

Tuesday, January 29th

Read Psalm 131

*O LORD, my heart is not lifted up;
my eyes are not raised too high;
I do not occupy myself with things
too great and too marvelous for me.
² But I have calmed and quieted my soul,
like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child is my soul within me.
³ O Israel, hope in the LORD
from this time forth and forevermore.*

When do you find yourself resistant to lifting your heart to God? When do you find your eyes are not lifted to Him but rather on the things you are trying to manage and control? Are there things you are holding on to that you need to declare God's power over? Spend some time lifting your heart to the Lord; shifting your troubles and weaknesses from your own hands to God's power.

Where do you find calmness and quietness with the Lord? How have you felt the comfort of God in your identity as His child? How might you seek that out in your daily routine? Where can you find time for calmness and quietness that puts your hope in the Lord?

Wednesday, January 30th

Read Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

What role does prayer play in your life? In what ways could your prayer life grow to help you shift your perspectives?

Do you think prayer could shift your perspective from negative thinking towards the heart of verse 8? What things might God be inviting you to put into practice? What tools, resources or accountability do you need?

Thursday, January 31st

Read Lamentations 3:22-26

*Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.*

²³ *They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.*

²⁴ *I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."*

²⁵ *The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;*

²⁶ *it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.*

Take some space and sit quietly with the Lord. Spend time thanking Him for his compassion and great love—share the things you feel consumed by and one by one, hand them over to the God with confidence that in Him you will not be consumed.

Where do you sense you are waiting for the Lord? How can your posture in waiting be filled with hope and seeking? Where do you see evidence of God as your portion (part of something)?

Friday, February 1st

Read 2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

How might you need to shift your perspective of your timing to God's timing? Do you believe that God will keep His promises? Why or why not? Where do you believe God has been slow with you? How might you shift your perspective to view "slowness" as God's patience?

It's easy to become impatient, waiting for things to be worked out and waiting for God's plan to be finished. How can you remind yourself that in waiting, there is opportunity for more to receive Jesus as Lord? How might that change your perspective of waiting? What purposes might your waiting have?

FAMILY

it's complicated

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