

A tall, white, cylindrical lighthouse stands on a rocky island. The lighthouse has a glass-enclosed lantern room at the top and several windows along its side. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The lighthouse is reflected in the calm water in the foreground.

Guidance

from

The
Light

365 days of encouraging words
by Deborah Lynne

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from
The Light

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Deborah Lynne

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Dedication Page

I dedicate this book in loving memory to my husband, Scott.

Acknowledgment

Thank you Lord for laying this on my heart...to write a devotional, sharing Scripture You put in my heart and opened it wider than it's ever been before. I love You Lord, and I thank You for loving me.

There are other people God used to grow my heart and help give me the desire to read more of the Word and grow closer to God. I'd like to thank them.

The first person that helped me see the Word has all the answers if I'd just open my Bible and start reading was Joyce Meyer. I think one of the biggest things she taught me was, "just because you sit in a garage all day, it doesn't make you a car. Same goes just because you go to church all the time, it doesn't make you a Christian." Beth Moore's teachings also grew my heart and helped me understand the Word for myself. Her teachings helped me grow in my personal relationship with God.

I was saved at an early age of 10 in a denominational church and I was so glad and grateful for them. Still am. It took me many years to learn that some churches have their man-made rules they try to teach us as The Word saying you must do this, you must do that, and if you do the other look out.

I'm glad I learned a lot of the word in my church for forty years. But when God was ready for me to grow (He'd probably been ready, but I was too busy doing what was needed around me to hear Him) He lead me to dig deeper into His Word. While searching, I was introduced to Pastor Larry Stockstill at Bethany Church in Baton Rouge, LA and the Word came truly alive to me. This man is on fire for the Lord. He is so anointed. And he preached so the common man/woman could understand. Brother Larry has retired from preaching and his son Jonathan is now our preacher. Like father, like son! And that family's faith didn't start with Pastor Larry. Brother Roy, Larry Stockstill's dad, started Bethany.

Hearing more truths from the Word led me to Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, James and Betty Robinson, Rick Warren, Joel Osteen, Jeremy Pearsons, Pastor Joseph Prince, and more. I suggest you find teachings of the Word as well as read it for yourself. Don't ever just take someone's word for it just because it sounds good or feels good. God loves us. He wants to help us live an abundant life full of faith, love, joy, hope, and so much more – Ephesians 3:20...more than we could think or imagine. Take time to spend with the Lord everyday. Put Him first and the rest will come.

If I've reflected wrongly on anything these Godly people shared, it is my fault. All the men and women I mentioned have been ordained in the love of God and have given many wonderful messages through their preaching and teaching.

Thank you all!!

Daily Devotional Introduction

Before I begin this devotion, let me say, I love the Lord. He is everything to me. He has been my Best Friend, my Joy, my Hope, my Provider, and my Healer for the past several years.

I'm blessed that He has been my Savior since I was ten years old...that was many years ago. God is good and has been faithful to me over these past fifty plus years, even though I wasn't always living as He would have me. He never gave up on me, and yes, I was saved even during the days or weeks or months that I disappointed Him in my choices. I never lost my Salvation. Don't get me wrong, He was always there ready to be all the things I listed in the first paragraph and more to me, only I didn't allow it. I thought, praise God, I'm saved and that was all that mattered.

I did grow in my knowledge of the Word in the first forty years but not in the way I needed to in order to live in His abundance of life, John 10:10, that He wants to give us all. In the past ten plus years, I've grown in my personal relationship with the Lord. He wants to have a personal relationship with each and every one of us. Those who don't know Him as their Savior, He wants them to come to Him and accept Him as their Savior. Those who have been saved by Him and want to walk in the abundant life He wants to give them need only to grow a personal relationship with Him. I don't mean go to church more often, although the right church that teaches God's mercy and love is a good place to go often. I mean you grow a relationship with Him, by growing your faith, like building your muscles. You grow your faith by the hearing of the Word daily. Yes, you hear it in a church that teaches the Word, but you need to hear it at home too. Do it by opening your Bible daily and reading His Word. It's a letter to you.

In the New Testament you learn about Jesus and His walk on the earth and then the sacrifice He made so that you and I could be saved. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) The rest of the New Testament helps us to know how He wants us to live as believers in His love, love that He gives freely to us so we can walk in the abundance He has for us.

I felt the Holy Spirit in me leading me to write this devotion, hoping to help others see living for the Lord is a great thing...it's an easy thing that we make hard. He loves us so much. His Love is a gift He gives us; we don't earn it. Thank You, Lord for that!! Before we gave our lives to the Lord by accepting Him into our lives and hearts, we were

yet filthy rags, sinners. But once we asked Jesus into our lives, He came into our lives. He forgave us of all of our sins: past, present, and future. And He covered us in His blood. When God looks on us, He sees His Son, His Righteous Son; and we are made His righteous son or daughter by Jesus' blood...the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

Don't misunderstand me. I didn't become perfect and I do make mistakes and I still sin though I try not to. I only know, God has already forgiven me by His Son's finished work on the cross. "It is finished!" Jesus doesn't have to die over and over again to wash away my sins (or yours). AND God doesn't have to sacrifice His Son over and over again to wash away my sins (or yours). I've been made perfect by the covering of Jesus' blood. And although I've been forgiven in advance, I do try not to sin and most every time I do sin I tell the Lord I'm sorry and thank Him for my forgiveness...Sometimes it takes me a while to realize or accept that I did it again. Ha-ha. That's the stubborn flesh still on me and it will be on me while I walk this earth...until God brings me home to Him.

Those who read my fiction books inspired by God, and who read my blog, know me. You know I lost my husband in 2014. I was devastated, but as usual, God brought me through (and is still helping me). I grew closer to Him as I stayed in faith, and stayed in His word. Over the years He has given me much comfort in His Word, and that is what I'm going to be sharing with you in this devotion, things He opened my eyes to as I read His Word, words of encouragement that He gave me I'll be sharing with you.

Thank you for joining me. God bless you!!

Deborah Lynne

** Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is taken from NIV YouVersion. I chose to cap all pronouns that represent God, Jesus Christ, and/or the Holy Spirit. I added bold font, for words that were emphasized in my heart.

January 01 His Promises

Psalm 103:1-6 - Praise the LORD, my soul, all my inmost being, praise His Holy Name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

The LORD is so good! He gives us precious benefits throughout our lives. He forgives our sins. Praise God! He heals all our diseases. Praise God!

He redeems our lives from the pits we dig for ourselves when we make wrong choices. He won't leave you there. He's already defeated Satan, so trust the Lord to do what He has planned for you and all that He promises to you. Do your part by staying in His Word, living the life He wants you to live.

In several Books in the New Testament He tells us how.

He covers us with His love and compassion. And the good thing is, we don't have to earn His love. He gives it to us freely...while we were still knee deep (or over the head) in sin. So just take His love. Bask in it. Love on Him by loving others through Him.

In the above Scriptures He also tells us He likes to satisfy us by giving us our desires. Isn't that awesome.

As we grow in our relationship with Him our desires will grow in line with His will. If there ever is a desire you do not receive, know that He sees the big picture and knows this desire will not bless you. Sometimes when we don't give up asking, He gives it to us anyway, but then we realize, He was right in the beginning...this wasn't for me. You were right, God. Why did I doubt?

He loves you and me. He gives us free choice. Sometimes when we choose incorrectly or desire the wrong thing and He allows it to come to pass, we may have to walk through some repercussions. But know that God only wants the best for you. So if you ask for something and don't receive it right away, it's either not the right timing or not good for you after all. Trust Him to know what's best.

God is so good!!! Have a blessed day!

January 02 **Faith Pleases God**

Hebrews 11:1-6 - *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead. By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. **And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.***

This is the Scripture that opened my eyes to help me see that my faith in Him needed to grow; I needed to know Him more and more. Not just what I learned from my Sunday school teacher, or the pastor, or from my parents. No. I needed to know what God's Word told me.

The verse Hebrews 11:6 was one that struck my heart while doing one of Beth Moore's devotions years ago. It's also the Scripture that turned my life around by helping me read what God wanted me to do while I was living on this earth.

He wanted my faith to be in Him. This pleases Him. He wanted me to know that He makes promises in His Word that He wants to fulfill in my life. He's ready to give them to me for the asking of them. He's ready to answer my prayers. He's ready to bless me as I stand in my faith in Him.

The **ONLY** thing He asked of me was to **believe He exists and know that He wants to bless me...and this pleases Him.** God loves me even when I mess up. He's already forgiven me because He loves me and sent His Son to die for me so that I don't have to. Jesus suffered so I don't have to.

Anyway – from these Hebrew Scriptures on faith, God let me know to please Him I needed to have my faith in Him, knowing my hope is in Him as He faithfully takes care of me, growing me so I can honor Him. He rewards me

daily for my faith in Him.

He wants that from you too. He wants you to put your faith in Him. He wants you to know He is there and wants to take care of you and bless you. So grow in His Word. Put your faith in Him, and let Him reward you daily.

Thank You, Lord.

January 03 **Submit Your Lives To The Lord**

James 4:6-12 - But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will lift you up. Brothers and sisters do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

God tells us in many Scriptures in the New Testament how He wants us to live through the writings of Paul, John, Timothy, James and others.

Before Jesus died on the cross and God raised Him back to life – animal sacrifices were continually made for people's sins. We are blessed to live in these times, times after Jesus' resurrection. Once we've accepted Him as our Savior, we are to try not to live in the flesh. The first few verses in James 4:1-5 show all the confusion we live in when we try to stay living for the world. (I recommend you go read that in your Bible)

God gives us grace, His grace. This is something we didn't earn. He gives it to us freely and gives us more than enough each day.

When we are in mourning, like I've been since my husband's passing, we are to give it to Him so He can turn it into joy. And He will. And He does. But we must do our part by trusting Him. By walking in the path and plans He has for us. He speaks of loving others in several key Scriptures, but in this one He tells us not to judge our brothers and sisters. Do not speak against them, don't

speaking ill of them. God knows their hearts, just like He knows ours. When you see your brother or sister in Christ going through something, acting outside of what you feel God would want, pray for them. Don't judge them. Don't criticize them. And don't talk about them. God loves them. He/she is one of God's, just as you are. So leave the judging up to the One and Only Judge... God our Creator.

Have a blessed day.

January 04 **Watch Your Tongue**

James 3:1-6 - Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

This is so true. Of course! The whole Bible is true. What I'm trying to say, as small as the tongue is, think of the damage it can do. But if we make an effort to let the Lord be The Lord of our lives as well as our mouth, a lot of good could happen. What we say can damage so many people. For those who know you are a believer and you speak things that you know Jesus never said or would say, this hurts your witness. Don't get me wrong. Speaking foul language won't send you to hell, causing you to lose your salvation, but it will keep others from believing your testimony as well as hurt you from receiving your blessings.

God loves us, but He told us to go into the world and share our testimony, not discredit Him. If we aren't reflecting Jesus in our walk or in our speech, we are not helping others to know the true Jesus or His love.

God is good. God is love. God is merciful. Jesus, the Son of God is all of these things as well. As a believer and a follower, think before you speak. Choose your words wisely. Be a blessing to others, not a curse.

This too blesses you. I used to be fast to speak, fast to respond, fast to doubt, fast to defend myself... then God showed me to take time to let Him defend me, let Him speak up for me, let Him prove my innocence. Once I let go and let God take over my tongue and my actions (by starting my day with His Word and asking Him to direct me), my life became so awesome. I'm not saying life is perfect or that I am. It's just when things do happen and I think before I speak, my life stays in peace.

Control your tongue. Give it to God. Let Him lead you.

God bless you.

January 05 **Think On These Things**

Philippians 4:8-9 - 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. 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.

Oh, my gosh! Was this a life changing Scripture in my daily walk? Yes it was! I can remember I had days I wished I could go back home and start over, but what's done is done.

The good thing is you don't have to let days like that come into your life daily. You get to choose. You get to choose happy, sad, joy, sorrow, anger, forgiveness, bad day, good day. It all starts from within. If we hear someone whispering, we can assume it's about us and think the worst. Of course, this would make you unhappy. Right? Right! But the thing is, you don't know what they said, so ASSUME it was something good about you. Don't think on the worst. Think on the best!

How many of you have let a day get ruined by worrying about something you think might happen? Then you find you went all day worrying and it didn't happen, so what a waste of a day.

Scripture tells us to think on what is good, what is noble, what is pure, and more. Notice everything He mentions is a wonderful thing. It's never a bad thing the Lord tells us to think on. It's basically telling you to think like Jesus

did. See the best in everyone. Think good to all and about all, and you will walk in peace.

This peace is the peace that surpasses all understanding. This is the feeling that the Lord puts in you that makes you smile through everything that is happening in your life and when others see it they want what you have. Trust me, everyone wants to be happy. True happiness is walking in peace with God, and walking in peace within you. His peace is a precious gift and He tells you how to have it. Think on what is noble, right, pure, etc. and peace is with you.

Have a great day!

January 06 **Payback Evil With Kindness**

1 Peter 3:8-9 - Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

As a kid we thought, don't get mad, get even. We grow up and sometimes still think that way, but we shouldn't. God forgave us when we were still sinners. We are to forgive as well.

If someone hurts me and I choose to get even, pay back with evil like they did me, then I won't be blessed. That's not a good thing but it is what will happen.

As a child of God, I'm not promised that everyone will treat me special, or treat me right for that matter, but He does tell me in the Scriptures above, if I will repay evil with good, with a blessing, then I may get blessed.

I can tell you from experience, as I've repaid evil with good, I have been blessed. Also let me tell you, in my earlier days when I chose to repay evil with evil, I only hurt myself. A lot of times when someone hurt me, most of the time they weren't even aware of the hurt their words or actions caused me. By me making wrong choices in reaction to my pain, I caused some negative things to come my way...up to even losing a friendship.

His Word tells us to be sympathetic, like-minded, humble...loving one another and we may inherit a blessing. So think before you react. Focus on

Jesus and what He'd have you say or do. Remember there is another Scripture that says *"Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.* Romans 12:19. If you let Him fight your battles, let him judge your enemies, or let him speak to the person who hurt you, you'll walk in the peace and joy of the Lord. It makes for a better day any way you look at it.

God bless you and have a wonderful day loving God and loving others.

January 07 **Wisdom From Heaven**

James 3:17-18 - But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

The book of James gives us so much wisdom in how we should live our lives. I'm sure most of you know James was Jesus' brother.

Wouldn't that be awesome?

Of course to James at the time of growing up it probably wasn't. Jesus did no wrong. I was the baby in the family, so according to my older siblings I was the favorite who never got in trouble. I don't believe it for one minute. I remember whippings and at times being reprimanded. I guess parents learn to pick their battles more wisely with kids as they have more of them.

James didn't come around to Jesus' Words in their early days. I believe it was at His death, or right before it, that woke James up to the truth of everything Jesus had been saying. The whole book of James helped me grow in my walk with the Lord. I hope you take time to study it in its entirety.

That little bit of Scripture, James 3:17-18 holds a mountain of wisdom. It helped me to realize if my thoughts or reactions weren't coming from good thoughts, positive hopes, or from a loving perspective, than I was thinking or reacting wrong.

God is good. His ways are always the good way, the peaceful way, and a way of showing mercy to whoever comes across your path.

Take your wisdom from Heaven today and walk in peace. Have a great one!

January 08

How to Test the Spirit of a Profit

1 John 4:1-4 - Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

This Scripture is great to know and understand. I've had many people come to my door trying to share their belief. I used to wonder how I knew which ones truly believed the Gospel and which ones didn't because most talked a good talk. They always sounded like they loved and cared for me...which as a believer I should love and care for my fellow man. God tells me to.

This Scripture speaks it plainly. If the one who comes to your door wants to share their faith, their belief, with you, ask them if they believe Jesus, the Son of God, has come to the earth in the flesh. If they say, oh he's coming...or Jesus the prophet came, or just talk over your question trying to sidetrack you, then you can believe that person is not there trying to share the Good News, the Gospel.

Jesus is Lord!

Another Scripture tells us if they can't say that, then they are not a believer in Jesus Christ, Son of God. Oh they may believe in God and they may believe in the Ten Commandments and try to follow them, but God sent His Son to earth to save us. He loved us so much that he wanted all of us to be saved so He gave us some One who would save us, if we only believe and accept Him as our Savior. Jesus!

So if you have someone come to your door, see if they speak the truth...if they speak of Jesus Christ. If they don't, then you tell them Jesus Christ has come and He loves them. Maybe they will listen, maybe they won't, but don't hesitate to plant the seed in them.

God bless you.

January 09 **Repay Evil With Kindness**

1 Peter 3:8-9 - Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

It is so easy to let your flesh do the talking when someone makes you mad or insults you. But don't let your flesh rule your body. Sure we have the choice, or the option to respond however we choose, but if we want to live the life of abundance and joy, we are to repay evil with good. It's what His Word tells us as believers to do.

If and when you do this, you will find more joy, and you'll find peace that surpasses all understanding...you'll be filled to overflow every time you let your spirit rule. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying as a believer you won't get mad or get your feelings hurt. What I'm saying, you have a choice how to react. If you choose to react in the flesh, you'll not feel the benefit of gifts God has filled you with. You may not inherit a blessing that He'd planned for you. God wants to bless His children just like you want to bless yours.

Also when we let the flesh rule, the fruit of the Spirit that God has given us, planted inside of us when we gave our lives to Him, will not come to fruition. Those gifts are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. If you'll let the spirit lead you, you'll grow the fruits in you and you will reap a great harvest of the peace that surpasses all understanding. God wants to bless you in abundance. To receive it, walk in His will. Be like-minded (to Jesus), be sympathetic, love one another, and be compassionate and humble.

After reading something one day about how as a believer I should want to walk like Jesus did, talk and act as He did, I opened the Word and read all the RED text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Of course the black print around it I read as well, this way I could understand what Jesus was responding to. Jesus was all those things listed in the Scripture above and more. Take some time out of your life and do what I did. You'll see how he responded. That is how we should respond as well...repaying evil with good.

He is awesome! Have a blessed day!

January 10
Be Fully Persuaded, God Is Able!

Romans 4:19-22 - *Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

To God be the glory!! God makes promises to us as believers. He also makes promises for those who choose not to believe in His Son. And He keeps them all.

In the above Scriptures, Paul told us about God’s promise to Abraham. If Abraham had looked in the natural, he would not have conceived a child at his age. He stood in his faith in God, in God’s promise giving glory to God through it all knowing that what God promises He is able to do.

We need to do the same thing. There are times we as believers know God will help us through this mess, but our faith doesn’t hold as strong as it should. We let the natural influence us and give us doubts. That is why it is so important to stay in the Word. Lean on God. Trust what Jesus did for us was real...and it is finished.

It doesn’t mean we will receive the promise right away. Look how long it took Abraham and Sara. And look how it worked out when they tried to make things happen on their own. We as humans try to fix things, but know God has it all worked out.

Some of you know I’ve been writing since I was 33. That’s when I heard God whisper in my heart that I should be writing fiction books people could enjoy. The first five years I worked hard at being faithful to Him and wrote 5 novels. Of course they weren’t perfect and God would have helped me fix them if I hadn’t decided to fix things myself. I spent the next several years trying to make my books worldly while writing more. When I was about to give up, God sent someone to me that gave me a word of encouragement.

I turned back to writing how I felt God would want my books to read. I let

Him lead me. I believe I am doing the work God called me to do. I hear from people saying how my book has encouraged them, or blessed them and THAT is what it's all about.

Thank You Lord!

January 11 **Get Your Life in Order**

Matthew 6:33-34 - But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

This Scripture really straightened me out. I know as a believer I trusted God. I loved what Jesus did for me and I rested in my salvation, but there is so much more if you want to live your life in peace and abundance.

We lived payday to payday. We had plenty of things, not always what we wanted but pretty much what we needed. Got that? There were times we wanted more—more money, more time, more strength, more peace, more forgiveness for others, etc. In other words, there were times we weren't very happy cause nothing seemed to be getting better. But the truth was, we weren't putting God first in all things.

I wasn't putting God first in all things and I was the one who professed my faith and trust in The Lord. One day God opened my eyes to this Scripture and I looked closer. It showed me **if** I put God first in **everything** I'd get more than a roof over my head, food in my stomach, and clothes on my back. These were the things talked about in Matthew 6. Then He said, put Him first and these things will be given to me *as well*.

As well as what? He let me see those things that would be added are the peace, the blessings, and the goodness God wants to give me. He told me not to worry. I realized how I wasn't putting Him first. I was fitting Him into my life.

I read the Word when I was at church, and then sometimes at home. I prayed every night before I went to sleep. I thanked God for my meals, my family, and my life. I tithed on what I made most of the time...if it was still there come Sunday. But when this Scripture opened my heart and my eyes, I told

Scott, my husband, that I was going to start subtracting my tithe the minute my paycheck went into the bank and I'd like to add his. He said I should have been. Oh well. It helps when spouses talked to one another about more than the kids. I started putting Him first in our monies and in my daily reading of His Word...starting with Him. I started listening to Christian music on my way to work. This turned my life around in many ways. Us committing our money to God (who it all belongs to anyway) started growing our accounts.

God is faithful. We only have to do our part. Scripture tells us to put Him first in all things.

January 12

Let The Holy Spirit Speak Through You

Mark 13:11 - *Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.*

I can hear you laughing now, asking yourself, why am I reading a devotional written by a woman who is planning what to say when she gets arrested? Well let me set you straight. I've never been arrested. I have broken the law because at times I have sped...sometimes even gotten caught and had to pay the penalty, a ticket. No fun, but you reap what you sow.

However, this Scripture spoke to me in a much deeper way. God laid this on my heart about letting the Holy Spirit speak through me while I was still working a 9-5 job. He reminded me that He would protect me. He would defend me. He would let others know I didn't do what I was accused of doing.

This Scripture was revealed to me again in these past few years reminding me, God is in control. He would give me the words to speak if I was to respond. Sometimes He even had me sit in silence. And for those who know me, know that is hard to do. But I learned to listen to the Holy Spirit in me and let Him guide my mouth, my words. By letting Him lead me all the time, it helps to keep from fighting with a friend or family member. We don't always have to have the last word. God's Word is final.

Sometimes when someone says something to us and we want to come back with a smart answer, if the Holy Spirit leads you to keep quiet or even to say something softly back, like—I'll think about that—you'd be amazed how this would change your life.

If you'll do this, not only will it help you, but also it will help those around you see the peace of the Lord shine through you.

God is good. He is faithful all the time. We are the ones who don't chose to follow His will, or His words.

Take a breath before you speak, and let Him lead.

January 13 **God Will Do Awesome Things**

Exodus 34:10 - Then the LORD said: "I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the LORD, will do for you.

God did a lot of mighty wonders in the days of the Old Testament. He was always true to His word. God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. We are still under a covenant with God. We are under the 2nd covenant – the Blood of Jesus. Praise God! His words He said in Exodus, still stand true to us, believers of Jesus Christ His Son, who died to save us and give us the 2nd covenant, the final covenant. God will do wonders in our lives too and others will see His awesomeness in His work He does for us.

Think back in your life since you've become a believer. Can you think of any wonder He's done for you. I can. He's done many, but I'll share a wonder He did for me almost 40 years ago.

My 3-year-old daughter woke up in the middle of the night screaming and then vomited. I took her to the doctor two days in a row. Day 1 he called it a 24-hour virus. Day 2 he said it must be a 3-day virus, but she will get through it, just give her plenty of fluids.

3 days later she was still waking with a scream. She didn't know to say, "Mommy, my head hurts so bad." She grew weaker and weaker. And on that day when she got out of her bed, instead of running down the hall like normal, I found her dragging herself by her arms. She couldn't walk. It broke my heart. I scooped her up and laid her on the couch, covered her with a blanket, and then turned my television to The 700 Club. I needed someone to pray with me right then!

Praise God! The man, Pat Robertson, on the show was praying at that time. I joined in, asking God to help me. I knew something bad was wrong, but the doctor had said 24-hour virus, and then a 3-day. I knew in my heart it was more than a virus. I prayed, “Lead me Lord to the right doctor.” The man on TV said, “God is hearing that mother praying for her little girl. He said go to the phone book and I will lead you.”

OH MY GOSH!! He was talking to me! I jumped up and ran to the kitchen. Opening the phone book to the yellow pages for pediatricians a name popped out. Dr. Lewis Leggio. I called and got an immediate appoint. I rushed her to the new doctor’s office. He took one look at her, ran a few tests, and then had Dr. Hopper, a neurologist come down to his office to check her also.

A few hours later we were at the hospital while more tests were being run on our daughter. The ones done in the office showed 8 possibilities of things that could have been wrong with our daughter, and they felt it was important to start with the worst and work backwards in finding the problem. The worst was a brain tumor. They stopped the testing at the hospital there, because that was the problem. The best surgeon in the country operated on her that very night, a Wednesday night. 8 hours long. We had people praying for her all over the country. This was before the social media and cell phones, so it was all word of mouth, but the Word was being spread asking for prayers.

When the neurosurgeon, Dr. Clifford, looked at the mass on her brain, he told us later he knew the tumor was malignant by the size, shape, and color, but sent a piece off to be tested in the lab. When word came back benign, he sent a second piece to be tested. Same response. Benign. He removed the tumor – the size of a softball. To make a long story short, when the tumor was tested in its entirety, it turned out the seed was malignant but the whole tumor around it was benign.

She was called God’s little miracle by many hospital staff members. Praise God for connecting these doctors and the medical team to my daughter.

God has worked many more wonders in my life and others around me. I’m sure you have some you can share.

The thing to do is keep trusting Him, and thanking Him, and seeking Him. He will continue to do great and awesome wonders for us. Trust His Word!!

January 14

7 Things God Finds Detestable

Proverbs 6:16-19 - There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

The whole Bible, Old and New Testaments, share God's Words to us. Although we are under the new covenant, covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, God still desires for us to love Him and to love others through Him. Here in Proverbs God tells us plainly things He despises and if you want to show your love for Him, my suggestion is you try not to do any of these things. As a believer, when you mess up and do one you won't lose your salvation, but God won't be too happy. Think about it like your mom and dad. They'll love you anyway, even when you do things they teach you not to do. But don't you just want to cry when you see the disappointment in their eyes?

God speaks plainly here:

#1 - What are haughty eyes? That's the look some people give others because they think they are better than someone else. As a Christian some believers feel that puts them above others. Jesus was above all of us, yet He came down to serve us. Not to look down on us.

#2 Lying tongues is when we speak untruths or we stretch the truth for whatever reason. A lie is a lie.

#3 Hands shedding innocent blood can be a hard one to understand. Sometimes people kill to defend himself or herself or a loved one, that wasn't innocent blood. Sometimes soldiers kill in war. That too wasn't innocent blood. Always let the Lord lead you. A life is precious.

#4 Most believers think they don't devise wicked schemes, but unfortunately some people plan things that they say is to help someone else, when in reality they are only helping themselves or trying to look good in others eyes. Please God and you won't have to worry. Remember, He knows our heart!

#5 Feet rushing into evil shouldn't be something we do. We are to try and

always be more Christ-like. Jesus never rushed into evil.

#6 A false witness is more lies, but it's being a witness against someone while telling these lies. Courtrooms listen to testimony all the time, and unfortunately a lot of people give false testimony just to help the lawbreaker get away with his crime.

#7 God hates a person to stir up conflict in the community. This happens in the house of God as well...a form of a community. Believers that are not listening to God but thinking of self try to stir up trouble, sometimes leading up to a split in the church. This is not good.

Think about this Scripture and pray asking God to help you not do any of these 7 things. We, believers, should always try to honor God in all we say and do.

January 15 His Ways Are Higher!!

Isaiah 55:8-9 - *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.*

The Scripture above helped me to see things in a different light. I also think it was the Scripture that helped me to stop trying to fix everything around me.

We look in the natural. We listen to what others, like professional doctors, weathermen, lawyers, and even our friends, tell us. The problem is they only know what they can see or what they've learned through this book or that teacher or even that parent. We believers should be looking at the supernatural...and I don't mean ghosts and goblins. I'm talking about Jesus. He died for us, suffered for us, shed his blood to cover us—He was the Sacrificial Lamb, the sin offering, the fragrant offering. He paid the ultimate price for us so we don't have to keep making sacrifices. We don't have to depend on this world around us.

We should depend totally on Jesus Christ. Know that His ways are higher than our ways. So when we are in a bit of a fix or jam, trust Him to know the direction out of it...the way you should go. Pray, asking Him to lead you and then follow the direction He gives you. So many of us ask and then either don't wait for an answer, or when He gives us the answer we question – ‘Are

you sure?’ (We are looking in the flesh.) God sees the big picture, so trust Him to lead us the right way.

Sometimes you may hear something in your spirit, like Beth Moore did that time she heard, “Go brush that man’s hair.” She was in the airport waiting for her flight. There sat a man in a wheelchair with scraggly hair and baggy clothes. At first she thought why, if I remember correctly. I heard this many years ago in one of the videos connected to one of her fantastic Bible Studies. Anyway, she followed the directing of The Holy Spirit and blessed a man so deeply and in turn it blessed her and now all of us who have heard the story have been blessed as well.

God has a plan. Trust it! Follow Him! His ways are higher than our ways.

January 16 **Don’t Worry—Pray!**

Philippians 4:6-7 - Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Peace is something we all want but we seem to have a hard time resting in peace. Why is that? Because life is happening all around us. We have bills to pay, kids to raise, a job to do, and a home to keep up with. And if you’re the woman, usually you are the one making sure the family is fed, has clean clothes, and a clean house...etc. Nowadays, I’ve seen some of the husbands doing most or all of the cooking. I think they enjoy creating meals—an escape from their job. In most homes the husband and the wife maintain a job to make enough money to pay for the lifestyle they are living. For some women their job is being the homemaker and child raiser. Any way you look at it, life keeps us busy.

So how do we find peace? God tells us in the Scriptures above. We are to be anxious (worried) about nothing and pray about everything—all the while thanking God for His blessings on us and His plans for us. When we relinquish our worries and give them over to Him, peace will fill us. Remember He sees the big picture and knows the answer to our problems.

Trust Him. Trust His Word. When we give it ALL to Him, He will fill us to overflow in His peace.

Know, as long as you're following His lead in your life and seeking His wisdom in how you live your life, He will take care of you. All the while you will be able to walk in peace with Him.

Remember most of all – God loves you!!

January 17 **Your Word Controls Your Life**

Matthew 12:37 - For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

As a believer who is growing closer every day in my personal relationship with the Lord, I read His word every day as well as listen to messages from Podcasts, watch different preachers sharing God's word on television, and read several devotionals every morning. One that opened my eyes some time back and then came back to me again in the past year and half was Matthew 12:37. The way Joyce Meyer put it was, you live today what you spoke yesterday.

It sounds so simple the way she put it, and it's also written very easy to understand in His Word. We don't always listen—or we get too busy to remember. God tells us **by the words we speak** we will either be justified (vindicated, right, accepted, correct) or we will be condemned (convicted, sentenced, doomed).

The first words we want to speak (if we haven't already) are, forgive me Lord for I have sinned and I want you to come into my heart. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, then we are saved. We don't have to say or do any more to keep our Salvation. God sees our hearts and knows if we mean what we say.

But if you want to live a blessed life, full of abundance, let the Lord lead you in what you say and do. Speak the blessings He lists in His Word that He wants to give you. Speak things that are **good, noble, right**. Believe what He says.

So when you start to speak, stop and think for a moment. Speak good positive words of faith, believing God's Word.

If you want your tomorrows to be good days...think before you speak.

January 18

Not My Will But His Will For Me

John 5:30 - By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but Him who sent me.

When I'm spending time with the Lord, I find my prayer requests grow. Don't get me wrong. There is nothing wrong about asking God for blessings, answers, direction, healing, and jobs, any and all things that come up in your life. This is what He wants us to do. Let Him lead you. His word says you have not because you ask not.

How are we to ask? Ask through prayer requests. So do we pray and expect an answer? The answer is not always yes, nor is it always no. Sometimes it is wait. He will answer, we only need to keep listening...believing...and waiting.

He is faithful in answering my prayers. I love it when it happens right away, because sometimes it does. Sometimes it takes a very long time...of course He probably told me to wait and I wasn't listening, and other times He tells me no. Usually I feel that in my spirit. When I pray for something that doesn't line up in His will, He lets me know. As a mom and granny I think I know what's good for the people around me, but as He reminds me, I don't see the big picture like He does.

As a Christian, we are to live our lives like Jesus did. Well, what did He say above? Jesus seeks not to please Himself, but God who sent Him. That is how we should live our lives. And when we are praying, we need to pray for His will, not ours.

This was a hard lesson to learn. I knew what I wanted. I wanted more time with my husband, more time for all of us as a family. God's will is to heal all, but there comes a time when we are called home. This was Scott's time. Scott thought he wouldn't even live to see 30. God blessed him way beyond those years. He gave Scott 33 more years to be exact. We were all blessed who knew Scott and I'm grateful for the extra time we had together.

Trust God to know what is best for you and your loved ones. Pray for His will to be done.

How do you know what His will is? Stay in His word. The Bible tells us these things.

January 19 **Be A Living Sacrifice To Christ**

Romans 12:1-2 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

During my times of grieving, I spent many days alone, crying. I have 3 great kids, 2 wonderful & loving kids-in-law, and 4 fantastic grandkids. All of them love me so much and show it over and over. I am blessed.

But as a mom, I tried to be strong for them, so when they would come over to keep me company, help me through another day, I'd put on my happy face and try to hide the tears. The only time I cried in front of them (that I can recall) is when they cried. We cried together a lot. But I tried not to share my grief. I don't know if that was good or bad, but it's what I did. Some days were easier than others, but most days while alone, after spending time with the Lord in the mornings, I wallowed in my grief. Don't get me wrong. I felt God's arms around me all the time. I felt the love of my children and family all the time. I just missed Scott being there with me. For a long time I kept apologizing to God, telling Him I'm sorry that I don't want to go anywhere, or be around anyone. I just want to stay home and cry. He'd let me know, "It's okay!"

Sometimes in our grief we hear people tell us you need to get back out. Go see your friends. Go do this and go do that.

Don't worry what anyone tells you. They are trying to help you because they love you. That's a great thing. But know you have to do it in your time. I'm not saying curl up in a ball and forget about life around you. I'm saying stay faithful to His word, pouring it into you everyday. **He is our strength. He is our joy.** And at the right time you will get back to the life He's called you to live.

Live every day for the Lord, keeping Him first always, and He will give you the strength, the courage, the direction, and the help you need every day. Keep your trust and faith in The Lord and He will see you through. His grace is sufficient!

January 20 **A Promise From God**

Psalm 138:8 - *The LORD will vindicate me; Your love, LORD, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.*

Most of you know me and know I'm a writer of fiction novels. Over the past year and a half, I haven't been doing what I was called to do. I tried, but the writing wouldn't come to me (during Scott's last few months). And since he died, I tried but couldn't stay focused on my story. As a woman who knows what needs to be done in my life, I always try to do what is needed, or necessary, or with my writing, what I'm called to do. This time I couldn't.

At times, I beat myself up when I couldn't do what I wanted to do with my writing. I had a book scheduled for completion for April 15, 2014. It's book 4 of the series. And even though I'd done a lot of research for it, as well as made my rough outline, and even started writing, I couldn't get past chapter 2. It just wouldn't flow. My mind kept going to my sense of loss. I didn't want to move on, nor did I want to write. As I talked about in yesterday's Scripture reading, He helped me know it was okay to wait, to put off my writing, to grieve for the loss of my husband. Even though I got the okay yesterday and I'm sure several other days before and many more to come, I still slipped back into thinking I was doing wrong. Crying out for Him to help me move forward and get back to doing what He'd called me to do.

This time, not only did I feel reminded it was okay to wait, He let me know He will vindicate me...keep loving me...and He won't abandon the works of His hands – which will be me working my hands. This is a plan He's had for me since before I was even in my mother's womb. God won't give up on me, nor will He let me give up on His calling, and myself as long as I stay faithful to Him—Keep my heart seeking Him, His word, His love, and His direction.

He kept working for me while I was healing. He put my publisher and my books with another publisher and together they made a collection of Deborah Lynne's novels – *Bayou Secrets*. It released as scheduled in May of 2015. I'm blessed.

January 21

Commit to The Lord

Proverbs 16:3 - *Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.*

Again, He gave me more Scriptures that helped me not to worry about not fulfilling the calling He has on my life.

You may not be called to write. You may be called to teach, to be a mom or a dad, to be a welder, a mechanic, a secretary, a preacher, a singer, an artist. He calls us to be many different things. Wherever He's called us He will use us to share Him, share His love, share His message with others.

That doesn't mean you have to preach to your students or every customer who walks in. When you walk in His love others see it around you. You do what He's called you to do and commit it and yourself to The Lord, whatever you're doing, He will make your plans for you. He will open the right doors at the right time in the right town. This Scripture goes further than your calling in life. It covers everything you do. If you do your housecleaning, drive your car, mow your yard, and do it committing it to The Lord, He will help you through it making it the best you can make it.

God is good. He loves us so. He wants us to live a happy and abundant life here on earth as we wait on His return, but He wants us to commit ourselves daily in everything we do; commit it to Him.

When we put Him first in our lives, we find this isn't hard to do—commit everything we do to Him. But when we keep Him stuck on the back burner to pull out only in our times of crises, that's not commitment. He's still there to hear your cries and He will help you because He never turns His back on His children. We do that to Him.

Sometimes our walk through life may be harder, almost impossible. Dig into the word and trust Him, putting Him first, and committing your life to Him. You'll be amazed at the blessings that start pouring out on you.

God is good. He loves you. And He's always there for you. Commit yourself to Him.

January 22

Prosperity Scripture

Isaiah 48:17-18 - *This is what the LORD says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your wellbeing like the waves of the sea.*

The best life is yours if you stand on the word of God and trust Him!

He wants to give you the best things in life while you are still living on the earth, (in the world, not of the world). His will for you is the best. He’s already planned your life and if you stay focused on Him, asking Him to lead you daily letting the Holy Spirit that lives within you make the right choices; you will live a great life...the best life...the life He planned for you. While you are living the life He planned for you, you will be blessing others around you as you live in peace and blessings.

This goes for all of us who believe and live our lives for Him.

God has already planned our lives and wants to direct our steps while we are walking into the dreams that are deep in our heart. If we will follow His guide, our peace will flow like a river, and our wellbeing will roll in like the waves of the sea.

Thank You, Lord for the plans You have for me and my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Lead us daily and help us stay focused on You. In Jesus’ name I pray...Amen.

Go have a prosperous day!

January 23

Redeemed from any curse

Galatians 3:13 - *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.”*

God took the curse of disease, depression, and many more.

But you say, Deborah, my family has this disease that goes from generation to

generation. My doctor tells me it's hereditary. That means it keeps going on from mother-to-daughter-to-daughter, etc.

But I tell you, stop living the curse. Stop focusing on the past. Look to The Lord who redeemed us from the curses when He said, "It is finished."

He took that family curse upon Himself and defeated it.

Trust Him. Walk in His victories! Praise God. You are free! Now walk in the freedom. Profess it with your mouth.

You believed what He said for your salvation, but know He redeemed far more than just your salvation. You need to put your faith in Him and read all that He did for you when He died on the cross and rose again three days later. Understand the three days He spent paying for your sins, your ancestors' sins, your future generations' sins.

He paid it all. Broke the curse. Now walk in the freedom!

January 24 **Stay In Perfect Peace**

Isaiah 26:3 - *You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You.*

How many of you want to walk daily in peace? I know I did and I do. God wants this for us...a perfect peace.

How do you get it? You get it through Him.

Put your mind on His Word. Read Scripture. Soak it in your brain and heart. Take it as He meant it. A letter to you. Those words weren't breathed into the writers of The Holy Bible just for them. It was for us too...past, present, and future generations. He loves us. God wants what is best for us.

If you'd spend your free time (and for those who say, I don't have any free time—make it) in His Word, hearing and obeying what He tells you, you will find a peace that you never thought existed.

Not only does the peace He gives you fill you to overflow, relieving you of your stress, it permeates around you.

I can remember many years back when my kids would come over to visit. While they were there, they would say, “I don’t know what it is about your house, or your couch, but when I come over here and hang out for a while, I just feel so rested. So at peace.” I knew what it was. It was God’s peace infusing my home allowing it to flow into my child’s life. Now my older grandkids tell me the same thing.

God wants you to have it too. Renew your mind daily with His Word. Take in what He tells you to do, how to speak, how not to worry, how to love others... and then do it...and you, too, will be filled to overflow with His peace.

January 25 **Blessings For Obedience**

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 - *If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all His commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God:*

You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.

Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.

You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

The LORD will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.

The LORD will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to.

The LORD your God will bless you in the land He is giving you.

The LORD will establish you as His holy people, as He promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in obedience to Him. Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you.

The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land He swore to your ancestors to give you.

The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands.

You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom.

Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.

These are blessings God wants to pour out on you today. Some people say, but that was the Old Testament. Those blessings don't apply to us. I'll tell you, these were blessings He wanted to give His people. But to get them they had to live under the law—the Ten Commandments. Well Praise God – we are under the new covenant, under the Blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ and those blessings are ours for the receiving! We are His people. The only thing God asks of us now is to:

- 1) Love Him above all others
- 2) Love others as you love yourself.

Through Christ you can do this! So do it! And Thank God!!!

January 26

Don't Let Your Heart Be Troubled

John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Here is more Scripture about peace. My heart must have been unsettled at the time. I'm sure it was during some of the hard times my husband had to go through during his battle with lung cancer. Although I was living in peace knowing God was with us through it all, the peace around me seemed to be on and off inside my home. I'm sure a lot of the time my focus strayed on the pain Scott was going through. It took my focus off of Christ and whenever I did, the peace was not resting on me, on us. That, my friend, is how we get out of the peace of God. When our focus strays and our eyes are no longer on the Lord but on the situation around us, our peace fades. Don't hear me wrong. God didn't leave us. He was still there comforting us. We felt it when we looked on Him. Praise God.

That's life, I know. We all have things that come up in our life that draws our attention to it. And most of the time it's something that begs for our attention so we can fix it or find the answer to it or something. But the truth is – God is

the answer to everything. He and His Word have the answer. That's when we have to continue to stand in faith in Him, on His Word. Keep walking, trusting, believing He means what He says and this too, He will get you through.

I know. It's not always easy to keep our minds off the rough things that happen in our lives, but the truth is we are the ones who make it hard. When we get down into our flesh, we are the ones trying to fix things. If we would stay in the spirit, let Him lead us to follow God's plans and wills for us, we can walk in the peace all the time.

Next time you find your peace slipping away, notice where your mind is. Are you focused on God and His Word? Or are you focused on the things around you? Give those things to Him and let Him fix them. You just rest in Him and be willing to do what He calls you to do. Let Him do the rest. He wants the load. Give it to Him.

January 27 **The Lord Looks At Our Heart**

I Samuel 16:7 - But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Man looks at our outward appearance. So what does that make us focus on? Our outward looks; hair, make-up, size, shape, clothes, etc.

The good news is it doesn't matter what the outside looks like. It's what is inside that matters. Think about it. Have you ever been somewhere and heard or said, "Oh isn't he adorable." But inside you are thinking I hope that kid gets better looking soon. (Just a silly example that came to my mind because as we all know, most babies look beautiful.) The point I'm trying to make, those words were spoken to make the mom feel better, but they didn't really come from the heart. If the mom knew this, the words wouldn't make her feel better. If you want to pay someone a compliment, say words that come from your heart, not just what you think they need to hear. Now don't misunderstand. I'm not saying insult someone because that is what your heart feels. No. Say nothing at all. Give them a warm smile and a hug, but don't say hurtful things or lies in an attempt to help someone.

I hope I'm speaking clearly to you. When God looks at you, He sees your heart. So purify it. Fill it with His Word. As Christians, we are to reflect Jesus Christ. If you're not sure how that means you are to be, go read the many stories of Him in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These stories walk the streets with Him, seeing it first hand through a man that was walking near Him. I never saw Him speak down to anyone—even the woman at the well where He spoke of the men in her life. He told her of her history but that she could change it. The choice was hers. So even given the opportunity to put someone down and ridicule her, He chose not to. We should do the same.

Speak in love. Speak in truth. Speak in faith. Share God's love and your heart will grow.

And remember – that's what God looks at. Your heart!

January 28 **God Wants To Meet Your Needs In Abundance**

Psalm 35:27 - May those who delight in My vindication shout for joy and gladness; may they always say, "The LORD be exalted, who delights in the well-being of his servant."

Do you want God to bless you? He wants to too. If you will delight in helping others, this exalts the Lord. We are to serve others around us. Be there ready to help. Sometimes it's financially, sometimes it's emotionally, sometimes it's spiritually, and other times it's physically. There are so many ways to help others. Most people answer the call to help by saying I can't afford to help them. I'm barely getting by myself. That right there should tell you that you are not doing enough for your neighbor. Money is not everything. Sometimes your neighbor needs a helping hand, like if you see someone struggling to get the garbage can back from the road, help them. This costs you a few minutes of your time and a tiny bit of physical strength. But guess what? You exalted the Lord in your actions. Sometimes the checkout clerk in the grocery line is having a bad day. Instead of adding to it by complaining, see if she'd like you to pray for her. Or if you hesitate in asking her for fear she'll take offense, just say a silent prayer for her, lifting her up to God, asking Him to bless the rest of her day and/or help her with whatever is troubling her. This would be how you can help her spiritually and/or emotionally.

Yay, it's another way to exalt the Lord!

So are you getting the picture? Put others' needs before your own, and God will take care of yours. He will bless you abundantly. Not only does He tell you this in the Old Testament, but He says it in John 10:10. He tells us Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but that He comes that we might have life, and have it in abundance. Don't you want that?

Remember, God wants it for you too. That's His plan for you. But to get it, you must learn to put others before yourself...just like Jesus did.

January 29 **His Love For Us Is Huge**

Ephesians 3:10-12, 14-18 - His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose that He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In Him and through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. ... For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ....

Love and faith were two words that just jumped off the pages here. God loves us so much. He wants us to know how long and wide, and how high and deep is the love He has for us.

Oh my gosh! Isn't that awesome.

His love doesn't stop here and there. It goes on in every direction. His love for us is even greater than our love for our children. Can you imagine that?

He wants us to feel that love to the very core of our being so that in freedom and in confidence we can put all of our faith into Him, into His Word, into His promises to us, into the plans He has for us.

When we put our faith and trust in Him, in His love for us, then we can go to His throne in faith, believing, trusting Him to answer our prayers. We are to come freely and boldly to the throne of God, asking boldly, and believing big, because we know He loves us and only wants what is best for us.

Put your trust, your faith, your hope, your love, in the Lord and He will strengthen you. He will grow you; use you to bless others in a big way. This in turn will bless you.

I know He is doing it for me, and He loves you as much as He loves me!

January 30 **A Prayer For Me...And You...By Jesus**

John 17:1-26 - *After Jesus said this, He looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You. For You granted Him authority over all people that He might give eternal life to all those You have given Him. Now this is eternal life: that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began. I have revealed You to those whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours; You gave them to Me and they have obeyed Your word. Now they know that everything You have given Me comes from You. For I gave them the words You gave Me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from You and they believed that You sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those You have given me, for they are Yours. All I have is Yours, and all You have is Mine. And glory has come to Me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, protect them by the power of Your name, the name You gave Me, so that they may be one as We are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name You gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. I am coming to You now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of My joy within them. I have given them Your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that You protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also **for those who will believe in Me** through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. I have given them the glory that You gave Me, that they may be one*

as We are one—I in them and You in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that You sent me and have loved them even as You have loved Me. Father, I want those You have given Me to be with Me where I am, and to see My glory, the glory You have given Me because You loved Me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know You, I know You, and they know that You have sent me. I have made You known to them and will continue to make You known in order that the love You have for Me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

Praise God!! Wasn't that a powerful prayer? And guess what? It was for you and me. Jesus, as He was taking His last breaths on earth was thinking of us. He knew and felt the love of God.

Jesus had spent His time on earth loving us, sharing God with us, and protecting us. Now was His time to go to the Father and sit at His right hand, but before He did this, He prayed asking God to watch out for us, protect us. He didn't ask God to take us out of the world, but protect us while we were in the world.

When times come on you and you don't see the way out, call on Jesus. His name was given to us, so that we may call on Him, allowing Him to direct our paths, ease us through the storms of life, bring us through any sickness that comes near us, and give us the love that comforts us through loss. He is there for us.

As He shared God's love to us, we are to take it, bask in it, and share it with others, so they, too, can find this letter to them from Jesus.

We were chosen. God opens the door to everyone, but not all come through. You who have walked through Jesus Christ (The Way, The Truth, And The Life – John 14:6) know that letter above is to you. Read it and walk in faith, peace, and love.

January 31

Two In Agreement

Matthew 18:19-20 - “Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

First you have to ask yourself, who is He talking to in this? Everyone? Does it mean anybody can ask anything as long as they get someone to agree with them and it will be? No indeed not. He's talking to believers.

Some people think that is what some preachers are preaching. They even call them "the name it and claim it" preacher. Well I can't speak for all preachers, but one I've heard called this, name it and claim it was Pastor Kenneth Copeland, but I'm here to tell you he is not that in the way people are saying it. Don't get me wrong. He does ask (name it) and believe (claim it) and receive, **standing on Scripture that God Himself gave us**. It's there for each and every one of us. But we must first believe and then we will receive, trusting in God's word.

If you believe in the Lord and His will for you and the rest of us, you are not going to be asking things that go against His Will. That's why two or more **believers** (I can add this word because the above scripture was spoken to believers, not non-believers) can **come together** and **agree** (remember agree, not doubt, not wonder if you are good enough for God to hear your prayer) **on earth** about anything they ask for and it will be done by our Father in heaven.

The key is both must be believers and Jesus will be right smack dab in the middle of them as they pray.

Brother Copeland knows and preaches the above Scripture for **believers in Jesus Christ**—people who have come to the Lord as their Savior, asking Him into their hearts as they ask forgiveness for their sins. Those who do are cleansed and made new and whole through Jesus' blood. Praise God! The good news this Word does not come from Kenneth Copeland, a mere man, a good man though...it comes from God and is for all who believe without wavering.

I know the above Scripture is true. I have laid claim to the Scripture while praying and asking something while someone else believed with me, and it has come to pass...more than once. Praise God, He is a God of His Word!

Thank You, Lord.

Have a blessed day believing in Him and His Word!

February 1

How To Treat Your Brothers/Sisters In Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15 - Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

This is a message from Christ through Paul to Christians, believers in Christ.

He tells us to acknowledge the people among you in Christ who work hard, and acknowledge those who care for you in Christ...even when they are cautioning you in how you speak or behave. Hold them high because of their work. Live in peace with them and other believers.

Warn other believers who start trouble and even encourage trouble in the church among the believers, that this goes against the love God is teaching us in Jesus Christ. Help those who are weak in their faith and understanding of the word and be patient with them all. Don't pay them back when they hurt you or others, instead, do good for them showing them Jesus's love. It's easy to talk about them behind their back when you are seeing them do wrong, but if you truly love them and want to do what the word tells you to do, go to them in love and point out the error of their ways. Forgive them if it was meant to harm you, and move on.

Jesus loves us so much that He suffered and died for us. As believers, as Christians, we are to be Christ-like. Jesus Christ always took time to listen, never condemned, asked questions to them, and showed them the way out of sin into the light. We should be doing the same thing.

Remember everything you do and say, do it in love, love for The Lord, and love for your fellow Christian, love for your fellow man as the end of that Scripture says—and for everyone else. So that means be this way to non-believers as well.

Have a blessed day loving others through Christ.

February 2 Wait on His direction

James 1:19-20 - My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

Oh my gosh! When God showed me these Scriptures, He turned my life around. I was so quick to speak whenever my old boss tried to blame me for something someone else did. I felt I needed to. If I didn't, who would?

When these Scriptures came to light to me, I heard God say, stop...wait on Me to speak for you. You are my child. Next time listen. Hear all that is to be said, then wait on me for direction in how to reply. Don't get mad or try to defend yourself, knowing you didn't do it. Let Me show you how to walk away from this in peace...My peace that surpasses all understanding. God wanted me to rise above the situation. Show that my faith was in Him. Show the righteousness of God in me, through me.

So guess what I did the next time this happened to me? You got it! I walked away from my office toward the boss' office. Then before walking in, I paused and prayed for God's direction. Then when I walked in, I listened, and then I waited to respond until I heard Him tell me what to say. Sometimes He just told me to sit, smile, and nod in acknowledgment that my boss was speaking. When He did it that way, the truth came out through someone else in a big way. This was a major turning point in my life. I learned God meant what He said. He would protect me! He would shield me. I know, this isn't in the above Scripture, but it is written all over His Word. I read it daily. Soak in it to some degree. I didn't always take everything He said so specifically towards me. I always thought, yes, He loves me and millions of others. I'm just one of millions more. He doesn't have time to fight my battles; I know He'll be there to see me through. I need to do some of the fighting of my battles myself. But no! He showed me to listen quietly and respond how He leads me, showing the righteousness of God.

I'd love to say I do it all the time, but I'm human and slip. When I don't listen, I know it. Things don't turn out the way they should. But when I wait on Him I am so blessed.

Be obedient. Wait on the LORD.

Have a great day!

February 3 Live Out The Word Of God And Be Blessed

James 1:22-25 - *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.*

This is almost a continuance of what I learned through the other Scripture. As you read yesterday, I learned every Word the LORD speaks in Scripture is to His followers. That includes me. This is telling me—when I read it, I better take heart. He means it to me. I'm not to just read it and walk off doing whatever I choose, or try to figure out the way I should respond. Do it His way!

As a believer this applies to you too.

When questioning or in doubt about anything, go to The Word. He tells us through it how to act...how to react...how to live...how to love...how to do any and everything. God is love. He wants what is best for His children. Trust Him and His ways. He's a loving, forgiving Father.

And the great news from Him to us is that when we do read His Word and obey it, He will bless us!! God loves to bless His children. If you don't feel too blessed today, go to His Word asking Him what He wants you to do. You can turn your days into blessings everyday. Rewards are blessings.

Don't just take my word for it. Read the Scripture Hebrews 11:6 – *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because **anyone** who comes to Him must believe that **He exists** and that **He rewards those who earnestly seek Him**.*

Rewards are blessings. If you are a believer, then you've said you believe He exists. Now you must believe that He wants to reward you.

The Holy Bible has a lot to tell you and me. Spend everyday seeking Him and

what He wants to say. You'll see a major difference in your life when you do.

Enjoy today!

February 4

When He Forgives, He Forgives And Forgets

Hebrews 10:15-18 - *The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." Then He adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.*

God paid the price already by giving up His Son for us. Jesus paid the price already by suffering for our sins!! So why do we keep beating ourselves up for something. Jesus died on the cross for **our sins** not His. He had no sin. He suffered tremendously for our sins, paid the price, so we don't have to. All we have to do as believers is recognize our sins (because every one of us still sins after we're saved, even though we should be trying not to), confess them to God, and quit doing the sin.

Now if you've done this and you keep bringing your sin up to God, you have a big problem. You are not believing His Word...and it's the truth. He's trying to remember no more – you're the one reminding Him. He forgave you this sin. Jesus paid the price when He sacrificed Himself so you don't have to. You're telling Him what He did for you wasn't enough.

Think about this the next time you go back and wallow in a sin from your past. Maybe the truth is you didn't really mean it when you confessed it to God wanting His forgiveness. If that's the case, get down on your knees and tell God the truth. He already knows it.

If you meant it the first time, then when it comes to memory, that's Satan trying to bring you down. Shout out loud – PRAISE YOU GOD FOR FORGIVING ME! THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME! THANK YOU FOR SACRIFICING YOURSELF, JESUS, FOR ME! I LOVE YOU! & THANK YOU!

Now walk in peace and love. Have a great day!

February 5

Pray For Everyone, Especially Our Leaders

1 Timothy 2:1-2 - I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

How many of you live in a free country? You are blessed and can worship God without fear of retribution.

I live in America. We are blessed too. Growing up we pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, thanking God for our freedom to live and worship in this nation while God blessed it. I, personally, have always thanked God for allowing me to be born here. I know we are still one nation under God!!

To listen around me, I'd think we weren't. Too many people try to tear us down because how blessed we've been. The funny thing is, America welcomes everyone to come here and be a part of our freedom, but when they come some try to change our faith, turn us away from God.

If we want to stay one nation under God – believers must keep believing in Him and know that He is a God who never changes. Those who keep their faith in Him (no matter what country you live in), He will bless you. We just need to keep praying asking Him to touch the hearts of those who don't believe in Him; asking Him to bless our leaders of our country; and make it a point for you yourself to live in peace. Don't be one of those people who are stirring the pot, talking about doom and gloom. Where is your faith when you speak these things? It's not in God and His promises to you.

Keep your eyes on the Lord and His Words in your heart. You will find peace beyond understanding. Don't put your faith in the people around you spouting out the doom and gloom...and for sure don't join in with them. Your future depends on it. Stay in His Word and put your trust in The Lord!!

God created the world and we are blessed to all be a part of it. Keep your eyes and heart on Him. Have a great day!

February 6

Healing Scripture

Isaiah 53:5 - *But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed.*

It doesn't get any plainer than the above Scripture.

God already did the suffering for us. He gave up His Son as a sacrifice for all of us.

Jesus suffered for each and every one of our sins. Because He did this for us, we should be living in peace. We've already been healed...by His wounds, His sacrifice. Praise God!!

When you feel your body not acting or responding as it should, the first physician you should reach out to is The Lord. If your faith is in Him, you will be healed at that moment in time. You may not feel it or see it immediately, but He did it immediately. Keep believing. Keep walking in faith.

If He wants to use your sickness to bless others in some way or fashion He'll do it by making your healing known. (His ways are higher than our ways) Listen to what He tells you to do.

He may send you to the doctor. He helped them to learn what they could do. Through that doctor and your faith in The Lord you will be healed in a longer process. Others, too, will be blessed watching your faith in The Lord.

Through it all you have to stand strong believing God, thanking God. He made the doctors, so if He sends you to one, by all means go and do what the doctor says.

By His wounds you are healed. Keep your faith in Him!

February 7 **With Long Life We Will Be Blessed**

Psalm 91:14-16 - *"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges My Name. He will call on Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation."*

The whole chapter of Psalm 91 is filled with promises of protection and being blessed. When you have time, read it all.

These three verses tell you, if you love the Lord, He will rescue you. He will protect you. He says this **because you acknowledge Him**.

But what if you're not acknowledging Him to your friends and neighbors, but in your heart you believe Him and have been saved. Well if you are not acknowledging Him, then the promise above doesn't belong to you. You won't be protected, rescued, answered when having troubles, honored, or live a long life. He keeps His promises to those **who acknowledge His Name**.

So what am I telling you? If you want any or all of the above promises start sharing your love for the Lord with those you come around. Don't just save your good talk about God to your fellow church members. Some people fear if we talk freely praising God in public, people will laugh. So what? Let them laugh.

I love God...Jesus...The Holy Spirit. I am so blessed by the love He has for me. I know my life is good because my blessings come from above. I stay in His Word. I try to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit every day of my life. Have I messed up? You better believe it. I'm human...but PRAISE GOD HE FORGIVES ME!! I only need confess and move on. Keep living my life trying to please Him, not man around me. Love God. He loves you and wants to bless you. Put your faith and trust in Him.

Have a blessed day!

February 8 **God Will Keep Us In Peace**

Isaiah 26:3-4 - You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the Lord Himself, is the Rock eternal.

Keep your heart and mind focused on God and His love for you, and you will live a life of peace...perfect peace. This is what God wants us all to have. When you find yourself trusting Him in all things you will find that perfect peace.

Most believers feel they do trust God, and we do. BUT we don't always put

our trust in Him about everything. We think well God wants us to fix some of these things in our life. Yes, He does, but not without Him.

So when anything, I mean anything, comes up in your life, if you will go to Him first. Ask Him what He wants you to do and then do it, you will find that peace. Sometimes He tells us to do nothing.

Oooh. That's hard huh. Yes it is. But when He tells us to do nothing, then do it —NOTHING. Now when He tells you to give or go do something that doesn't seem to have anything to do with your problem, do it. That's called being obedient. And that's what He wants from us. Sometimes it makes no sense. We don't have to understand. We just have to obey.

Now I know we hear people saying they did such and such because God told them to (and that such and such was bad or evil – trust me, that didn't come from God). If the thing they did wasn't good, noble, or excellent, then it was not from God. The Word tells us all good comes from God. All evil comes from Satan. You can't get much plainer.

When bad things happen and people say, that's the wrath of God. Know the bad was from Satan, and yes, God can stop Satan and sometimes doesn't when we think He should, but God allowed it to happen for a reason. Good will come from it for His children of God...His believers...His people who acknowledge Him to others.

Stay in His Will for you. Have a blessed day.

February 9 **He Remembers Our Sins NO MORE**

Hebrews 8:8-13 – *But God found fault with the people and said: “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. “This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no*

more.” By calling this covenant “new,” He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear:

Many people today still live under the law.

They forget what this passage tells them.

God gave us a new covenant – the blood of Jesus. He gave His Son who suffered and died in our place. His blood covers our sins. The cost of our sin has been PAID IN FULL for us...past, present and future sins.

Am I saying that we don't try to obey God's commandments?

No. I'm saying we try to do the two most important ones that He states in the New Testament, which truly covers all ten commandments in the old covenant. Love The Lord our God above everyone and everything else, and love each other as you love yourself. You do those two things and you are keeping the Ten Commandments. BUT we are not under the law. Under the old covenant, when a believer broke a command, they would not be forgiven until their Chief Priest went into the Holy of Holies and shed blood for their forgiveness. If they died before that happened, they would not have been forgiven.

PRAISE GOD for the new covenant that we are under. Jesus shed His blood for us once...and that covers us through and into eternity. Don't get me wrong. If you sin deliberately against people God told you to love (everyone), and have no remorse, He will let you suffer consequences right here on earth. So my suggestion, if your flesh takes over and wants to do something you know God would not approve, ask the Holy Spirit to take over and keep you in love.

Walk in love all day. Have a great one!

February 10

Is Your Name In The Book Of Life?

Revelation 3:5 - The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and His angels.

Those who give their hearts to Jesus, their name is engraved in the book of

life and will not be erased.

Above is another Scripture that can be spoken no plainer. We know if we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We know if we acknowledge Him to others, if we share His love, if we share His goodness. We know if our names are written in the book of life.

Knowing you are one of God's children who have come to Him in faith, believing and receiving, know your name will never be removed.

Keep your faith in Him—the God who loves you and gave His Son to save you.

Thank You Lord.

Have a blessed day.

February 11 **Jesus Gives True Rest**

Matthew 11:28-30 - "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

God is so good to us. He is right there ready and waiting, to take our burdens off our shoulders. A lot of us who believe in Him still hold a heavy weight on our shoulders because we choose to hold on to it. Instead of lying it down at the cross and letting God handle whatever the issue is—we feel we have to do it. We burden ourselves with our problems.

I know, sometimes we have these problems because of some action we took. So we deserve to suffer through them. But the amazing great thing about God, He loves us anyway and wants to help us. If we'd see what we did or said wrong, confess it feeling remorse for doing or saying it, God is faithful at forgiving us and forgetting our sin. If you'll give that burden, even the thing you've brought on yourself to the Lord, He will get you through it.

I'm not saying He will take it away. I'm saying He will help you through while you learn and hopefully choose never to do or say that type of thing again. He wants us to learn from our mistakes, yes, but through Him. He

wants to help us through this, carrying our burden as we rest under His yoke.

What a good God!! He makes it easy for us. We make it hard. Walk in love, doing what the Holy Spirit leads you to do, and watch your life turn around. Give Him your burdens and yoke yourself to the Holy Spirit.

Thank You, Lord.

February 12 **His Compassion And Mercies New Each Morning**

Lamentations 3:20-26 - I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning: great is Your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; there I will wait for Him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks Him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

We are so lucky, so blessed. God loves us so much that His mercy is new each morning. Thank God for His love and mercy since we seem to mess up so much.

It's like Paul said, "I don't do what I know I should do; instead, I do what I try not to do." Paraphrased by me. You do know why that is, though, don't you? It's because we let our flesh rule us sometimes. We are blessed that God shows mercy on us.

What does that mean? It means He shows us kindness, favor, and compassion even though we don't deserve it.

God is a good God. He loves us so much. For those of you who have children, think how much you love them. Think about how much more you want to do for them than you already do. God loves us even more. Isn't that awesome?

So today walk in that love. Thank Him for His forgiveness. Know that He wants to show you favor and blessings each day. Walk ready to receive them.

Today is a new day. God bless you!!

February 13 **God's Great Plans For Us**

Jeremiah 29:11-13 - *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.*

When these Scriptures came to live in my heart, I think I started walking with a bounce in my step. To know, securely, in my heart that God has special plans for me lifted my spirit. Through His plans He gives me hope for prosperity, knowing He won't let anyone stand in the way of my future through Him. People can't harm me, or the plan God has for me.

When I was a child, I thought God wanted me to be an actress. I truly believed I'd be the next Doris Day. For those of you young people who don't know her movies, most movies were feel good happy movies that made you laugh and love and feel joy in your spirit. She made a few more serious ones, some even with mystery and suspense.

Well guess what? Even though I didn't go learn the trade of acting (my plan - since I thought that was how He had planned to accomplish this for me - my way, not His way) as I had planned since about 6 years old until I was 18, God still made His plan for me come true.

I do act. I get to be every character in every book I write. It's awesome, and I love it! His ways are always the best ways. Get into the Word, talk to The Father, let Him lead you where He'd have you go, doing what He planned for you since your beginning and watch your life bloom.

God is so good. He is so awesome. He has plans to prosper you, not to harm you. He wants to give you a hope and a future. Call on Him. Seek Him with all of your heart. He will listen to you. He loves you!

Have a wonderful day.

February 14 **Don't Give Up—Persevere!**

Hebrews 10:35-36 - *So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly*

rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised.

This message is so personal to me. The good thing is, it's for all who believe in Him and want what He's planned for you. Make it personal to you as well.

Most of you know I'm a writer of fiction, that's probably how you came to read this devotion. I started writing at the age of 33. After my first five manuscripts I realized this was what God wanted me to do, but not just for me as I thought in the beginning. These books were for me to share with other people. For those who already know God personally, my books are meant to give them something enjoyable to read and yet at the same time strengthen their faith. For those who don't know Him personally but have heard of Him or not, my books are to help give them a desire to know Him, have Him as their personal Savior. And for those who read my books and already have a full, wonderful, relationship with the Lord, they know they can read my books without thought of having to skip ungodly words, words that give God no glory, graphic scenes that don't need to play out in our minds, yet still give a suspenseful, love filled, story that keeps the pages turning—a good book to read.

When I first started writing there were only a few clearly wholesome books of fiction, but these numbers have grown as more authors who believe in the Lord share what God intended them to share in their fictional novels—made up stories with a true God in the middle. Some of my favorite of these type authors are Dee Henderson, Dani Pettrey, & Jill Elizabeth Nelson. I know there are plenty more, praise God, but I listed my three favorite.

Twenty years after I started writing, my first book was published. It was actually the second manuscript I had ever written. Of course it was rewritten many times before it was as God intended it to be. In those twenty years, a few times I wanted to give up, God put someone in my life to encourage me to continue. I'm so blessed that I persevered. Now I have several books published and more to come. I've let God lead me in each. He opens the door to the story and keeps me moving forward. Thank You, Lord.

So don't give up. When you have done the will of God in your life you will receive what He has promised.

PERSEVERE!!

February 15 He Will Complete His Work In You

Philippians 1:6 - *...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

God has a plan and purpose for each and every one of us. It says so in many scriptures in His Word, but the one that comes to mind at the moment is Jeremiah 29:11. He knows the plans He has for us...plans to prosper us... plans to give us hope and a future. Also the Word tells us God has a purpose for each of us. And I understand it's to share the Good News! Jesus died and suffered for my sins so that I don't have to, and then He rose again. He rose from the dead. He is alive! This gives me hope for my future He's planned for me. Now it's up to me to fulfill His purpose for me. I'm to go and tell.

He gives each of us a purpose. We are all to go and tell, but we are given the gift to do it in so many different ways. He puts a passion in us and through that passion He begins a good work in us that He will carry to completion. We just have to step out and serve in our purpose.

Some are called to be preachers, teachers, leaders, CEO's, presidents, singers, poets, writers, plumbers, dispatchers, salesmen, doctors, nurses, nannies, mothers, fathers and many more. The good thing is, in all of our callings we are able to share the Good News. Some places of business will not allow the name of God to be spoken. The good news is you don't have to say a word. **Speak with your actions.** God is love. Share His love by acting as Jesus did while He walked the earth. Sometimes our actions speak louder than our words ever could. So think about that the next time you think you don't have a purpose or you don't know your purpose.

Reflect Jesus in your workplace, in your walk on the earth. Put others before yourself. Forgive even when the co-worker or patient or customer doesn't deserve it. Love those who are unlovable. Be kind. Be patient. Smile. Whatever God put in your heart, whatever work He started in you, He will finish. I believe He called me to write fiction. I found out later He wanted me to write non-fiction as well. So He hasn't stopped working in me, or through me yet.

PRAISE GOD! His work through you and me isn't finished yet. Have a blessed day!

February 16

Have Confidence When Approaching God

1 John 5:14-15 - *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of Him.*

This Scripture tells a lot of people different things. I'm not going to talk about what it tells them. I can only tell you what it tells me.

It says when I have a burdened heart; I can go to Him and ask Him to lead me out or through whatever is going on in my life and He will. Also, if I have a desire or a need, I can boldly ask Him to provide. I am a child of God's. I know those words were meant for me. I believe them and I receive them.

I also know if there are days I'm not putting God first and other things have moved to the top of my mind, taking priority over Him, if I should shout out a prayer in a sudden need or desire, there is a strong possibility it won't be one that is answered right away.

Because I'm not thinking about God so therefore, I'm not focused on **His will** in my life. He hears me, but sin has gotten in-between us, and I **chose** to let it keep going on. He will need to see a change in my heart... a change back to Him first. In the mean time I'll be walking through troubles that come from some of those wrong choices I made.

But on days that I am focused, keeping Him first, He will always listen to my prayer and answer it. Sometimes the answer isn't quite what I thought I'd asked for, but then I remember His ways are higher than my ways and He knows what is best for me. So I still thank Him and praise Him.

I love The Lord and I love that He loves me and wants to be a part of my life 24/7. My biggest prayer is that I keep Him in my heart and mind throughout every day of my life. I want to keep Him first in my life always. I want to please Him while loving Him, and being loved by Him.

Make the right choices and keep Him first so you can always approach Him with confidence.

February 17

Give Thanks To The Lord Daily, For He Is Good

Psalm 118:1, 5-9 - *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever. When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; He brought me into a spacious place. The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The LORD is with me; He is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in humans. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.*

How great is that!

Some people tend to worry too much about what other people can do to them. Sometimes we even worry too much about what people think of us.

Remember, they are mere humans. They mess up just like you and I do.

It's better to remember what the Scripture above says.

God is here with us (those who are His believers and followers). He loves us no matter what situation we put ourselves into.

When you find yourself in trouble, call out to Him. He is listening for us to reach out to Him. He wants to help us no matter what. Sometimes it takes longer than we want it to take, or we have to go through some things to get to the finish line, but He will use it all to His glory and to help you.

Put your cares, your trust on The Lord and He will see you through.

Have a blessed day.

February 18 **Most Powerful Name Ever**

Philippians 2:9-11 - *Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Jesus is THE name above every name. Whenever you get in a scrape and don't know which way to go, call out "Jesus!" He will lead you.

Whenever you need to pray about something or someone but you don't know

what to say, just say “Jesus!” His name is so powerful. So demanding.

If you find yourself in a jam, call Jesus out loud. Saying His name, Jesus, brings strength and peace to any and every situation. The Word says every knee shall bow. Think about that. Most of the time when things are going wrong, somehow you can bet most likely Satan has his hand on the throttle. Say that powerful name JESUS out loud and Satan has to drop to his knees. That should give you a quick moment of relief. Long enough to latch on to whatever the Lord whispers for you to do.

I even find times, when I’m in bed trying to go to sleep but it eludes me for one reason or another, if I’ll just whisper His Name over and over, peace settles over me and I quickly fall to sleep. I love it! I have to admit it didn’t work two nights in a row. I went to bed at ten one night and midnight the next, but both nights it was after 4:30 in the morning before I fell asleep. I was telling my daughter how it was wearing me out, because I still woke up by 7:30 or 8:30 and ready to get up. Something she said made me realize it was a medicine I was taking too late in the day keeping me up. I don’t take medicine very often so I didn’t realize it. It was over the counter nose spray. (Our pollen in the air is terrible and it’s gotten to me twice this spring.) Anyway, I stopped spraying after 1pm and have slept like a baby every night since.

The main thing to know is Jesus is the Name above every other name. And it is powerful. Use it, use Him, and rely on Him. He is there for the taking. He wants to be your one and only.

Have a blessed day.

February 19

Make Your Prayer Powerful Using The Name Of Jesus

John 14:11-14 - Believe Me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it.

Here again Jesus is reiterating the power of His name. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him. Talk about power! The power of God and the power of Jesus are written all through the Word...Miracles in abundance.

And then what does He tell us in John 14? The passage above is from there and it tells us **whoever believes in Him** will do the works He has been doing. He goes on to say those works will be even greater things than the ones He has already done. Jesus was leaving our brothers and sisters to go be in Heaven with God our Father. He tells us to ask anything in Jesus' name and He will do it, glorifying the Father!

Naysayers will say this is not true, but the key to it being true is only for the ones He talked about. **Whoever believes in Him.**

It doesn't mean those who believe God and His Son Jesus exist, because, guess what. Satan believes they exist. Then there are naysayers who **believe in Jesus** as their Savior, but don't think all the Word talking to believers is to include them. Sad, but true.

Jesus left the power with all **His believers**. But to receive the power you have to believe He is giving it to you. By our faith we are saved. Also by our faith we are healed. Also by our faith we have the power. Only not all of us believe we too could have the power.

Ask God to show you the truth, help your faith grow as you grow your personal relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

February 20 Prayer Is Powerful

John 16:23-24 - In that day you will no longer ask Me anything. Very truly I tell you, My Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

John was still talking about prayer and how powerful it could be in our lives. We only need to listen and take it to heart.

Walk in faith. Walk in belief.

John was blessed and able to walk the earth with Jesus. They could ask Him anything. Jesus told them to ask God anything in Jesus' name and they will receive. Their joy will be complete.

Our joy comes from the Lord. Trust in Him. Rest in Him. Believe in Him. And receive from Him the joy and the peace He gives to His children. Let Him lead you. Anything that comes up in your life, in your heart, ask about it in Jesus name and He will give you wisdom and understanding in this.

Our Father is faithful. He will give us whatever we ask in Jesus' name. Amen!

February 21 **Build Your Life Upon Jesus – The Rock**

Matthew 7:24-25 - *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the Rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the Rock.*

The message in these scriptures are clear.

Put your trust in Jesus. Build your life on His Word. Let Him be your foundation and you will never fall.

It didn't say you'd never fail or have a problem here and there. It said you'd never fall. Keep your faith on The Rock (Jesus Christ) and He will see you through anything and everything.

He is a strong foundation...the only foundation you can rest totally upon.

Thank You, Jesus. Have a strong and blessed day!

February 22 **The Golden Rule**

Matthew 7:12 - *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

My momma used to always tell me, if I want someone to be nice to me, I have to be nice to them first. Of course as a child you don't want to hear that. You want everyone to treat you great, but if you're mad at them you want to be able to stomp your foot and stick out that lower lip. Pout a bit.

But the Word says it clearly. In **everything**, do to others how you'd have them

do to you.

I promise you, if you'll forgive those who hurt you, you'll be forgiven. If you'll love that co-worker or neighbor who is not worthy of love, you will be loved. If you'll show that checkout clerk or waitress a smile, you'll receive one back.

So dare to walk around and treat everyone the way you want to be treated, you'll find the treatment coming right back at you.

Have a greatly reflective day!

February 23 **Give Him Your Troubles**

Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

When something happened and my son would ask why God allowed it to happen, I used to tell him not to worry. That God would work good out of it. I'll never forget as a teenager, he asked me, did I know that promise is in the Bible? I smiled and said yes, I did. I let him know that life wouldn't always be perfect just because we believe in Jesus as our Savior. I also let him know that if we trust His Word to be the truth, our life would be blessed. And it has been in many, many ways. Through the bad, He grows us our strength in Him and helps us through. As long as we keep looking to Him and trusting Him to get us through, we will rise to a new level of faith and grow our relationship with Him more and more.

I've known since I was ten that God loved me and saved me. I also knew He had great plans for me. So I also knew whatever came my way, the good and the bad, God would make good come from it.

Why?

Because The Word tells me He works for my good because I love Him and was called according to His purpose.

It sounds too simple. It is. And it's the truth.

Praise God.

Look for the good coming your way.

February 24

Promises To Those Who Wait On The LORD

Isaiah 40:31 - ...but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

When I read this, I think people think that because I claim to be a Christian that my life is always easy. No wonder I'm always smiling.

That's not true. I am **almost always** smiling, but the reason is because I know whom I have my faith in and I know my strength comes from Jesus Christ. He will see me through everything that comes my way.

Why? Because His Word says so.

Those who hope in the LORD, this is what we do. We put all our hope and faith in the Lord.

I do that by taking time daily to read the Word. Study it. Listen to others preach the Word. I stay connected to Him. Yes there have been times in my 60 plus years, I've taken my eyes off of God. Praise God, He didn't lose sight of me! He carried me through and kept reminding me He was right there. I just needed to reach out.

Most who know me, know that sometimes I can be stubborn. I remember telling Jesus, I know I'm supposed to say I am sorry and ask You to forgive me, but I'm not ready! I felt His warmth say, 'I'm not going anywhere. I know you love Me, and will put your trust back in Me.'

I'm so glad my God is a mighty God and knew that I truly loved Him. One day, not too long after that conversation, with face down and hands up, I asked for His forgiveness and promised to learn more of His will for me. I promised to walk closer to Him and not turn my back on Him any more. He forgave me and our walk has been so close for a very long time. He's helped me grow in my faith in Him and what all He wants to do for me and with me.

He loves you too. Put your love in Him and let Him help you soar like an eagle. I don't like heights, but I don't have to worry. He's holding me up

there. My trust is in Him.

Have a great day.

February 25 **Renewing Your Strength In Old Age...A Promise From God**

Psalm 103:1-5 - Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His Holy Name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

When I was young and read the above Scripture, I would think that was something to look forward to. Well guess what? The time is here, but it was here all of my life, since I gave my heart to Jesus at ten years old.

This verse tells those who have come to know Christ as their savior should just PRAISE THE LORD! PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME. And while we are praising Him, thanking Him for all He's done in our lives, we should not forget all the benefits He gives to those of us who believe.

1. He forgives all our sins
2. He heals all our diseases
3. He redeems us from the pit
4. He crowns us with love and compassion
5. He satisfies our desires with good things
6. Our youth is renewed like the eagles

That last part made me think He was talking to the older generation. But read all around it. Read on through the New Testament, under the new covenant and know that all of these things are for you who believe in Him as your Savior.

God bless you. Rest in His promises to you!!

February 26 **Do Not Fear**

Isaiah 41:10 - So do not fear, for I Am with you; do not be dismayed, for I Am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My

righteous right hand.

If we all took that little Scripture to heart, we could live such a peace-filled life. God tells us not to fear.

Why does He say not to fear? Because He is with us. And we all know if God is with us, no one can harm us. He is the way, the truth, and the life.

He also says don't be dismayed because He is our God. What is dismayed? That's being depressed, downhearted, disappointed, or discouraged. Wow! He tells us not to be any of those things. Have you ever been any of those things I listed? I know I have. You know why? Because I was looking to me to fix whatever situation was going on in my life around me. When I didn't have the strength or the knowledge or the know-how, I felt dismayed.

BUT if I'd listened to Him, reminded myself He is my God. And He will strengthen me and help me. He will hold me up with His right hand. If I'd listened and believed at that moment, I would have saved myself from some heartache and depression. God loves me. He loves you. He wants to take care of us. We just have to be willing to trust Him and let Him do what is best for us. We make things so hard.

The good news is He doesn't give up on us. So keep your eyes on Him, on His Word, His promises, and you won't have to be afraid or dismayed.

God bless you all.

February 27 **Rejoice And Give Thanks To God In ALL Things**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

I used to have trouble with this one when confronted by my sister claiming she can't thank God for everything because truth be told, she wasn't happy with whatever was going on in her life. So what could I say to her? Nothing, because I didn't truly understand what God said here.

I do now! He didn't say thank God for the situation or circumstance that we are in. He said give thanks **in all** circumstances knowing He will see you through, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Back in the day, I thought it was telling me this bad circumstance I was in was God's will for me and I should thank Him for it. But that wasn't what it said in the Scripture. It was saying – give God thanks, and know He will get me through it. **His will is for us to Thank Him. Trust Him.**

Know that He will get His children through everything that comes their way, if they trust Him through it all!

Give thanks *in all things*, not *for all things*.

Keep in your heart God's promise: that what Satan means for harm, God will make good for those who love Him. So whatever the situation you find yourself in, look to God to see you through. Thank Him and trust Him.

God is the Christ in every crisis. So thank Him and lean on Him.

Have a great day!

February 28

The Two Greatest Commands

Matthew 22:37-40 - Jesus replied: "'Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Some people forget that Christ died on the cross and rose again, so we are no longer under the law. The Ten Commandments is the law. No one could keep them anyway, no matter how hard they tried...except Jesus. He did. Then by following God's plan He fixed it where, as a believer of Jesus Christ, Son of God, born of a virgin...the Man who died on the cross and rose to life through the hand of God, we are no longer under the law.

We are under the blood. Does that mean we can lie, steal, cheat, be rude to our parents, etc? By all means it does not. It means our salvation doesn't depend on us keeping them. Jesus already suffered for us knowing we couldn't keep them no matter how hard we tried.

However, being under the blood of Jesus, should mean you want to please Him. And do you know who said those things in versus 37-40 of Matthew 23?

Jesus did. He's the one who said remember to Love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind. And He said to love your neighbor as yourself. If you do those two things you will be keeping the Ten Commandments without feeling the pressure of trying to live under the law.

The sad news is, we won't always keep these 2 laws either, but our salvation doesn't rest on that. It rests on our faith and belief in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

The good news is, when we fail, God forgives us because Jesus shed His blood for us...and life goes on. So keep your heart and eyes focused on the Lord and HisWord, and you'll have a great day.

March 1

A Free Gift

2 Peter 1:2 - Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

People look everyday for peace and wonder how to get it. The Word tells us that we can not only have peace, but have grace as well...and have it in abundance. We get it through knowing God and His Son, Jesus, as our Lord and Savior.

The Word tells us about Jesus's birth and His walk on earth and all the glorious things He did while He was walking among men. Then the Word tells us how He died on the cross for all of our sins, suffered in our stead, and rose to life again. It goes on to tell us to accept Him as our Lord and Savior...we need to confess our sins, repent and ask for forgiveness and He will come and live in us and through us as He sends the Holy Spirit to reside in our hearts & spirits. So once you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will have peace in abundance. He will give you knowledge through the Word. Seek and you will find!

He gives us enough grace daily to walk through the day. What is grace? It's Him forgiving us even though we don't deserve it; dying for us even though we don't deserve it; going through the painful suffering while paying for our sins, loving us each day more and more, even though we don't deserve it. That is God giving us grace in abundance. The peace will rest in your heart when you stay in the Word, reading His promises and His love for you, peace that surpasses all understanding.

Of course when you read the Word and He tells you not to worry and to trust Him to take care of you, that He'll walk you through whatever you are going through, and you worry anyway – guess what – you just lost that peace He wants to give you in abundance.

So we have to do our part by walking and living how He tells us to do in His Word. God is good. He loves us so much He sent His Son to suffer and die for us so we can have life! Once you really accept that, and truly believe that, fill up on His Word and you'll be amazed at how much peace and grace is yours.

Hallelujah!! Life is wonderful! Have a great day.

March 2

What Is Love?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

If you are like me, you've read this from your early introduction to the Word. As Christians, we are called to be *like Christ*. God is love. Jesus is love. So therefore, we should reflect love as well.

The Word tells us if we are walking in love, we should be patient. I know when I'm sitting at a red light and it changes to green but no one moves, I lose a little bit of my patience. That's not love. So that is something I truly struggle with patience. I ask God to help me, and He is faithful to do that every time I remember to ask...instead of growling under my breath.

Love is kind. I think I have that down most of the time. Occasionally I slip and let someone else flare my nostrils, but again, God is quick to help me when I ask. He forgives me as well.

If we are walking in love, we are not to be boastful or prideful. And we are never to dishonor others. Love is not self-seeking. So how am I to walk in love not doing the things I'm not supposed to and doing the things I'm supposed to do? When I put others ahead of me, when I think of their needs and don't even concern myself with mine, then I'm walking in love. I know for a fact God is going to help me through anything and everything that comes my way. So if I just live what I know, and keep my focus on helping others...I will be walking in love.

The next part of love is probably the hardest to do. Love doesn't anger easily and keeps no record of wrong. I wish I could say THAT'S ME, but I can't. I don't get angry as fast or as quick as I used to. This is another work in progress for me. But I find when I immediately forgive someone who hurts me by something they've said or done, I'm able to keep the peace God has filled me with, and I can walk in love. And guess what...I'm so happy when I do this. If I let my flesh rule and get angry, I'm only hurting myself. Most of the time when someone hurts me, they don't even know it. It's like when I hurt someone else...I don't know it. Because truthfully, I don't want to hurt

anyone, and I know my family and friends are the same way. So usually if I get offended easily, it wasn't on purpose. And if a stranger or someone I thought was a friend hurts me, I still have to forgive them so I can live in peace. It is so much more important than having the last word or making them see things my way.

Peace...love...joy...these are the best of the best, and I want to live my life no other way.

March 3 **According To Your Faith**

Matthew 9:29 - Then He touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you"; ...

That sounds too good to be true, but it is the truth.

When I wake up in the morning, I thank God for the day. I thank Him for His goodness, His mercy, His love. I thank Him for the blessings He will bestow on me each day. I thank Him for using me to bless others. In other words, I wake up expecting God's goodness to flow through me. My faith is in His Word. I believe what He tells me, He will do. And He does it. By my faith I receive His blessings daily.

Now don't misunderstand me. My healing doesn't always come instantly in the physical sense, but I know that when I asked Him to heal my knee or ankle or foot (those seem to be the places I have had the most problems with in these past few years), He heals me instantly. Sometimes it takes longer for my physical body to feel the spiritual healing...but I have to keep believing I've been healed and thanking God for my healing—never doubting but continuing to have faith He did what He said—and keep thanking Him for my healing, and eventually my physical healing catches up. Sometimes when it happens I don't even realize it for a day or so. But the thing is, it happened. Physical caught up to the spiritual by my continued faith that I was healed. He always wants to heal me and you. Remember He says YES and AMEN!

By faith I know my tomorrows will be better than my yesterdays. The Word says so and I believe.

By faith I know I am loved. His Word says so and I believe.

By faith I know one day I'll see my husband Scott, my mom, my dad, my sister, and now my brother again in Heaven. Praise God they were all saved!!

My faith comes from what the Word tells me. I get that from reading it, filling my heart and mind with His Word. And according to that Scripture above, according to my faith it will be done to me. I know it. I believe it. And I walk expecting it.

Praise God!

March 4

God Sees Righteousness When He Looks At His Believers

2 Corinthians 5:21 - God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

As a believer of Christ Jesus as my savior, when God looks down at me He doesn't see that sinner Deborah, who messed up, who did wrong. No. When He looks down at me I am covered in His Son's blood, so all He sees is the righteousness of Christ that I'm covered with.

Praise God!

Jesus is the man who walked this earth and never sinned. He was tempted, just like us, but He never gave in to temptation. He never sinned. No. He always turned to God and He helped Jesus fulfill the plan God had for Jesus when God first sent His Son to live on earth among men. He did it all for us. But to receive His blessedness, to become righteous, we must accept Jesus as our Savior. It sounds simple. It is. You just have to believe and receive.

Then to walk in the fullness of His abundant blessings you need to read the Word and do as it tells you to do. The Holy Spirit in you will help you, as long as you lean on Him to do so. The Holy Bible is a "how to" book that covers anything and everything you need direction in, so use it! Talk about turn your life around!

Have a great day!

March 5

Jesus Never Changes

Hebrews 13:8 - *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

When you read the Word, you see that Jesus was a good guy who walked around helping others.

Never did He worry about tomorrow. He took each day as it came and glorified God as He walked through His day. He gave love to anyone who would accept it. He healed those who wanted it and believed that He could. He always took time for everyone, even the little children.

He is still like that today. He's there waiting to hear from me...from you. He wants to help us. He wants to pour down His love on us, His favor. He wants to direct us in the way He wants us to go. We only need ask.

He's the same today as He was yesterday, all the things you read in the Word.

Those of us who have accepted Him as our Savior look forward to the forever in our lives. We will be living eternity in Heaven with Jesus loving us and being there for us, because He never changes.

He is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

Praise God!

March 6 **God Has Great Plans For Your Life**

Ephesians 2:8-10 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

This is something that amazes me. No one has to work to be saved for eternity. You just have to want Jesus to come into your heart and live there... via The Holy Spirit. Most say I'm not ready to give up this or that and to be a Christian you have to.

Guess what. You don't have, but you'll want to. You'll want to live a life worthy of Christ, glorifying God.

Your works doesn't save you. Believing and accepting Christ as your Savior

saves you. When you do, then you'll **want** to work at pleasing Him, glorifying Him.

God has a plan for each and every one of us.

I can only tell you about mine. He told me, showed me, He wanted me to write fiction. My books are fiction, but my God is real. In today's world there are shelves and shelves of inspirational romance, mystery, suspense, and more. God is alive and living in the pages of non-fiction, but also in fiction.

Praise God for the wide spread of inspirational fiction. It's in the books and the movies today. I am so blessed to be a part of this world that is working to grow the Kingdom of God.

Not of the world, but in the world living for my Lord and Savior. He's got a great plan for you too...to use what you are passionate about and use it to help grow the kingdom of God.

March 7 **The Rule To Live By**

Luke 6:30 - *Give to everyone who asks you and if anyone takes what belongs to you do not demand it back.*

That Scripture seems harsh and unfair. However, this is loving your enemy.

God tells us to love our enemies in verses 27 & 28.

It's hard to do. It's not even always easy to love your friend or family. But God's word tells us how to love our enemies.

We do it by giving them whatever they ask of us (if it's in your power to do so-this is stated in another part of the Bible where it talks about giving what is asked of you). Luke 6:30 goes on to say, if someone takes something that is yours, don't demand it back.

Again that seems harsh and unfair, but if God tells us to do it, you know we are going to come out on top when we do. He never tells us to do anything that will hurt us. So as hard as it sounds, it's best to do as we're told.

If we need help doing it, He'll help us if we just ask.

God is good!

March 8 **Remind God Of His Promises**

Isaiah 43:26 (NASB) *Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together; State your cause, that you may be proved right.*

When things aren't happening in your life that you know God has told you in His Word, promises He's made to His believers, His followers; call up the Scripture and remind Him. Pray about it. Ask Him for it to be in your life. If it still doesn't come to pass, ask Him if you have un-forgiveness in your heart or are not pleasing Him in another way, ask Him to reveal it to you. Make your heart right with the Lord, and ask again, quoting Scripture to back up His promise to you.

The Word is strong and God is faithful. Jesus used Scripture as Satan was tempting Him. He reminded God of His Word while Satan was tempting Jesus.

Speak it! Stand on it! And believe it!

God's promises were good yesterday...are good today...and will be good in the future.

It's not that God has forgotten even though He says 'put Me in remembrance.' So do as He said and put Him in remembrance.

God bless you. Have a great day!

March 9 **Way To Walk Daily**

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22, 26 – *Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil. Greet all God's people with a holy kiss.*

These are things you know to do daily. You don't have to ask yourself, well should I do this today? No. Every day we are not to quench the Holy Spirit in us.

He is there in you, leading you, directing you in how to live and respond to everything that comes your way. But when you choose to ignore Him once, the next time He talks a little softer. The more you ignore Him; He will eventually lay dormant in you. He does not push His way in.

However, when you listen and obey doing what He tells you, His voice will grow stronger in you each day. But it's your choice. He leaves it up to you.

If someone comes along in the streets or in your church and prophesies over you, listen. Then pray asking God if this is His will for you. He'll let you know. Read His Word. If it goes against His Word you know it's not for you. Remember God speaks to us in many ways, but it's up to us to test the truth... through His Word, through prayer, through obedience.

Hold on to what is truth, what is good, and reject the evil. You know God is good, not evil. So if it's evil you know it's not God!

He also tells us to greet our brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. That's opening your arms and heart to others around you, God's children, and be there for them like Jesus was there and is there for you!

Have a wonderful day.

March 10 **God Is The Best Father**

James 1:17 – Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Everything that comes your way that is good is from the Father. That's because He is good and He chooses to give good to His children...that's you and me, believers in His Son. This will never change.

But you say, wait Deborah. Bad things have been happening in my life. I'm a believer.

I didn't say bad things wouldn't come.

When these bad things come, go to God. Ask Him what you need to change in

your life or what you need to do to stop them from coming. He's not sending them to you, but he allows bad things in our lives for a reason. It doesn't mean you've done something wrong either, yet it could be that.

However, He could be allowing that bad thing in your life so someone who is watching you, knowing you are a believer, will see how you walk through it. Sometimes these bad things are used as testimonies to others. Sometimes it's consequences from bad choices we made.

But it all comes down to this—bad is not from Him although He is allowing it. Keep your faith and trust in Him to see you through it. Jesus tells us in the Word trouble will come every day...so know I'm not talking about trouble. I'm talking about bad things that happen around you and to you.

Keep your eyes fixed on God and let Him lead you through these days knowing He will bring you through. Rest in Him. This too shall pass.

Have a glorious day!

March 11 **Keep Your Eyes On Jesus**

Hebrews 3:1 – *Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest.*

This ties in to what we talked about yesterday, in my opinion.

Keeping our thoughts on Jesus is what will help us through the trying times, troubled times, bad times. He is our stronghold.

Jesus died for you and me...so know that He is there to help you through whatever comes your way. He'll even carry you if that's what you need.

God is good. God is love. Jesus is good. Jesus is love.

Trust in Him and His word. Stay in the Holy Bible, reading it every day. What we fill ourselves with is what will pour out of us in times of trouble, heartache, bad times, and good times.

God wants to be there for it all. You need only to fix your thoughts on Jesus!

March 12

Rest In God

Psalm 91:1 – *Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*

As you know, this past year and a half, and even the six months leading up to my husband's death, were trying times. It's hard to watch a loved one die.

I'm so blessed and thankful that Scott knew Jesus as his Savior. It was a peaceful yet sad time.

Scott was dwelling in the shelter of the Most High, resting in the shadow of the Almighty, and I was too and am today.

Sure I cried...I still cry, but I know without a doubt Scott is praising the LORD in heaven with others as well as the angels. And one day I will join them all there.

In the meantime, I'm resting in the shadow of the Almighty. My life is at peace, full of joy and expectancy.

You can have it too. Just dwell in His shelter, rest in His shadow.

March 13

He Can And Will Do More

Ephesians 3:20-21 – *Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever! Amen.*

God wants to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we could imagine. To live that abundant life, we have to not only read the Scriptures that tell us these things, but also we have to take them into our heart and mind, along with our spirit, and believe them. We have to know that we know.

God wants to do amazing things for us. He forgave us even when we didn't deserve forgiveness. He still does. He sent His Son to die for us because He loves us so. If we would take His word deep in us, trusting Him, trusting His Word, we will be amazed at how free we become. Our lives become peaceful

even in the midst of tragedy or pain.

God wants to do more for us, more than we can think or imagine or ask. But we have to do our part and believe and trust and not doubt.

He is there for me...He is there for you. Let Him lead!

March 14

Praise God We Don't Get What We Deserve

John 1:16 – *Out of His fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.*

God wants to bless us all the time. He reminds us in Scripture throughout the Word. By His grace we are blessed. My favorites to read are Psalm 103 and Deuteronomy 28.

In Psalm 103 He tells us to praise Him and not to forget all His benefits (blessings, promises, gifts to you and me). Number one benefit is He forgives us of our sins. We don't deserve it but He does it anyway. Notice He forgives us, not forgave us. Yes He forgave the past sins but He continues to forgive our present and future sins. Now, that is an awesome promise, because we still sin even when we try not to sin.

The second benefit is He heals all our diseases. We know as time passes and the earth evolves and man makes more and more things, diseases become more and more abundant. But back before Jesus came to earth God told us He heals all our diseases. You trust in that and any sickness that comes on you—you will get through and overcome that disease.

The third thing He talks about is that He redeems us from the pits we fall into. Pits are things we bring upon ourselves or our fellowman creates for us. Keep your trust in Him and He will pull you through it, helping you out of it.

Fourthly, He covers us with His love and His compassion. We don't deserve either, but He freely gives us both. Free to us...costly to His Son. Jesus paid the price, we need only to believe and accept. Next He satisfies our desires with good things.

And last but not least, he renews our youth like the eagles. They are strong and that's what He wants for us, to be strong and soar above the evil of this

world.

Deuteronomy 28 lists the blessings for our obedience. Realize to receive them you must be obedient to His Word. (Note – this is not to receive Salvation. You’ve already received that. This is to receive the blessings God wants to give you.)

It starts with telling us to obey the Lord and follow His commands. This is in the Old Testament, so it makes us think of the Ten Commandments. Under the old covenant that is what was meant. But now that Jesus has come and suffered and died for us and lives again, we who believe are under the new covenant.

In the New Testament when Jesus is asked what does He command of us now, He tells us to Love the Lord our God more than anything, and love others as you love yourself. Those are the commandments to follow to receive His blessings. In the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy He lists all the blessings. Times have changed. Most of us don’t live in a tent or farm for ourselves...some do...but this applies to all of us. Our tent is our home, our farming and tending is our jobs today.

Read this Scripture and apply it to your life, knowing that He will bless you wherever you are (in the city or in the country), He will bless your kids and the people you bring into His fold, He will fill your cupboards so you have plenty for you and others, He’ll protect you wherever you are as long as you are keeping your trust in Him, He’ll prosper you as you live for Him, and more, so much more.

Read it. Dwell on it and in it!

Think of it as a letter to you from The Great I Am! He loves you and wants to bless you!

Let Him!! Keep your faith and trust in Him.

March 15 **We Have The POWER**

Luke 10:19 – *I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.*

Yes, God is speaking to Jesus in this Scripture...but know He is telling us the same thing, because He gives us the same powers He gave His Son.

The more you read the Word and know the Word, the more you will know how blessed you are. And as you walk in the blessings your life becomes more peaceful, more joyful.

Take time to read the Word everyday, so you too will know all the power God has poured down on you!

Have an immensely blessed day today!!

March 16 **We All Stumble**

James 3:2 – *We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

This Scripture tells us it's not how religious you are, or how many Scriptures you can quote, or how many good deeds you do that make you a mature Christian. It's how you use your mouth...the words you speak.

If we never mess up in the words we speak, then we would be perfect. Only Jesus was perfect, but remember we strive to be like Him.

Sure, we'll never be perfect like Jesus was, but if we'd stop and think before we spoke, control the words that we let come out of our mouths, we would be more like Jesus every day.

Isn't that what we all want to do, be more like Jesus? A Christian is one who is Christ-like. So yes. That is what we should want to do, strive to be more like Him. And as we watch what we say, what we let come out of our mouths, we will become a more mature Christian.

So think before you speak! Let the Holy Spirit lead you when to talk and when to keep your mouth shut. There are times we know that we know this or that, but sometimes as much as we think we know, God knows better. Keep those things to yourself if that is how God is leading you. And if God leads you to share those words down the road, then so be it. That's when you share them.

Always remember, God sees the big picture. And if you turn to Him in everything, even when talking, He will lead you. Take time to let Him.

God bless you and have a wonderful day today as you choose your words wisely. 😊

March 17 **Let Him Remain In You**

John 15:7 – If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

His words are so simple. Jesus tells us plain as day, if we remain in Him and His Words remain in us, then anything we wish will be done for us.

You must realize if you are remaining in Him and in the Word, you are not going to wish for anything that goes against what God wants for us. God is good. He is full of love for us. He loved us so much He gave His only Son for us.

And Jesus loves us so much; He went through with God's plan and died for us, suffering for our sins so we don't have to.

So why do we make it so hard to believe what the Word tells us? Naysayers call that "name it and claim it," but I call it God's blessing on us. He wants to show His love by giving us things we wish for. His Word says so!!

Do you have children?

If you do, then you can understand how He feels. He loves us so much...we the children of God...that He wants to grant us our wishes. But you must do your part. What is that? REMAIN in HIM and His Word, keeping His Word in your heart, mind, spirit, and body by renewing yourself daily with the Word.

Keep God first. Take time daily to fill your mind and heart with His Word. And walk in His love.

Watch your wishes be done for you.

March 18 **God's Plan For You**

Philippians 2:13 – *for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.*

God has a plan and a purpose for all of us as we walk this earth.

When we accept that and ask for His Will to be done in our lives, we will see a difference in our lives. The plan He has for us will take time to become clear to each of us, but if we decide we want what He has planned for us and seek after Him, He will make it clear.

And as we walk daily in His will for us, God will work in us to will and act according to His good purpose for each of us.

Also when we start doing this we will be amazed at how peaceful our lives become. I'm not saying things won't happen around us and to us, but we'll have Him guiding us through whatever comes our way, and we will flow in peace from God. It's a peace that we won't even be able to explain, but we'll know we have it.

Take care of yourself by walking in His plans for you.

Have a glorious day!!!

March 19 **Take Control**

Acts 24:16 – *So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.*

Our mind is a key piece to keeping our self on the path God's planned for us. Satan puts thoughts into our minds. It's up to us to shut him up. We can either let him run unrestricted in our minds, or we can fight back with the Word.

When a negative thought comes into your mind, know negative does not come from God. God is a positive God who wants the best for us and wants us to do the best too and for others. If a mean thought comes into your mind, know it's not from God. He wants you/us to walk in love.

We can give Satan control, or we can discipline our minds to give control to

God through the Holy Spirit living in you.

If we want to keep our conscience clear before God and men, then walk in His Word. Walk in His love. Keep our thoughts on good, pure, kind, and/or noble things.

You'll find a freedom, a joy that keeps a smile on your face and in your heart.

Trust God and His ways to be your path to a clear conscience. Have a blessed day.

March 20 **Let Your Light Shine**

Proverbs 27:17 – As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Have you ever wondered why some people are more advanced in their spiritual growth than you are?

I remember years ago, saying to God, "I want a heart for You like hers." I was talking about Beth Moore. She reads the Word and shares it with us through Bible Studies. When studying her Bible Teachings the Word becomes so clear to me. And the joy she has for the Lord just radiates from within her. So much so that I feel when I've spent ten to twelve weeks in one of her Bible Studies that I come away glowing myself. I started doing her Bible Studies back in the early 2000's. And today, I have people tell me they can see Jesus in me. Or that the joy of the Lord shines through me... the love of the Lord is reflected in my spirit. How can that be? Because as God told us, iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Did I grow in my relationship with God by just doing Beth Moore Bible Studies? No. But, she rubbed off on me. And when I started doing those, I started reading more and more of God's Word. I started listening to preachers on TV. I read books and other studies by other believers in God. So not only did Beth Moore sharpen me, so did Pastor Larry Stockstill, Brother Kenneth Copeland, Pastor Joseph Prince, Joel Osteen, Joyce Meyer, and many more believers who share God's Word. Their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior permeated through their messages into my heart and soul. They too made the Word become clearer to me. I'm still being sharpened every day. Thank You Lord!

Thanks to opening my heart to His Word and my ears to messages about Him and my eyes to non-fiction books about God's love, grace, and mercy, I too now can be used to sharpen others. We don't have to be a preacher to be used. Just learn and grow and be willing to be used.

Stay close to Him and He will stay close to you. Surround yourself with His teachings, His love, and you too will be sharpening others. You probably already are and don't even realize it.

God is good and He loves you. Have a blessed day!

March 21 **He Has Your Way Out**

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Temptation that is common to mankind covers every temptation. And guess what? Jesus walked this earth as a man and was tempted in so many ways. He did not give in to temptation.

Our flesh is weak, and I believe all of us can say we've given in to temptation many times. If you'll think back, I bet you can see where God gave you the way out...only you didn't take it. I know I can remember some times I gave in to temptation AND I can remember God giving me the way out. I chose not to take it and suffered the consequences.

We don't have to give in to temptation. It comes usually when we are at the lowest point of our day or at a low moment in our lives. It comes when we are most likely to give in, but we don't have to. We can follow Christ's direction and overcome temptation instead of letting temptation overcome us.

Maintaining a Christ-like attitude through your journey, in the middle of unpleasantness, is the key to victory. He not only will offer you a way out, but if you take it, He'll see you through to the other side...the side of victory.

God has a great plan for you and me, and if we are faithful to always turn to Him and let Him lead, our lives would be so much more pleasant, peaceful, and beautiful. He loves us so much...even more than you love your own kids.

Stay faithful to Him. Stay faithful to His Word. Look to Him to lead you through whatever comes your way.

March 22

Let The Lord Be Every Thing To You

*Psalm 27:1 – The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?*

Did you know fear comes from Satan?

Fear does not come from God. He tells us – ***Be not afraid.*** All throughout Scripture you find Him saying that to His people. We are His people, so we are not to be afraid.

Well, Deborah, give me a break. Things happen. How can you not be afraid?

Truth is, I have been afraid...but when I was afraid I was living and thinking in the flesh. How did I get past it? I started calling on Jesus. Just calling out to Him. My heart was hammering. I heard a noise in the house and I was alone. It was shortly after Scott died. I wasn't used to being the only one in our home. I'd finally started sleeping in the bed instead of my chair in the living room. It was hard to do, but I'd finally managed to crawl into our bed to sleep. It's been a little over a year and a half. I still turn his pillows sideways and lay them down the middle of our big bed. I know I'm not alone. God is with me, but the night I heard that sound I woke up in fear. It wasn't until after I called on the Lord to fill me, to calm me, to give me peace, that I finally relaxed and felt the peace of God. Then I got up and walked around the downstairs, checking all my locks...and then went back to bed. I slept the rest of the night in peace.

Fear dangles in the back of my mind at other times, but when it does I choose to turn it over to the Lord and ask Him to take care of whatever seems to be troubling me at the time.

The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Let Him be yours too. Give your fears to Him. Let Him take care of you and your fears. He's always willing and ready.

March 23

Be Content

Hebrews 13:5-6 – *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”*

These verses are strong advice. He tells us to keep our lives free from “the love” of money...and He tells us to be content with what we have. My Daddy always said, “Make do, redo, or do without.” That too was wise. Maybe that was his interpretation of God’s directions. It worked for me most of the time.

All my life I can say I’ve had more than enough. I’ve been blessed. But there were times when I wished I had something someone else had. That wasn’t right on my part. I had to learn to be content with what I had before God moved me to the next level. After I advanced, whether it was as a mother or a wife, or in the job, or now in my career, I saw the truth in those words of Scripture. I had to learn to be content where I was before He moved me on to another level.

Sometimes I needed to learn something He was trying to teach me in that placement in life. It wasn’t until I found contentment in that situation, that I felt God grow me. This has happened several times over the course of my life.

I hope I’ve grown wise in my days here on earth and have learned to be content wherever God has me. I know He has great plans for me.

His Word tells us our tomorrows will be greater than our pasts. My past has been very good. I don’t know about you, but I try to remember only the good. I let the bad stay as far away from me as the east is from the west, because I know God has already forgiven me for my poor choices I’ve made. So I focus on the good. Stay content where I am. And I look forward to where He will be taking me next.

He is my helper. He has plans for me. No man can hurt me. Only I can...by not letting God direct me. But I choose to stay in faith, walking in love, believing God has me in His hands.

March 24

Look For The Good

Philippians 2:14-16 – *Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.*

I'd love to say I don't complain about anything...and I never argue. Sad to say that isn't true. I can say I do it a whole lot less than I did years ago. In fact, just a few moments ago I went and did something someone asked of me. When they asked the favor it was followed by strict instructions on how to do it their way. As I walked away to do it, I grumbled a little to myself thinking I know what I'm doing. Then I remembered what God said – don't complain or argue – that means don't grumble about ANYTHING. I immediately said, "Forgive me Lord." I felt immediate peace. I know when those instructions were given to me; it wasn't meant to say my friend didn't think I knew how to do it right. It was just their way of doing it and that's how they wanted it done. I'm here to help so why shouldn't I do it their way. I felt ashamed and asked forgiveness, receiving it immediately. I think that was pride (not from God, but from Satan). I let him slip into my mind and take offense. That was so wrong. But praise God; He didn't let me stay there.

God loves me. He loves you. We are his children. He wants to help us walk blameless and pure lives in a crooked and depraved place. As we do, we become beacons of light to others. When you are walking without grumbling, more than likely there is a smile on your face. When people see the happiness in you, they want some of what you have.

Share the love. Share the joy. Don't grumble or argue.

Have a blessed day!

March 25

Follow His Lead

Proverbs 16:9 – *In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.*

This Scripture was on my website for many years. I still believe it so strongly.

We plan our days. We plan our months. We plan our years. We plan everything in our lives. BUT the Lord determines our steps...and if we are wise, we follow the steps He has established for us. We do have the freedom to choose every time.

Now where I am in life with my relationship with God, I pray His will be done in my life. I've learned that when I choose to walk the steps He's planned for me, the day comes out so much better. Of course I'm a woman. I've been a mother for over forty years. Now I'm a grandmother. I was a wife for 43 years...so know that I plan my days. Ask my kids. Sometimes I think I try to plan theirs as well. Ha-ha! They are all grown up, but at times they have to remind me, Mom, I'm not a kid anymore. I'll figure this out one day. It's a natural instinct for a mom to try and fix things...plan things...make things work.

But the good news is, I don't have to try and fix things, make things happen. The Lord has already determined my steps. He planned them before I was born. So as long as I stay close to Him, stay in His Word, and let the Holy Spirit guide me while I'm making these plans, I know God will direct my steps, securely, keeping them firm and on His path.

I wake up knowing this, and knowing I will have a blessed day!

March 26 **God Supplies Our Daily Needs**

Hebrews 4:16 – *Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

When we read the Word daily, we find the Lord gives us enough mercy and grace for each day. We only have to rely on Him and receive the grace He gives us and we will find victory in our day.

Each day when you wake up, thank God for this glorious day He is giving you. Go to Him boldly in prayer, with thanksgiving, confidently knowing that He loves you and that He wants the best for you. We don't deserve the good things that He does for us, but He does them anyway.

Why?

Because He is a loving God.

Because He's a God who wants the best for us.

Because He's a God that has already worked out the end of our times here on earth.

Because His plans are the best.

Because He is full of mercy and grace and wants to give it to you in plenty.

So trust in Him. Receive His mercy and grace whenever you need it. Reach out to Him. He has more than enough, and He's ready to share it with you.

March 27 **God Loved Us First**

Romans 5:8 – *But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

God loves me. Not because I write books that share His love with others. Not because I live everyday perfectly as Jesus did—because I don't. Sad to say I don't even come close. I do try, however, to be the best I can be, to reflect Jesus and His love for me.

The good thing is, He loves you too.

Those of us who have put our faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God and the work He accomplished while He walked this earth—through His death and resurrection—are accepted, saved, loved, and righteous.

He died for our sins. He paid the price for us. We have these things because He gave them to us, not because we earned them. It was a gift when you invited Him into your heart.

He loves you and me, and loved us before we loved Him! Not because of what we do or don't do, He just loves us because of who He is! Praise God!

So hold your head up and know that your Creator loves you. Walk in that love. Share that love with others and you will feel the blessings of God pouring down on you.

God loves you!

March 28 **God Is Good**

Psalm 37:4 (NASB) – *Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.*

I've heard in different circles that this verse is not true. But it is. All of God's Word is true!!!

God wants to give us all the desires of our hearts. He will too, but you have to delight yourself in the Lord.

Some say, well I go to church every Sunday. He doesn't give me my desires.

Going to church is not delighting yourself in the Lord. Don't get me wrong. It could be a great start, as long as you don't leave what the word is teaching you in the parking lot. Take it with you. Build your heart in His Word. Feed on it. Meditate on it. Let the Word consume you, and then you will be delighting yourself in the Lord.

It's more than just reading about Him. It's more than reading the Word everyday. It's more than going to church. It's more than praying to God. It's having a full relationship with Him. It's when the Lord is so important to you that you want to spend every minute of every day with Him.

Some people say, but you can't let God be with you all the time. He doesn't watch the same kind of movies you watch, or television for that matter. Or he won't like some of the kids you hang around with at school, or if you're an adult, the adults you hang around with when you are not at church. That's when I have to say; you're watching the wrong movies or hanging out with the wrong crowd. If you don't think God wants to be there, then that means you shouldn't be either...if you delight yourself in the Lord.

There is a time and a place for being with non-believers, or Christians who are not walking in their faith. It's when you are helping them come to the Lord, or bringing someone back to God. God uses people in every walk of life, but we have to stay delighting ourselves in Him...if we want to receive the desires of our hearts. He wants to give them to us.

The ball is in your court! 😊

March 29

Listen And Obey

Luke 11:28 – *He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.”*

That sounds simple enough. If you hear God’s Word AND OBEY, you are blessed.

So does that mean if you are not being blessed, it’s because you are not obeying God? It could mean that. Or it could mean you aren’t listening to the Word. Maybe you’re obeying the Word you heard as a youngster, but you haven’t really read much lately. Maybe He’s waiting, wanting you to get back into the Word.

All I know is, God’s Word is truth. If He says it, it’s true. So He does bless those who hear the Word of God and obey it. You need to pray this out. Talk it over with God. See what you may be doing wrong...or see what you’re not doing that you should be doing.

God wants to bless you. Let His Word lead you to blessings in abundance. Open up your heart to His Word. Take it in. Feed on it. And obey it.

God bless you! Have a wonderful day today, expecting God’s blessing. If you’re doing your part, the blessings will come. And as you receive them, remember to thank Him.

March 30

God’s Grace Is Enough

2 Corinthians 12:9 – *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.*

You’ve probably heard this before. I’m telling you it is true. When I first got laid up for a couple of months after an automobile accident, I read so many books. Then one day I said to God, I can write this. I felt in my spirit Him say, “Yes, you can.”

Those words changed my life. When I first heard them, they were followed by a story that popped into my head. I laughed, but then immediately grabbed a

notebook and started writing. Well after five manuscripts were written, I thought I must have misheard the words from God. Or maybe they weren't from Him. Maybe I just imagined them.

So I started back peddling and telling God, it must not have been Him that told me to start writing. I had five manuscripts but couldn't seem to get any published. At first I thought He had me writing them for me, but then He helped me see He planned to share them with others so I can share Him with others. But then I started questioning if it was even Him talking to me. I reminded Him that English was one of my worst subjects in school. History was the worst. That's probably why I don't read or write historical fiction. Anyway, I told God plainly, He must have had me confused with someone else or I was just hearing things.

That's when He told me to be patient and wait on Him. Now waiting didn't mean for me to sit around and do nothing. Writing is a craft. There is an art to it. Grammar is a part of writing, so I had to refresh my memory on proper grammar. I kept writing the stories God kept pouring into my heart and head. He let me know my job was to write, hone the craft, and not give up. I did this for twenty years, at times a strayed in my writing and listened to the world's advice as to what sells books. He got me back on track. 18 manuscripts later, my first book was published. More have followed, Thank You, Lord!

God gave me His grace, His wisdom, His creativity and it's more than enough. He gives it to us all—for free!

Praise God!

March 31 **Think Before You Speak**

Proverbs 21:23 – Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity.

I don't know about you, but I had a bad habit of speaking negative thoughts. When they came into my mind, they slipped right out.

Those who know me well today probably find that hard to believe because now I try to keep my words positive. The negative still slips out occasionally, but not very often.

So how did I change that? When I read this Scripture it let me know that it was up to me to guard my mouth, to control my tongue. Thoughts will come to me/you. We can't stop them from coming. Unfortunately the devil can slip thoughts into our mind whenever he wants. Don't get me wrong. I am not saying every negative thought comes from Satan. We bring them on ourselves when we have low self esteem, or when we are just so tired we feel too worn-out to worry about our thoughts.

We should, however, keep a positive mindset. The Word teaches us God is love. God is good. God is patient. God is kind. And we know Jesus, His Son, is like the Father. And we as believers want to be more Christ-like. So we should set our minds on good thoughts, positive thoughts.

And I don't know how many of you have listened to Joyce Meyer in the past, but she said something that has always stuck in my mind. Where the mind goes, the man follows. That's to us women as well. When we allow our thoughts to go in the wrong direction, our body tends to follow those thoughts.

Someone else, (I can't remember who), said you are living today what you spoke yesterday...so if you don't like where you're at, change your words. Speak today what you want to live tomorrow.

So watch out what you say. Don't let your thoughts come tumbling out of your mouth, unless of course you're thinking great thoughts. 😊

Have a wonderful day!

April 1

Troubles Come

John 16:33 – *“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

As you all know, these past few years I have had some troubling times. When my husband got sick, our life changed...Scott's life changed. So many things he could do before, he could no longer do. Things he didn't do before because he never had the time to do, he got to do and found out he enjoyed them... Even stated a few times how he wished he'd made more time to do some of those little family birthday parties and get-togethers. The most important thing of all, he came back to Christ.

So know in the past 5 years there were some troubling times, but through it God gave us a lot of joy as well. God overcomes the trouble, if we just allow Him to. Give Him your troubles, your worries. Let Him take care of them. You just walk in love with God, loving His Son, Jesus Christ, and loving others through Him and you'll find you're passing through your troubles with a joy in your heart.

Remember, troubles do come. God tells us so. But think past that; know that He overcame the world. So if He can overcome the world, He can overcome your trouble.

Trust Him. Give it to Him. Rest in Him.

April 2

God Is #1!

Exodus 20:3 – *“You shall have no other gods before Me.”*

That sounds simple and most of us believe we have no other gods before our God. But is that true?

Are we honoring His command? Have we put anything or anyone ahead of God?

Stop and think about your day. How much time do you give Him? Do you talk to Him about your problems...I mean do you go to Him first when problems

arise? Do you take time to read His Word?

He took time to speak to us through many men on earth. I mean the Holy Bible is like a great “how to” book—How to live your life in abundance, full of joy, full of peace, full of love. God wants the best for you and me both.

If we would make him a priority in our lives, we would be so blessed.

Do it. I dare you! 😊

April 3 **You Were Made Special**

Ephesians 2:10 – For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

What does that mean?

To me, it’s saying God made each of us special, with a special purpose to serve. Some people were made to be preachers, evangelists, and/or singers. Those are easy positions to see how they can use their specialty traits to serve God.

Guess what? Whether you are a banker, a farmer, a housekeeper, a homemaker, a secretary, an actress, a writer, even a dispatcher, and more, you were created to do your job and do it to the glory of God. Bring honor to Him. Direct others to Him. I don’t mean you are to preach to your co-workers. The way you act, think, and talk, should tell them there is something special about you. When believers remember God is fighting their problems for them, their enemies for them, their sicknesses for them, and they rest in Him and show the joy of the Lord in their walk, talk, and actions—letting others see the joy of the Lord in them—then they’re/you’re preaching without saying a word.

Share the grace of God with others. Share His love. Do all of this by being the masterpiece God created you to be, being the best you can be at whatever you are “being” at that moment.

Notice in the list I stated dispatcher. I did that for 20 of my 30 years at Enterprise Transportation Company. And as a dispatcher, God allowed me to share Him (without preaching) with my co-workers. As a full-time writer I do

it as well.

What I'm trying to say is at whatever your walk in life is He created you as a masterpiece, with a purpose and a plan...giving glory to God through it all.

Have a blessed day!

April 4 **Never Give Up!**

Galatians 6:9 – Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

God is good. He teaches us to do good as we walk through our life. Sometimes, it's just being good to others you meet on the street. A smile here, a kind word there...all of that is good.

You'll never know how much that meant to someone you shared it with, but God does. He sees the big picture. So never give up on doing good things like bringing sunshine into someone else's life.

Also, when you are called to do something special for Him, and you know it...you accept it...and you start doing it. If you don't see results of your good thing God has led you to do, don't give up. It doesn't mean nothing is happening. And if you need to see a harvest from your good deeds, you won't see it if you give up. Keep on keeping on. He tells you in His word, you will reap a harvest from doing good. So don't quit. Don't give up.

I know I've shared this before, but I'll share it again. I felt called by God to write fiction when I was 33 years old. I didn't know at the time it was fiction to be shared with more than my mom and a friend. But He let me know He had big plans for my writing. I followed His call. I wrote for twenty years before I saw the first of the harvest. Then eight years later the harvest grew a little bigger. So I'm telling you what God said to me and to you, keep doing good. Don't grow weary and give up. At His time, which is the right time, you will see a harvest.

God is faithful. The joy that overflows within when the harvest comes is beyond expressions. But I can tell you from experience it's worth the wait!!

April 5 **A Moment In Time In His Presence**

Psalm 16:11 – *You make known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.*

These words David is speaking go along with the Scripture I shared on April 4th. David is thankful for the path God showed him to follow. He's beside himself in the joy he's feeling in the presence of God.

I believe God shows each of us the path He has planned for us when we are seeking His way. And when we listen, and follow the path He has chosen for us He fills us with the joy that I was speaking of... a joy that is indescribable. I believe, it's because He is making Himself known to us more and more at that very moment... kind of like the moment Moses saw the burning bush. He knew without a doubt that was God.

Today when my daughter was reading a review someone posted about one of my books and the reader shared how when she finishes one of my books she feels uplifted and inspired, I knew it was God.

That thrilled me to no end, because I knew when God shared with me what He wanted me to do in writing—to entertain readers, but even more, to remind them that God is present and wants to be with each of us through our trials and tribulations—I wanted to fulfill His calling on my life. When this review was read to me, I felt like I was sitting at the feet of Jesus and He was letting me know He is well pleased. I'm following the path He's made known to me.

So talk to God. Find the path He's planned for you (if you haven't already), and follow it. Get ready for a joy beyond measure!!

Have a wonderful life!

April 6 **The Powerful Strength Within You**

2 Timothy 1:7 – *For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.*

This is a powerful Scripture. If you would take it to heart you'd be amazed at what you can overcome quoting it.

The first thing it makes me think about is when fear comes over me I know it's not from God. He didn't give us that spirit. The spirit of fear is one of those spirits that Jesus overcame at the cross. That is one of the evil spirits from the devil. And you as a believer have the same power of victory to overcome that spirit.

God gave us the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind. So when fear tries to overtake you, start walking in the power from within you. Start saying out loud; "I don't have to fear this (whatever it is). I have strong power within me. I am full of love. My mind is sound. I can overcome whatever this is trying to bring me down into the pits of fear." Or just start quoting the Scripture over and over. You'll see how the strength and power within you will overtake this spirit of fear.

Praise God!

God is faithful. What He does for one of His children, He will do for all of His children. Timothy knew God did not want His children to walk in fear, but in strength from the Holy Spirit that He has filled us with. So take hold and let the Holy Spirit lead you.

Have a great day!

April 7 His Time

1 Peter 5:5b-6 - ... *"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time.*

As a writer, God has had to remind me of this Scripture many times over the past few years. Before I was published, that wasn't a problem, and most of the time it isn't now. I know I only write because God leads me. He not only gives me the story ideas, but He helps me write them in a way that a message comes from Him without me trying to be a preacher (which I was not called to be). I am grateful I'm a published author who is now being seen in bookstores and libraries across America as well as being read in other countries. Only God could make this happen.

I have no power to spread my books. Writing them takes skill I can learn and I

am trying to grow in my education of writing, but in the meantime God has blessed me with great helpers in sharpening my novels. The problem of pride comes when I'm sitting listening to someone who is also a writer and the green-head of envy creeps out on me. My flesh has its way in my head, and I think things like "what about me, my books? Are my books as good as his/hers? Why aren't mine being made into movies yet or made into a TV series? That is so silly on my part. But I'm human and at times I let my flesh have its way. Praise God for the Holy Spirit in me that shouts that Scripture in my head, bringing me back to the truth.

If it's meant to be, God will make it happen. If it's not, that wasn't my calling. So I need to stick with what He's telling me to do or not do and be grateful and thankful for where I am. He will lift me up at the right time, **IF** I stay in faith, stay humble, and not get all puffed up in pride. He has lifted me up in my calling and brought me a long way. I know there is more to come. My tomorrows are greater than my todays. And most important of all, it's not about me. It's about me reaching hearts and bringing them back closer to God, back to God, or to Him for the first time.

God is using me through the gift He's given me to grow the Kingdom of God. And I am ready and willing to be all that He's called me to be. Praise God! I am in God's army...fulfilling the great commission.

He wants to use you too, so listen, be willing, follow Him, and wait on Him.

April 8 **Persevere**

2 Thessalonians 3:13 – *And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.*

Never give up! Never stop believing! God has a plan for each and every one of us. He has a plan for you. If you want to live the life He's planned for you; seek Him, seek His Word, seek the plan. Once you feel you've heard it or seen it, go after it as He leads you. Don't jump ahead or try to make it happen. Just listen to Him and follow His lead...and His plan for you will unfold. In my opinion that is doing what is right.

Doing what is right is following Jesus' way. If you read the Word you've seen where He tells us not to judge others. He tells us to forgive so we can be forgiven. He tells us to love others. All of that is doing right. That is what

Jesus did as He walked the earth. So as a Christian we should be striving to do as Jesus did. He did what was right.

God showed me the plan He had for me when I was 33. He showed me He wanted me to write fiction and touch hearts of millions of people. I got excited and got busy. Unfortunately along the way, I tried to get ahead of His plan. I tried to do it my way...or the way I was being told by other people was the right way. I should have trusted that God had already set up the connections I needed. All I was supposed to do was write and be ready and wait...not give up...and never tire of doing what was right. Finally I saw the error of my ways and got back to waiting patiently for Him to lead me, and while I was waiting I did what was right. I wrote a new manuscript every year.

Let Him lead you daily, and the peace and joy that you will be filled with will make life easier on you. He told us we would have troubles, and that each day had enough of its own, but when we walk consistently in the steps He has planned for us, we'll be amazed at how much better our lives will become.

God is good and He is faithful. So take time each day to do what is right. Don't tire in making the right choices as they come your way. He will lead you. Follow!!

Have a blessed day!

April 9 **He's Got Your Back!**

Proverbs 3:5-6 – Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.

To me this is another Scripture telling you God has already made a way for you. He's already planned out your ways, but you & me, we have to do our part. We have to trust that He's got our back. With all our heart we need to trust Him. Don't rely on your fleshly knowledge. Learn from the best. Learn from Him through His Word.

If you take time daily to give yourself to Him and His ways for you, He will help you stay on the path He's planned for you. He will make your paths straight. With that comes a peace that gets you through the troubles of this world, a peace that can keep a smile on your face even in the midst of trouble

all around you.

Rely on Him. He's got your back. Have a blessed day!

April 10 **What A Way To Live!**

Philippians 4:4-9 – Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 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. 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.

These five Scriptures can turn your life around if you let them. . .if you take them to heart. Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord always. Not once, but twice. We think, “How can we be rejoicing in God when things aren’t what we want them to be?” In my life I could be saying that. How can I rejoice in You, Lord? You took my husband home to be with You. He’s not here with me. I miss him so much. How can I rejoice in You Lord?

I can do it, because through Paul He told me to. The Lord told me to rejoice, so if I plan to be obedient and receive favor from Him, I need to do what He tells me to do. . .even when it goes against how my flesh feels. So that’s when I turned to prayers—a lot of them. I needed God to help me praise Him while I’m in so much pain. I read Scripture as God stayed with me, leading me, never leaving my side. In His Words I found comfort, peace, and the promise of a future. He’s not finished with me yet. Scott touched the hearts he was sent here to touch. . .and that was a lot of people. And we know through Scripture, when our job here on earth is finished, The Lord will take us home to be with Him. And that’s a great thing! It’s something we as believers look forward to. Our eternity will be spent in heaven. Yea!!

So I keep doing what He said, thanking Him for everything, asking for what I feel I need, and then walking in the peace that surpasses all understanding while I keep my mind focused on Him. Praise God!

April 11

Grab Hold

Psalm 23:6 – *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.*

He keeps chasing me down pouring out His goodness and His unfailing love as I live my life to serve Him, to please Him. This is something He gives to all of His people. His Word tells us so throughout the Scripture. Trust it. Believe it. Let Him pour out His love and blessings on you! If you'll take time, giving Him the beginning of each of your days and then following the path He's chosen for you daily, you'll see His goodness falling on you too. It's probably already there and you just haven't taken time to notice. Or if you have, I'm sure you are praising Him all the daylong!!

I remember when I started realizing the favor God was showing me. It started out so simple. I made up my mind I was going to be watching for God to show me His favor.

That morning after reading the Word and the devotions He's led me to fill my mind with before I start my day, I went out and watched for his favor. The first favor I noticed was driving into a WalMart parking lot that was packed with cars thinking, *ugh, I'll have to park a mile away.* Then I remembered, no. God wants to show me favor. So I said to Him, Lord, I'd like to see that favor now, if You would. I knew He could, but I didn't know if this would be one of those times. I mean it was a little lazy on my part and not important at all. BUT guess what—As I slowly crept up that middle aisle, smack dab in the front of the store a car started backing out of a spot. And it was like the second spot from the crosswalk to the front doors. How blessed was that?

It may sound silly to you, but that was the beginning of a new way of life for me. Throughout that day I noticed several more favors come my way. Like the lady at the check out who had been grumpy with the guy before me (and remember the store is packed so lines are long), and then it came to my stuff. She rolled the products I was purchasing forward. The frown etched her face as her brows furrowed, but when she looked up at me I smiled and said hello. Her whole demeanor changed and my experience checking out was wonderful. The day kept getting better!

Let today be the beginning of noticing your blessings from God. Have a great one!

April 12 Obedience Is The Key

John 14:21 – “...*Whoever has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me. The one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love them and show Myself to them.*”

This is a simple Scripture to understand. But you have to do more than just understand what it is saying. You have to DO it.

First off, how can you hear God’s commands? I’m not talking about the laws from the Ten Commandments. We are under the blood of Jesus! So ask yourself, is He going to start talking to you every morning? Get up. Do this. Do that. No. Once you form a constant relationship with Him—that is what He wants with you—you may hear Him tell you from the moment you open your eyes what He’d like to see you do that day. But you have to form that relationship. How do you do that?

You start by reading His Word daily. I used to only open my Bible on Sundays and Wednesdays and of course while I was teaching Sunday school I opened it on Saturday nights as well...to prepare the lesson. Sure that was good for me. I learned and grew a little with every word I read and studied and learned. BUT until I started putting God first, reading His Word written for me (& you) every day, I didn’t have the constant relationship, constant fellowship, with God. Don’t get me wrong. He was there for me, but I wasn’t there with Him by my choice. He gives us free will, so you too have to make the choice, the decision to put Him first.

Once you start reading the Word daily, wanting to learn, to grow, to understand, you too will hear what He has to say to you. I remember Beth Moore telling a story about being in the airport and hearing God tell her to go brush a man’s hair. This guy in the wheelchair was disheveled. She figured if she did it, everyone would think she’s nuts. (My words, not hers). But she did it. It was a wonderful story and God’s blessings were all up in that story. Beth was blessed as she blessed this man. Everyone who hears the story is blessed. God is so good.

The thing is, when we listen, and hear, and OBEY God, He will show Himself to you. So give Him time everyday in your life, so He can be the blessing He wants to be to you. Amen!!!

April 13

God Is There For You!

Job 8:6-7 – ...if you are pure and upright, even now He will rouse Himself on your behalf and restore you to your prosperous state. Your beginnings will seem humble, so prosperous will your future be.

God is there for you...but are you there for God?

See, we have to do our part to receive all these glorious promises He makes to us. Just like you want to do and give great things to your kids, God wants to do even more than that for His kids. That's us. But in order to receive the gifts we have to walk in purity, walk upright, do what is right. Don't get me wrong. We are under the new covenant...the covenant of Jesus' blood so we have salvation, a free gift from God when we accept Him as our Savior. In fact, we have everything Jesus defeated on the cross for us when He suffered and took on the painful judgment for our sins. We have it by faith. We don't have to do anything else to get our salvation, our healing, or our victory. Jesus did it for us. We only have to walk in faith.

All of us who have received Jesus as our Savior have faith enough for our salvation. Some lack a little faith in their victory and their healing. Some don't feel they deserve it—but that's another story. By walking in purity and walking upright in The Lord, He will and does rouse Himself on our behalf. He restores us to our rightful place. And those of us who are in Christ, the rightful place are being blessed and walking in joy.

This verse goes on to tell us when we are doing this our beginnings (the day we were saved) will seem humble so prosperous will our futures be. But again, we have to do our part—walk in purity and be upright AND believe His Word belongs to us.

God loves us. Take what He wants to give you. Receive it with a joyful heart.

April 14

God's Plan For You Is Greater

Haggai 2:7b-9 – “...I will fill this house with glory,” says the LORD Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’

says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty.'

God owns all the silver and gold in this world. He is the richest Man in the universe. And He is our Father. You are His son/daughter. Have you ever thought about that?

I know as kids when we first learn of inheritance, we wonder what our parents will leave for us. Sometimes it's spiritual blessings, financial gains, and or wisdom in the world. Unfortunately some people are left with inheriting cynicism, anger, hatred and other horrible things that none of us want left to us. The good news is God the Father, the Creator of the universe, loves us all and wants all of us to be His children. We get to make the choice. There is that freedom again. He lets us choose.

Anyway, those who choose to be a child of God will receive glory in his/her house. And as the child of God we grow in His Word and, our latter house will be greater than our former house. He wants to build us up, grow us, strengthen us, and most of all bless us. Give yourself to Him whole-heartedly and He will grant peace in your heart.

And haven't you heard—home is where the heart is, so you will have peace in your home. Praise God!

April 15 **A Test Of Your Love For Him**

John 14:15 – *“If you love Me, keep My commands.”*

If you love Him, you will obey what He commands. That sounds simple enough, but we have a hard time doing it. Please don't misunderstand me or the Word. He is not telling us we have to obey his command to earn our salvation. Jesus earned us our salvation and by believing in Him and that He died on the cross for us, and God raised Him from the dead, we are saved. We don't have to do anything to earn our salvation but believe and receive freely the gift.

This Scripture is telling us that if we love Him, we will obey Him. So out of love for our Father in Heaven, we obey what He tells us to do.

What is it He's telling us to do?

He tells us to forgive others so He too can forgive us. He tells us to love others as He loves us. He tells us not to judge others. He tells us to give a tenth of our money/time to Him. It's all already His. He's giving it to you, but He asks that you give Him back 10%. He tells us to serve others. He tells us to look at what is good, pure, and noble. He tells us to be kind to others. He tells us to put others before ourselves.

I'm sure I've overlooked something that I know He's told all of us to do. And there are things that He tells individuals to do (like the example I gave of Beth Moore brushing that man's hair).

Here He is telling us—*if* we love Him, obey Him. Like I said, it seems easy enough. To do this, though, we have to consciously decide we want to walk in His Will for us, listening and obeying. And we have to read the Word regularly so we can grow in what He tells us, knowing the Word better and better so we can obey.

So decide today you want to show Him your love for Him.

April 16 **Dress for Your Best**

Colossians 3:12 – Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Have you ever noticed how great it is to be around people that show compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and or patience?

I mean who wants to be around someone who dogs other people, constantly putting their fellow man down? Do you? No, because for sure if that person is putting others down to you, they are putting you down to others. There is no fun or joy in that!

Being kind to others puts a smile on their face. Don't you like to see other people smile? Be kind to them. Give them a reason to smile.

As a writer, being around a lot of other writers, or reading a good book someone else wrote, or seeing their book made into a movie, a little bit of the fullness of pride tries to stick its ugly head out of me. I remind myself God

has blessed me to be where I am today, and as long as I stay humble knowing it's Him and not me that has me here, He will keep promoting me in the world of writing. Be content, I remind myself, and then dress in humility. In your calling, remember to stay humble!

And everyone loves a gentle spirited person.

Patience is a virtue from God...we should all strive for it...dress in it. He wants to fill us with patience.

These are some of the fruits of the spirit: kindness, gentleness, and patience. But all five of the characteristics listed in the above Scripture, Jesus showed in His walk on the earth. The fruits of the spirit are in all who have accepted Jesus as their Savior. We only have to work on growing them and dressing ourselves daily in them so we who profess to be Christians can be a reflection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

April 17 **Your Faith**

Matthew 21:22 – *“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”*

Faith is something as believers we all have. As we put more of our trust in God the stronger our faith becomes. As we realize we rely on Him and not ourselves to walk through our life here on earth, the easier our walk becomes and the stronger our faith grows.

Also our faith grows by reading and hearing the Word. The more we hear His Word preached or taught, the more we learn to put our faith in Him. As we do, more blessings and miracles will come our way through our faith, thus our faith grows even more.

The old saying is, “seeing is believing.” But trust me, you must have faith before you can see the blessings and miracles in your life grow. To grow yourself in Him, your new saying needs to be, ‘BELIEVING IS SEEING!’ Believe and you will see.

So go to the Word. Read it. Study it. Renew your mind daily with it. Talk to God: in bed at night, driving down the road, walking through your life... anytime anywhere. He is there for you. Reach out to Him and watch how your

faith will grow.

As your faith grows, you'll find the prayers you are praying being answered. God tells us plainly, if you believe you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. Most people laugh at this, but those who do don't really know God for His Word. As a strong believer walking in faith, you will not ask God for yourself anything that goes against His will. God is faithful. Trust Him! Ask Him to lead you in your prayers even.

I used to keep a prayer journal, writing down my prayer requests and as time passed, I'd go back and put the date He answered my prayers. I was so blessed to see His Word come to pass. Every prayer was answered. I believed, and I received. Thank You, Lord!

April 18 **God Is Able**

Romans 4:20-21 – Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.

Never doubt God's ability.

In this Scripture they are talking about Abraham and how he didn't waver in his unbelief. God had told him he would have a child and be the father of many nations. Abraham, even in his old age, didn't stop believing. His faith became stronger. And eventually God's word to him came to be.

Have you ever felt God gave you a message of His plans for you? If so, stay in faith. Stay in His Word, living for Him, so He can bring it to pass. The only thing that can stop His promise to you from coming to pass is you.

My own example is at 33 years old, God told me His plans for me. He also showed them to me in a dream, I believe to reconfirm in my heart that I hadn't imagined it. It was about 20 years later that God's promise started coming to be. It wasn't because He didn't want me to have it as He had planned. It was because I got off the path He'd planned me to walk. The first five years I believe I was waiting on God as I continued to write what He had called me to write. Then along the way I started trying to write differently, to fit into the world. It was about 18 years after the original promise to me, that I heard God tell me I wasn't doing what He'd called me to do. I prayed and listened, and

then turned myself back around. As I persevered in His Word and kept writing, the time came when He opened the floodgates. The dream He'd placed in my heart started coming to pass at the age of 53 and the doors keep opening! Praise God!!

So trust in His ability. Know that if He's given you a promise that isn't coming to be, check yourself. Are you staying in His Word? If you are, then just keep persevering. Know He keeps His Word. And know that He is more than able.

April 19 **Can You Be Sure?**

Hebrews 11:1 – *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

Remember the old saying I mentioned earlier...seeing is believing? Well, know "seeing" is not faith. Faith is - believing even when you don't see it.

I believe every one of you who are reading this devotion either believe in Jesus as their Savior, or is looking to know more in order to believe. To know more about Jesus, the Son of God, I suggest you read the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There we see and hear four different points of view while Jesus walked the earth. All four of these men were called by God to write their account of their time with Jesus, so that future generations can come to know Jesus and love Him as He loved us.

For Him to become your Savior, to know Him as LORD, that is where faith comes in. You have to know in your heart that what you are reading is the truth.

Let it stir and grow within you. As you do, your faith will grow. As you stand in faith, believing, when you see the first thing come to be after standing in faith waiting expectantly, your faith will grow stronger.

When my oldest daughter was three she got very sick. Doctors called it a 24-hour bug, then a 3-day virus. They didn't help her. She only got worse. I was listening to Oral Roberts on TV and praying with Him to God asking for help with my daughter. Suddenly I heard Brother Roberts say, "The momma praying for her little girl call the doctor now. She will be healed." I started crying and shaking. I knew he was talking to me. I jumped up and ran to the

phone book. I looked up baby doctors and prayed God to lead me to the right one, for her baby doctor and his partners couldn't seem to help her. He led me straight to another doctor. The man's name and number seemed to stand out. I called and they told me to bring her on in. Before long this doctor told me the worst-case scenario for my daughter is a brain tumor. He said there were 9 different possibilities but they'd prefer to start with the worst and work backwards until they found the source of her illness. It turned out to be a brain tumor. She was rushed into surgery once it was confirmed, and the top surgeon in the nation agreed to take care of her. After 9 hours of surgery, the doctor came out and told my husband and me that when he first looked at the tumor he knew by size, shape, and color, it was malignant and he was ready to close her back up and send her home to live her short life that was left, but he did what they normally do. He took a piece of the tumor out and sent it down to the lab for testing. It came back benign. Doubting it, the doctor took a second sample and waited for results. It too came back benign so he removed the whole tumor (the size of a soft ball). When the complete tumor was tested they found the seed of the tumor malignant but the entire tumor around it was benign. Did I forget to say; this all happened on a Wednesday and prayer across the nation was being prayed for our daughter, plus God had already delivered a message through Oral Roberts.

I myself was in such peace through the whole 9-hour ordeal. I knew God was in control. And I knew He wouldn't have told Brother Roberts for me to rush her to a doctor if it wasn't going to show His glory. People thought I was a little crazy believing everything would be fine.

The point I'm making at 22 years old I saw God perform a great miracle. My faith already believed in Him, but after our daughter's miracle my faith quadrupled or better. Your faith grows as you trust and see the results. BUT you have to have the faith first...and then it can grow and grow.

First when you don't see it, still have the confidence. God won't let you down!

Hallelujah!!

April 20 **Pause In Anticipation**

Psalm 27:14 – *Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.*

Waiting on God sometimes is a hard thing to do, but it's what He told us. The thing we need to do is follow His direction. I usually talk about my writing when it comes to waiting, but there have been other things in my life I had to wait on God for. This time I'll share a different story. I didn't start working until after our second child was born. The good news is I stayed thirty years with one company and in the end was blessed to be able to retire and enjoy retirement. But in those 30 years there was a few times I wanted to give up.

In the beginning I had a wonderful boss who cared about his workers and wouldn't ask anyone to do anything he wouldn't do himself. Unfortunately he was replaced with a "yes" man who wasn't very nice to the employees. He too was terminated, and the next boss was transferred. A new trouble came with each new boss. Now after eleven years with the company I was under my fourth boss. With the last man came a different kind of trouble for me. He didn't believe in having a woman doing a man's job (by that time I was a dispatcher).

That boss tested me to the core. So many times I was ready to walk out. Start over somewhere else. But like before with boss number 2, I prayed and asked God for leadership. I felt He wanted me to wait on Him. This wait brought me through some major testing. Sometimes I failed, but God didn't give up on me. Other times I saw why He kept me there. I was used to pray for my boss and his family through the sickness and then death of his wife...and God used me to pray and help a few of the drivers grow closer to Him. In the end, God healed the relationship with my boss and I (or should I say He helped us form one), and when I retired my boss had a great retirement party for me. People from our other terminals across the US either came or sent word or a gift letting me know how much I was loved and appreciated.

I waited on God. He showed me the way. And He brought me through it on top. I love that I retired after 30 years of service. I stuck it out, because He led me to do so...and I was so blessed for it.

Wait on the Lord! He sees the big picture! And He likes to use us to grow His Kingdom where we are.

April 21
Be Your Best

Romans 12:21 – *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

When someone is treating you poorly, the last thing you think to do is be good to him or her. Normally we get on the defensive side and either want to retaliate in kind to them, or we want to be meaner to them or at least turn our backs on them. Maybe I'm wrong and it's just me who thinks these things.

Is that what the Word is telling me/us to do? Pay them back? Get them where it hurts?

No. It tells us to do good to them. Sometimes doing good is merely praying God to bless them and for you to offer them forgiveness even though they aren't asking for it nor do they deserve it. Offer it in your heart.

Can I tell you, I tried this? It worked amazingly. Probably because it's the last thing anyone expects...but even more so, when you overcome someone doing evil to you by doing something good to them, it makes you feel better in the end.

It doesn't matter if they deserved something bad to happen to them. Leave that up to God. He may agree and if so, He may let a little trouble or pain come their way. But the important thing is—as a believer—you do what the Word tells you to do. And let God take care of the rest.

I promise. If you do, you will come out happier and more at peace. God knows what is best for us, so when He tells us to pay back evil with good, it's for our own good.

April 22

Start With Forgiving

Mark 11:24-26 – "...Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

God is so good to us. No matter what we have done, when we ask for forgiveness, He not only forgives us, but He forgets it—as far as the east is from the west. We have to learn to do the same thing.

If someone has done something to you, hurt your feelings, called you names, talked about you behind your back, or done something even evil against you,

find it in your heart through the power of Jesus to forgive them.

If you hold that anger or hurt inside, when you ask in prayer for something, it probably won't come to pass.

But God's Word tells us plainly, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. Don't forget the next part. When you are asking this of God in prayer, if you hold *anything* against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. You want a clean slate with God when you pray. I mention that prayer journal I used to keep. I learned early on before I prayed for any of those people or things on my list, I prayed forgiveness for my sins and spoke forgiveness over any and every one who hurt me, and then I prayed my prayer requests.

God tells us so many things, promises so much for us, wants to bless us all, but we have to read His Word taking it to heart, knowing He means what He says and obey and do what He tells us.

Our salvation is by faith. It's a done deal. But all the promises God wants to give us, we must be obedient and willing to do what He asks of us to receive them. Take time to read and consume the Word filling your heart to overflow with His Word.

April 23 **Unwavering Awe In The Lord**

Psalm 112:1, 7 – Praise the LORD. Blessed are those who fear the LORD, who find great delight in His commands. They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

When you find yourself in awe of the Lord, you will be able to walk in such steadfast joy, knowing He is God!! He is the One and only. He has the power to admit you into heaven or send you straight to hell. Only He has the power. The good news is when you fear the Lord in awe knowing you want to spend eternity in heaven not in hell, knowing you want life not death, knowing Jesus died on the cross to save YOU and through His resurrection He defeated Satan for you, and you ask Him into your heart as your Savior, you no longer have to fear what your future holds for you.

Praise the Lord. You'll find yourself wanting to live like Jesus lived... trying to live like He lived. The Holy Spirit will be in you helping you make better

choices. You'll find yourself with an inner joy even in the midst of some unhappy circumstances. Why? Because you know God is in control and you are one of His. You won't fear bad news. Your heart will keep that inner joy, as you trust the Lord to bring you through every situation and bring you out on top!

Have a great day!

April 24 **Drop Those Chains That Bind**

Hebrews 12:1-3 – Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Jesus died on the cross for our past sins, present sins, and future sins. So don't beat yourself up when you find yourself in sin. Instead stop! Repent! Ask God's forgiveness and do it no more. Walk away from the draw of that sin. You'll find the peace of the Lord filling you again and His joy running over.

BUT more importantly don't get tangled up in the sin. Don't let Satan tell you how you messed up. It's too late. You've blown it.

You haven't. God loves you any way! And remember your sin only satisfies the flesh for a short time.

Think eternally. And remind yourself what Jesus went through for you and me. He did it for our future. Like Jesus said, "It is finished." He took care of it all. So don't grow weary of doing what is right. Drop those chains that bind and keep your eyes on the Lord!!

Hallelujah and A-men!!

April 25 **Our Hope is In Him**

1 Peter 1:3-5 – *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In*

His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Through it all—your life here on earth—know that your hope is in Him. Because Jesus followed through in God's plan to save us, we have great mercy from God. Once you accept Jesus as your Savior, you are made new. All your sins are washed away.

He died for all our sins: past, present, and future. It doesn't mean run around sinning cause Jesus already paid the price for you. It means know He said we were worth it. He suffered so we don't have to. And know when you walk through your life wanting to please the Lord you'll find more joy and blessings in your days.

And when your time on earth is over, the inheritance that's being kept for you in heaven will be revealed to you. I know that I know it is an awesome inheritance. Remember, everything is God's and we are inheriting from Him!!

April 26 **Let His Light Shine Through You**

1 John 1:5-7 – This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.

Sometimes when people hear others claiming to be a Christian, their lives don't reflect it. This is a turn off to bringing more people to Christ.

Those that don't walk in the joy of the Lord or reflect the light of Jesus, need to take a moment and look at themselves, and then ask themselves, why is the reflection of Jesus not showing in their life?

It happens to most all of us as we walk through our life. We let things dim the light of the Lord that is in us. That's when we should take a strong look at ourselves and then refocus on living for the Lord.

If you don't know the answer as to why the reflection of Jesus is not showing in your life, take time to read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Take in the picture of Jesus you read in the gospels.

Then compare His character to yours. Ask yourself: Am I kind to others? Do I put others before me? Do I forgive others even when they don't deserve it? Do I love even those who are unlovable?

If you said no to any of these questions, pray about it. Ask God to help you be more like Jesus. If you said yes to all, then ask these questions: Do I judge others? Do I think I'm better than my fellow man/woman? If you said yes to either of these, again pray about it.

Stay in the Word. Old and New Testament helps us to grow more like Christ every day. Read it, hear it, and obey it. Then His light will shine through you. Everyone around you will want to know the secret. Tell them and bring more to the Kingdom of God.

Have a blessed day!

April 27

You Too Can Be Pleasing To God

Matthew 3:17 – *And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.”*

This is God talking about Jesus, His Son.

Guess what? God wants to say the same about us. We are His children. We who have believed in Him and accepted Jesus as our Savior are His children. Do you want to hear God say, this is My son/daughter, whom I love; and I am well pleased with them? If you do, then again I suggest you get into the Word.

To please God you must have faith. (Hebrews 11:6). You get faith by reading, hearing, and obeying God's Word. He has the answer to any question you could ask. It's found in The Holy Bible. What better way to grow pleasingly in God's sight but to follow His directions for you?

God bless you. Have a great day! Keep Him first in all things and you will be pleasing Him today!

April 28

Don't Make Excuses

Jeremiah 1:5,7-8 – *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” ... But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD.*

Read this Scripture and take it to heart. He was talking to Jeremiah, but shared it with us too letting us know He knew us before we were formed in our mother's womb. And He had plans for us already.

So don't think or say you can't do it. I'm too old, too young; not smart enough; not strong enough; or any other excuse you can make up. Remember He knows everything about us. Nothing we say or do comes as a surprise to Him.

So don't make excuses.

Trust Him and do as He calls you to do. You'll find such peace and purpose in your life when you follow His calling for you.

April 29

He Handles Your Pressures So You Don't Have To!

Galatians 1:3 – *Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

If you find yourself living day to day and being unhappy, unfulfilled, anxious, worried, and or disillusioned, cheer up. Put your trust in God and His Word. He has enough grace and mercy for you each day to give you peace in your day.

He died and suffered on the cross for you, for me. He did this so we don't have to. He rescued us from the evil that is in the world today. When you try to fix things around you without leaning on Christ you'll stay in that miserable life I mentioned in the beginning. If you want to join the life of peace and joy, cast your cares on Him. Trust Him to battle your problems

while you stay focused on Him and His Word, following His lead in your life.

When you rest in Him, you'll find that peace that surpasses all understanding. And the joy of the Lord will fill you to overflow so that no matter what comes your way, you'll thrive through it all.

He has the power and wants to use it on your behalf. Let Him. Trust Him. Lean on Him. Praise Him. Thank Him.

April 30 He's Called You

Acts 2:38 – Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Peter is talking to everyone. Jesus gave His life for us. If we want to live eternity in heaven we must repent and be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ. When we do, He forgives all our sins. He suffered and died on the cross for everyone's sins...but if we don't accept Him as our Savior then we will live eternity in Hell. Yes it's real and a place you don't have to go!

But it's your choice. Repent now, if you haven't already.

God loves you and me so much that He sent His Son (who was blameless) to die on the cross for our sins so we don't have to. Jesus followed through in God's plan for Him to save us. He loves us too.

So hear His call. Repent now. Accept Him as your Savior. It's never too late until you take that last breath on this earth...then it will be. Don't wait.

I know most of you reading the devotion have already given your life to Christ, but I'm sure you know someone who hasn't made that choice yet. Live a joy filled life with Christ so your loved one or friend will want what you have. Be that witness you've been called to be, so through you Christ can add another one to the Kingdom of God!

May 01 The Lord's Listening

Psalm 34:17-20 – *The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all; He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.*

These Scriptures give me hope in my life. It tells me straight out that I will have troubles. I may even have a broken heart now and then. Also my spirit could be crushed at different points in my life. But because I know Jesus' blood covers me, making me the righteousness of Christ (I didn't do it - I can't work to be good and perfect to become righteous - I am righteous because I accepted the gift of salvation from God), I know God will deliver me from my troubles. The LORD is close to me while my heart is being broken...like right now. I lost another loved one. This time it was my brother. Praise God, he wasn't lost either. I lost his presence due to the fact he died here on earth. The minute he drew his last breath, he was in heaven with the LORD. In the meantime, the LORD is holding me close...again.

He has pulled me back up from the murky pits I've allowed myself to fall into at times over the past fifty years since my salvation.

Even when we mess up, He stays close. He is there to help us. But we need to seek Him **daily**. The more we abide in Him the more clear His direction comes to us. I don't know about you, but in my past even though I was saved when a situation came into my life, I asked friends and family for direction first...instead of God. I've learned over these past few years **go to God first** and He will see me through. His Word tells us this.

Sad thing is we don't all read His Word enough to know all the good things He wants to do for us. Or some of us read Scripture and think; it's not for me. He doesn't want to do this for me. But you're wrong. He loves you. He loves us. He wants us to abide in Him so He can abide in us. He wants to deliver us from or through all our troubles. Protect us from harm that tries to bring us down.

Be a reader of the Word and a doer, and you will be blessed with His favor pouring out on you. I know I am blessed even though trouble comes my way. He gets me through it every time! He is listening and wants to help.

Thank YOU LORD!!!

May 02 **I Receive My Reward**

Proverbs 13:21- *Trouble pursues the sinner; but the righteous are rewarded with good things.*

I just talked yesterday about how the LORD listens to us, the righteous, when we call out to Him. Not only does He listen and bring us through these times of trouble, but the LORD also rewards us with good things. Have you ever stopped and taken time to count your many blessings—all the good things that have come into your life?

I know I have. Over the past 60 years of living I've heard myself tell others, "I am so blessed. God is always blessing me." In my mind as I'm saying it I'm thinking of the good things that are coming my way, and I'm also wondering why He is so good to me. I don't deserve it. I've gone against His teachings several times over my many years of being saved. But God keeps His Word. It's only over the last ten years that I've dug deep into His Word, reading, mediating, and trying to memorize what He tells me. The good news is He didn't wait for me to dig deep to start blessing me. It's just like the gift of salvation. He didn't wait for me to love Him before He loved me. He loved me before I was created. God knows the plans He has for me. Each day is better than the day before. As my faith in Him has grown because I take His Word as truth, my blessings have grown. The rewards keep coming my way, growing bigger and bigger.

Read and take to heart Hebrews 11:6. He says our faith in Him pleases Him. And that those who come to Him must know He exists and that He rewards those who believe.

Good things are what God wants to give all His children. But to receive them, you have to believe that He wants to give them to you and start looking for them. I remember when this first came to me back in 2005 or 2006 I started watching for His favor, His rewards that He wanted to give me; A close parking space when I'm so tired I don't feel like shopping but I have to do it, a near miss by a driver not paying attention, or a quick response in my own driving when my mind has gone elsewhere. He does little and big rewards, so watch expectantly for all, and you will receive His rewards, keeping your faith

and hope in Him.

May 03

Let All Go Well

3 John 1:2,11 – *Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.*

Even in our deepest darkest days (we all have them), for those of us who are a child of God, we have hope. Our hope is in the Lord. He will see us through.

So if we can focus on His goodness that has come our way and will be coming our way we'll find the strength to get through this rough or sad day in our life.

John prayed for us to have good health and that all may go well with us even as our soul is getting along well.

This speaks to me. My soul is well. I am saved. I am happy in hope for the end of my time on earth will bring me straight to heaven. There I will see my family and friends in Christ. Richard (my brother) just joined the crowd. So my days on earth right now are darkened with missing him. But my spirit keeps me uplifted, keeps me well, because I know my future.

John tells us to imitate good, not evil. By doing this you are showing you are from God and others get to see Him in you. This makes you a blessing to others and that is the greatest gift of all...to be able to bless others.

So let all go well in your life today, even if you seem to be having a bad day. Turn your eyes and heart up to the LORD and let Him turn your day around for you. God is good. God is faithful. Trust Him. Trust His Word!!

May 04

Waiting On Healing

John 5:2-8 NKJV *Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was*

made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

It's never too late to believe, to step out in faith, to walk the path God has planned for you. God is in control, but He gives us free will. We don't always choose the path He's planned for us.

He stands by waiting, watching. He wants to give you your healing. He wants to give you success. He wants to bless you daily.

If you want healing and all the things Jesus suffered and died to give you, keep your eyes and heart on His Word. Listen for His direction. When He says take up your bed, or step out...do it! Don't hesitate.

Jesus loves you and is there for you...for all His believers. And He is waiting for the non-believers, loving them first...just like He did us.

Have a great day!

May 05

For Your Protection

Psalm 91: 9-11 If you say, "The LORD is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

God wants to protect you from everything. This Scripture makes it plain. If you say the LORD is your refuge, and if you make Him your dwelling, no harm will overtake you.

What does that mean, make Him your dwelling?

It means you have to trust in God daily all day long. Give Him first place in your life...in everything. Live to please Him. Live as He's called you to do

trusting Him to be your provider in all things. Not just when it's convenient for you, but always. Get into His Word everyday and see what He tells you to do.

Don't get me wrong. First, He knows we won't do everything perfect, but we must try to live by His Word to us. Second, He didn't say trouble wouldn't come our way, just that no harm or trouble will overtake you. It means He'll get you through it all if you trust in Him.

He also said no disaster would come near your tent. I'd love to believe that when hurricanes blow through the land my house will still be standing in one piece when its over, but what I think it means is His angels will guard me, keeping me safe. I will survive through the storm. And if it is my time to go to the Lord, I believe He'd take me swiftly and not let me feel a drop of pain. I think of it the way Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thought before they were thrown into the fiery furnace. God will see me through unharmed or take me home immediately...either way, I'll keep my trust in Him!

God bless you!

May 06

A Promise From God To His Children

Psalm 37:19 – *In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will enjoy plenty.*

Again God is telling us (His believers) when bad things come our way, He will not let them destroy us if we will keep our faith in Him. Disasters may come, but they won't knock us down when they do.

Even in the days of famine, when others are going without, He promises His people will enjoy plenty.

I don't know about you, but I know I've been blessed with plenty all my life. I'm not saying bad things have not happened. Through painful loss of loved ones, God has kept my spirit full of joy. I'm not saying I haven't been sad. I have. I miss them terribly, but God reminds me they wouldn't come back to suffering here on this earth even if they could. They are where we want to be, living in Heaven waiting on the new earth to live eternally. The new earth is the way God intended this one to be. I can't wait.

But in the meantime, I'm still walking this earth. I thank God everyday for the blessings He brings my way. I thank Him for bringing me through trials that come my way. I also ask Him daily to help me walk the path He's planned for me, helping me make the right choices...His choice. Remember the armbands people wore – WWJD. That 'what would Jesus do' is an awesome thing to ask yourself when a choice presents itself.

Have a blessed day!

May 07

Woe to Those Who Conspire against God's People

Psalm 2:4 *The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.*

If you'd take a moment to read the Scriptures surrounding this one, you'll see the "them" that is referred to in this verse are people who are making plans to harm God's people. He laughed at them.

God loves us. He doesn't want anything bad to happen to us. God is good. God gives good things to us. God plans good things for us. God promises to bring down people who try to hurt His children.

Unfortunately, sometimes it is our poor choices that allow some of these bad things to come our way, or sets up bad people who get to hurt us. That is why it's so important to try to make the right choices in your lives (remember you have free will) that will bring about the blessings of God. Again that armband comes to mind. What would Jesus do?

If you're not sure what Jesus would do in different situations, break down and read and study the first four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They walked the earth with Him. They tell us how Jesus didn't judge; how He showed love to the unlovable; how He helped the poor and needy. He did so many good things to others. He put others before Himself. These are the things we should be doing. So when you are making choices, think of others when you do. Put others first in your life. Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. Be loving and kind as Jesus was.

God is looking out for you, so keep your eyes on Him, living for Him, pleasing Him.

May 08 **God Watches Over His Own**

Exodus 10:21-23 – *Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness spreads over Egypt—darkness that can be felt.” So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else or move about for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.*

Did you notice the difference? The Egyptians were frozen in darkness. They could not even see their hand in front of their face for three days. God made this happen through Moses’ obedience. God also protected His own. They had light. They moved around freely because He blessed them with the light for three days.

If you’ve read the story of Moses taking the Israelites, God’s people, out of Egypt then you know God poured out curses on the Egyptians, helping Pharaoh to make the decision to let God’s people go. Pharaoh held on for some time before giving in and his people, the Egyptians, suffered because of it. But the good thing is God watched over His own. None of the curses fell on His people.

If you have Jesus as your Savior, He wants to be more than that. He wants to bless you and pour out His favor on you. If you want more than your Salvation, then keep your eyes on the LORD; renew your mind daily with His Word. Be blessed with all He wants to give you.

Be obedient and watch the blessings chase you down!

May 09 **Christ Lives In Me**

Galatians 2:20 – *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

This is Paul speaking, telling us he’s been crucified with Christ. He no longer lives but Christ lives in him. He lives by faith in the Son of God, in Jesus, the man who gave Himself for us.

If you've accepted Jesus as your Savior, that means you too have been crucified with Christ. It means you believe when Jesus suffered, He suffered for you too. He suffered for the sins you and I have committed and will commit until our last day on earth. He paid the price so we don't have to...but we need to remember He DID suffer. Don't let it be for naught. Be thankful. Know that God defeated death and brought Jesus back to life. Jesus paid for our sins. We are walking in victory!!

Rejoice! Be thankful! Praise God for all He's done for you! Live your life by faith in the Son of God! Walk in the joy of the LORD! Have a blessed day, day after day. He wants this for us all. Let Christ live in you so you can live in hope for eternity.

May 10 **Eternity in Heaven**

Romans 8:21,25 – ...that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

This is what I was just talking about on May 9. Our hope in eternity in heaven lives in us, those of us who have accepted Jesus as our Savior. Jesus died for us and already paid the price for our sins, so we won't have to. When we die, our bodies will decay but our spirits will go straight to Heaven. And when Jesus returns to the earth our decayed bodies will be brought to life (perfectly and better than before) and joined with our spirit that is already in heaven. Then we will live out eternity the way God had planned for the first earth. Sin destroyed that earth, but He's given us a second chance to get it right. That is our future; Earth the way it was supposed to be. Praise God!!!

So stay in hope. Look forward to what God has planned for us all. And wait patiently for it!

May 11 **Are You Without Sin?**

John 8:7 - When they kept on questioning Him, He straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

If you'll read further in John 8 or remember the story, all those men that were

ready to stone this woman for her sin scattered away quickly. They knew they couldn't throw the first stone. No one could. They had all sinned...but so have we.

If we claim we don't sin, then we are calling God a liar. He tells us in Romans that we've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. In 1 John He tells us if we claim not to have sinned, we are making Him out to be a liar and His Word is not in us.

So KNOW you have sinned, you do sin...but as a child of God you try not to and God loves to help you. HE LOVES TO HELP US.

And the main thing is, Jesus already paid for our sins: past, present and future. So keep your trust in Him.

Thank God for another beautiful day. Enjoy it!

May 12 **Sin And Forgiveness**

1 John 1:9 – *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

God is good. He loves us so much, He sent His Son to take our place for the sins we have committed. And Jesus Christ loves us so much He followed through taking upon Himself all the suffering, the beatings before death and the three days of torture in Hell before resurrection.

Let the light of the LORD shine through you. Keep in fellowship with Jesus. Walk in His light. Live out His truth. Let His blood that covers you keep you pure. Keep renewing your heart, soul, and mind daily with the Lord. Confess your sins. He's already forgiven you when He covered you in His blood. Confess them and thank Him for already forgiving you. He has purified you with His blood when you asked Him into your life.

Walk in joy. Walk in forgiveness. And walk in love—His love!!!

Have a great day!

May 13 **Rejoice**

Nehemiah 8:10 – *Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”*

This scripture is found in the Old Testament when Ezra, the teacher of the Law, stood up and shared the Law with the people. Ezra praised God and so did the people, and then he read from the book of the Law. People started crying and the teacher said not to mourn or cry. He told them this day is Holy. THEN Nehemiah, the governor, said go and enjoy the best foods and drinks and share them with others who have nothing. And he reminded them again as the teacher had, not to grieve, for the joy of the LORD is their strength.

This applies to us today, only we are not under the law, we are under the blood of Jesus. So we have a stronger reason not to mourn or cry. God has blessed us so much through His Son. We should be jumping around praising Him and thanking Him. And as the governor said, we should be sharing our good fortune with others who have naught.

Truly, giving does bless the giver. The more you give, the more joyful you’ll feel. It IS more blessed to give than it is to receive. Be a giver. Share your blessings with others. It may be food, clothes, testimony, love, and anything else God leads you to share. He has blessed you first off because He loves you, but also so that you can bless others.

Go out and share your beautiful smile with someone who needs it today. You will be blessed as well.

Have a great one!!

May 14 **Love Your Enemies**

Luke 6:27-28 – *“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*

I don’t know if you read that and went, “Ugh! How can I? Do you know what they said or did to me?”

I know when someone hurts me or puts me down for some reason; all I want

to do is cry. The old me wanted to throw an insult right back hoping to make them feel as bad as I did. Sometimes the present me feels the same way, but that's not what God told me to do. When I learned to do as He said, and when I follow it, I find that hurt dissipates. The desire to cry goes away. I find when I go to prayer and start praying for that person I start to smile and feel better. Try it! You'll find it works for you too.

But your mind says that person doesn't deserve me to treat them good by lifting them up in prayer. What they did to me was so mean, whether it was intentional or an accident. Guess what? You didn't deserve to be forgiven either, but Jesus loved us so much He carried out God's plan for our forgiveness.

Forgive them for what they did to you and lift them up to God for blessings to come down on them. I know God is faithful. If you do what He tells you to do, you too will be blessed.

Have a great day!

May 15 **Check Your Anger At The Door**

Matthew 5:22 – But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

Yesterday we talked about forgiving those who hurt you...and praying for them. I hate to tell you this, but when we don't forgive them as He said, we tend to hold it inside. Then we'll mull it over and over. It will fester in us. As it grows, it torments us.

Don't misunderstand me. The one who hurt you isn't even thinking about you anymore. But because you didn't forgive them, you held on to it and wasted a good bit of your time mulling over what they said or did to you. Now you have built the anger up inside of you so much that you are miserable. You can't seem to shake it. Somehow your mind continues to go back to what they did to you.

You are only hurting yourself. You are dragging yourself through hell, so to speak.

So free your heart and your spirit. Forgive them so you can move forward in your life. Then you can walk in the peace, joy, and love, God wants to fill you with. And He wants to fill you to overflow. He wants to do this every day!

Thank You Lord!!

May 16 **Are You A Slave?**

Romans 8:15 – *The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him we cry, “Abba, Father.”*

When you accepted Jesus as your Savior, the Holy Spirit came to live inside you.

He is there to lead us, direct us. He even wants to help us make right choices as they come up throughout the day.

He doesn't make you do anything! You don't become a slave to Him while He cracks a whip and says do this, do that. No, that doesn't happen. The Holy Spirit speaks to you gently, trying to encourage you to make the choices in your life that will grow you as a Christian, helping you to walk the path God chose for you long ago. It's not mandated that you follow that path. You have the choice to walk it or veer to the right or left.

Through experience I've found when I stay on the path God planned for me, I walk in peace and joy. Don't get me wrong. Trouble still comes, but I'm stronger and can face it and get through it easier...and sometimes quicker. But when I choose to ignore that still small voice in my heart, head, and/or ears then I'm pushing down the Holy Spirit. I find when I do it too much, His voice gets harder and harder to hear. But when I seek His guidance, when I seek His advice and listen and obey, His voice gets stronger and easier for me to hear. He tells me only what the Father says so I know it is what is best for me.

Again I have the option to choose to listen or ignore. I pray every day that I'm wise enough to listen to Him. I hope you do too.

Enjoy!

May 17

Take A Deep Breath

Ephesians 4:2 – *Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

It is so easy to lash out when someone cuts you off in traffic. I also find it easy to want to say something back to someone who puts you down in front of others. And wait, who wants to wait before reacting to whatever comes your way, or whatever you are working on to become a success at your chosen career? We live in the world of hurry up. Get out of my way. Don't slow me down. Our world is a rushed world.

As a child, we can't wait to be a teenager. Waiting to become an adult seems to take forever. But ask any young adult. Most would gladly go back to school and let mom and dad take care of the real world. And don't think our rush to grow older stops there. Once we are working that real job that pays the bills, we can't wait to retire so we can enjoy life. So it seems we are always pushing to be living the latter days of our life.

Slow down. Take a deep breath and chill right where you are. If you would learn to live in the moment and enjoy who you are and what you are that day, tomorrow will take care of itself as long as we are listening to the Word of God. He tells us to be humble and gentle. We are to take time to show respect to those around us. Lifting them up, not ourselves. And we do it tenderly, respectfully, joyfully.

While we are doing these things God tells us to do, the Holy Spirit will stir us on the inside leading us to do what we've been called to do. And as we start following His urgings and directions, don't rush to the finish line, expecting overnight success or completion.

Take it day by day and wait on the LORD. He will grow you in your calling and help you reach His goal for you. All growth comes in His timing.

No matter how much we want to jump ahead, know that He knows what we can handle and when we can handle it.

So be patient while you are waiting and living for Him. And all the while love those around you through Christ. Each day is precious. Live in the moment

and enjoy those around you while they are there. Blink your eyes too much and you'll miss your kids growing up, or your delightful marriage, or sharing the Lord with someone on the job or in the grocery store. Walk through your life day-to-day, moment-to-moment and enjoy it all.

May 18

Sing And Dance, Praising The Lord

Zephaniah 3:14-17 – Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your punishment, He has tuned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. On that day they will say to Jerusalem, “Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in His love He will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

Sing! Shout out loud! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, you daughter/son of The Great I Am.

Jesus suffered so we don't have to. He took our punishment for us. We are covered by Jesus' blood. Protected. Free from fear. Saved. Loved.

God will never leave us. These are promises of His throughout His Word.

I know there are times I still question Him. The other day I was saying to Him, why didn't You answer my prayer completely? I wanted you to shine, Lord. I bragged on your power. I bragged on your Word. Yet you didn't completely answer my prayer request as I'd asked.

I felt alone, because I didn't hear the answer right away. I'm still not totally certain of what is always the best, but what I do know is, **God knows what is best**. He's leading me, directing me, by the Holy Spirit.

I think He was pleased about how strong my faith was as to Him answering my prayer two weekends in a row. Both, in my point of view He answered part-way. I believed I was praying these things to help my friend see how powerful God is and how much He loves me and wants to answer my prayers, taking care of His children. But when He didn't, I had to ask myself what I did wrong. Where was I messing up? I still don't know for sure, but I think He's letting me know my motives were a little off-track.

I know how many prayers I've prayed with His answers so plain and easy to see. Some right away, others a few days or a few months down the road. One took twenty years before I started seeing results and those results are still coming almost ten years later. Another prayer I prayed for forty years came through at God's perfect timing. I think the key is make sure your prayers are for HIS glory. Also helping others in your prayers, praying for them, is always a prayer God loves to see through, especially if it deals with their salvation. But most of all, He loves us and wants to see us happy and rejoicing in Him, through Him, so if it's important to us, it's important to Him. Don't give up. Keep your trust and faith in Him. He takes great delight in seeing us rejoicing and being happy.

May 19

Keep In Step With The Spirit

Galatians 5:22-25 – But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Here's more scripture talking about the Spirit God so lovingly left for each of us who come to know His Son. The fruit of the Spirit is in each and every one of us who have come to know the Lord. Fruit takes time to mature. We have control helping it grow within us. Love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control all reflect what we saw in Jesus as He walked the earth. As Christians we should strive to be more and more like Him every day. I believe these are the keys. Help mature the fruit of the Spirit in you.

Work on them one at a time and watch how you will grow. Not only will you grow, but while you are reflecting Jesus more and more, people around you will want what you have: the peace that will reflect in your face; the joy that bubbles up from within. Don't get me wrong. It won't happen the minute you pray for it. In fact the hardest one for me is self-control. When I first started asking God to help me grow in self-control some people around me made me want to scream or run...or both. But that was how God started working on me with self-control. I'm still a work in progress there...and in a few other manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit, but I know I've come a long way. I'm not how I used to be and I look forward to how I will be when my time on

earth is over.

My tomorrows are better than my todays. That's another promise from God and He's been keeping it since I was a little girl. 😊 This keeps me smiling, wondering what blessings are waiting for me around the next corner.

God bless you!

May 20 **The Sin Not Forgiven**

Matthew 12:31-32 – And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

This scripture brings up a lot of controversy. At least it has over the 50 years of my walk with the LORD.

I believe I've had peace with it from the beginning, so I don't mean controversy in me. And I'm sure there are many more people who have a deep peace through these scriptures. Remember, I'm sharing with you what these scriptures mean to me. God may speak to you through many scriptures differently. By this, I mean share a different message to you at the time. I know He's used the same scriptures to show me many things over my many years as a believer.

The one above told me God can and will forgive any and every sin I did and do, when I asked, believing, trusting, and welcoming, Jesus into my heart for eternity. And He did it for you too. Only you and God know if you've done this. Others can try to judge and tell you, oh but you're not saved. You did such and such. Well, I did such and such myself, but praise God, He loved me through it, and forgave me even before I asked Him to. And He knew I was going to do it before I did.

Once I gave my heart to God asking Jesus to come into my life, I knew and still know I am saved without a doubt for all eternity. When I die I'll join God instantly in heaven, my body to follow later on Jesus' return.

By my reading the above scripture, He says the only sin He will not forgive is **those who deny Him by blaspheming The Holy Spirit that He leaves in those of us who come to Him.** The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Those who don't believe in the Holy Spirit that God left with us when Jesus died for us, they are not forgiven and will not be spending eternity in Heaven. Without faith it's impossible to believe.

God wants to save us all. Praise God!

May 21

Let It Be Good That Spills Out Of Your Heart

Matthew 12:34-35 – You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

This tells me, what I fill myself up with, good or evil, will come out through me naturally. I don't know about you, but I want to do good. Most of the time that is what comes out of me, but sometimes my flesh gets in the way. Then a snide or sarcastic remark or thought will come to me in reflection of something someone said or did to me.

Do you know what that tells me? It tells me I haven't spent enough time filling myself with The Word. To me, that's filling myself with good. Normally I start everyday with The Word as well as a couple of devotions that I have found that help me grow stronger in my faith. But some days start so early, I either skip the morning readings or just cut it to one devotional and a short scripture. When I skip it altogether, sad to say, I can tell. My days aren't as smooth or I make a few wrong decisions. Days I shorten my time with The Lord I still feel His presence but don't always hear His directions as strong as I'd like. I find the more time I spend filling myself with the good, just as The Word says, more good pours out of me.

I try to make up for my missed or shortened readings in the evening, but a lot of times the night slips right on by. Don't get me wrong, it doesn't make me a bad person, but it keeps me from having more goodness to flow out of me. I find I'm happier when I'm sharing God's love and walking in peace, than when I let my flesh rule and let a little sarcasm flow out of me. The good thing is we have the choice. Fill our selves with good or not.

Think of a saltshaker or a sugar bowl. If you fill that saltshaker with pepper, you won't get any salt when you start shaking it loose. You'll be heating up your food instead of adding a little flavor. Or if you put salt in your sugar bowl, when you scoop out a teaspoon for your coffee, yuck! You won't be adding sweetness to your strong brew.

So as in everything in our life, we have a choice. If we want to let goodness come out of our mouths and show in our actions, then we need to fill our hearts, our souls, our spirit, with goodness. It's our choice, your choice...so make it count. 😊

Have a great day!!

May 22 **Standing Strong**

Psalm 112:6-8 – Surely the righteous will never be shaken; they will be remembered forever. They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD. Their hearts are secure, they will have no fear; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

After you read this scripture, you need to ask, who are the righteous?

We are—All of us who are under the blood of Jesus. We are righteous, not because of how we act, but because of what He did and we believe it... believing Jesus is our Savior. We accepted the gift of Jesus' blood. Because He is righteous and we are covered in His blood, we are righteous. We could never do enough good to become righteous, because we make mistakes. Jesus didn't make any. He never sinned. Therefore He was righteous.

Because we believe in Him, we will never be shaken. Our names have been written in the Book of Life. We may have things that come our way that makes us ask God questions, but that's okay. He'll help us find the answers. During that time we will still be saved, still be righteous, not shaken.

Trusting in Him, knowing He is in control of our eternity, gives us rest. When bad news comes our way, it doesn't say we won't be saddened. We will be. But when we take a moment and remember God has our future in His hands, we know in the end we will triumph.

So stay steadfast in your faith, trusting in Him. Let the Holy Spirit lead you to walk in God's will for you...one day at a time.

May 23 **Cursed Or Blessed**

Jeremiah 17:5-9 – This is what the LORD says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the LORD. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. “But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.” The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Praise God, those of us who believe in Jesus as our Savior are blessed...not cursed.

Did you read what those who are cursed look forward to? Cursed are those who put their trust in man. They aren't trusting in God. So they have to rely on their own strength or power of someone else...another person. They don't know the LORD nor do they put their trust in Him. Bushes in the wastelands get blown here and there by the wind...tossed around. So someone who is cursed gets tossed around in their daily life. The heat can catch the bush on fire and burn it away in a snap. So too can problems come in and destroy someone who doesn't have the LORD to rely on.

The rest of that verse talks about the blessed. Isn't that exciting? That's you and me. We are blessed. We trust in the LORD. Our roots are strong, nourished by the Word. When problems (heat) come our way, we don't need to worry. We will come out on top. We will win in the end, survive through whatever comes our way, and thrive. As long as we keep the LORD first in our lives we will continue to bear fruit. Others will see the goodness shining through and want to know more. We may be planting the seed, but know that God will water it.

Stay strong in the LORD. Let Him shower you with His blessings.

May 24

Quality Of Life

2 Peter 1:5-10 - For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you'll take time to read these scriptures, fill your heart to make every effort of letting this be your normal way of life – having faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, and love – you will find a great quality of life in yourself through your knowledge of Jesus Christ, your LORD.

He died for us, suffered for all our sins, so that we don't have to. Live your life letting the Holy Spirit guide you and you'll find a great quality of life here on this earth. And then, praise God, when your time comes to an end on earth, you will live eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What more could anyone want? Thank you Lord, for allowing me to be a part of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I look forward to eternity. I hope you do too!

Have a great day!

May 25

Be A Winner Each Day

Psalms 37:3-5, 7, 23-24 – Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and He will do this: Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked

schemes. The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in Him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with His hand.

The verses for today are many, but all come together to give us reassurance. They remind us to keep our trust, our faith, in The LORD. As we dwell in Him, in His Word, we will enjoy safe pasture...safe days.

Not only should we read what God is telling us, but if we take delight in Him, in His Words, in His plans for us, He will give us the desires of our hearts. He'll do this, because if you are delighting yourself in what He's telling you through Scripture, then He knows we want what He wants. So our desires will line up with the blessings He wants to pour our way. So commit yourself to Him, to His Word, and He will pour out His blessings on you, giving you your desires.

Of course sometimes you have to wait to see those desires coming your way. While you're waiting, be patient knowing He knows the best time for you to receive your desires.

Keep your heart strong, in Him, letting Him lead you. You may have a few bumps in the road along the way, but know He will see you through. You will be the winner in many, many ways.

May 26

Live In Confidence

Hebrews 10:19-22 & 35-36 – Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, His Body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ... So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised.

These words are very encouraging to me. For I know I have failed many times over the course of my life. But I know, because I am covered in the blood of Jesus, I can talk to God, my Father, about how I feel...why I failed Him. Usually when I have done these things (made wrong choices) it was because I

was putting myself first. It's like one day I said, enough. And suddenly started thinking why can't things be "my way" instead of this person's or that person's way? Trust me. That was me making a wrong choice right there. God wants us to put others first and trust Him to take care of us. I know this but God let me walk in those selfish days.

The great thing is, He didn't stop loving me. Yes, He allowed me to make some of those wrong steps...and I'm sure before I took them He let me know I was stepping off the path He'd planned for me, but my stubborn self-centered heart was looking out for me. I think I believed no one else was so I better. Of course the whole time because I am a child of God, He watched over me. He allowed me to walk through my bad choices but kept leading me back to Him. We still talked everyday, but at some point I listened with both ears instead of just one...and I let my heart into the conversation.

God never gave up on me. He's there for you too. So no matter what you are going through or feeling at this time, if you are a child of God, trust Him to lead you. Talk to Him and **listen**. Persevere in living the life God planned for you, knowing it is the best one for you and for all of those around you. We are to be witnesses, reflecting Jesus in our actions and words. So let's grow the Kingdom of God together, one day at a time, for as long as we walk this earth.

Have a great day!!

May 27 **Trust In Him**

Psalm – 91:7,10 – *A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. ...no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.*

I don't know about you, but I live in the south. Down here we have lots and lots of rain, and during several months of the year we have hurricanes that threaten our lives, our property, and our land.

When I found this chapter, these verses, or should I say when God led me to them and opened my heart and head to understand them, I felt so much peace come upon me.

It tells me no matter what is going on around me, all the bad news I hear about on the television, all the disasters that are taking place; I am under God's

protection. He told me no harm will overtake me, no disaster will come near my tent. I'm not saying bad things won't happen. I'm saying God will see me through. I believe His protection is all around me. And guess what, even if my home is destroyed in a hurricane and my body is killed, my soul will be instantly in heaven, at peace, rejoicing with others all around. I also know in my heart by His Words, this scenario won't happen to me until I've completed what He's called me to do on this earth. Like Paul in the ship that was being tossed and turned and everyone thought they would drown, Paul heard from God letting Him know he had more to do, so he wouldn't go down with the ship. I too won't go down by a hurricane until my work on earth is complete.

So when the wind kicks up and rain comes down in torrents, I sit on my chair in the living room, watching outside, thanking God for the plans He has for me. My trust is in Him.

One more quick thing I feel I should say here, I believe I will hear from God telling me to move to the center of the house, get in the tub, if more destruction is going to be allowed to my home. Or He may even tell me to vacate. I wouldn't be strong headed and self-sufficient and stay sitting in my chair. My trust and safety is in Him, not me. That's why it's very important to stay in the Word, stay listening to God, stay letting the Holy Spirit in you lead you daily, and all the while rest in His arms, with your trust in Him.

May 28

The Sabbath Was Made For You

Mark 2:25-27 – He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions. Then He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

Over the past year and a half, since my husband's death, I've had a hard time getting back into going to church. In the beginning I went right back, but everyone, in love, asked, “How are you doing?” I had a hard time with that question. I knew my husband was better off, but I MISSED HIM! Life for me was hard, but yet at the same time, I was resting in God's arms and at a peace only He could give me. So what answer do you give? It was easier to quit going. Don't misunderstand me. I stayed close to God. Stayed in His Word. Listened to more than the two preachers I used to listen to on TV. God led me

to 3 more. So I was hearing and reading the WORD of God on a constant basis daily—in fact, more hours than I did before.

At a point I let a sense of guilt touch my heart when I'd hear 1 or 2 of the preachers tell me I should be in church on The Lord's Day! Then God would connect me with this Scripture that reminded me, wait Deborah, I made the Sabbath for you. He reminded me as long as I'm keeping Him first and making a priority of praising Him in my life, relax on the Sabbath and let me heal your wounds, your hurt, your heart. At the right time I will lead you back.

Over the following months I didn't attend church on a regular basis. At times I felt encouraged to slip into other churches in my area to be in the middle of believers, yet not many who knew me to come ask about how I was doing. It worked from time to time.

The Lord is stirring me again. Maybe it's time to get back into a house of believers, sharing the love of God with them. He will show me the way.

All I'm trying to say here is let the Lord lead you as to where you should attend, where you should be on any and every given day. He will bless you with a family of believers at the right church at the right time, as long as you listen to Him first. God loves you and He wants the best for you. Put your trust in Him, not man. Love man through Christ, and be ready to be a witness for others who don't know the Lord as their Savior.

God bless you!

May 29 **Shine Brightly**

Mark 4:21-24 – He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on its stand? For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.” “Consider carefully what you hear,” He continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more; ...

If you love the Lord, let His light shine through you.

Don't hide your faith in Him under the surface. Let it explode through your actions, your words, and your love for others.

Keep your ears turned toward His Word, letting the Holy Spirit in you lead you daily. He has great plans for each and every one of His children and He wants what is best for us. Open your heart to His Word. Let Him lead you.

Let today be a great day, the one He's planned for you. And know, according to His Word your tomorrows will be better than your todays. Look at life through His eyes, through the plans He's made for you.

Walk expectantly, rejoicing Him all the way. What a great life you will have as you keep your trust in Him.

May 30 **Keep On Thanking Him**

Psalm 136:1 – Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good. His love endures forever.

Did something good happen to you yesterday...or today?

If so, give thanks to the LORD. He is good. He brings good things your way. Be faithful and consistent in giving your thanks to Him.

Know if something bad comes your way, God didn't send it to you. He only gives good things to His children.

If it's bad it's either coming from Satan or repercussions from decisions you made or someone else in your life made. If you keep your faith and trust in Him, know He is good, He loves you, and His love endures forever. Know He will see you through it all and He will make good out of whatever bad came your way while you were **keeping** your trust in Him.

Keep thanking God through it all. He will see you through!!!

May 31 **Rest In The LORD**

Proverbs 19:23 – The fear of the LORD leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

It didn't say trouble won't come – it said untouched by trouble. How could

that be? It's because when we rest in content, it means we are letting Him fight our battles and we know He will bring us through. When this trouble passes—which it will—we will be untouched. We will come out on top. We will not only survive through it, we will thrive after it!!!

Praise God! Live your life trusting the LORD to see you through each and every minute of every day in every thing. God is there 24/7 for you. You must rest in Him, being content, knowing He is there for you and will lead you through. Follow His will for you in every situation and you will be *untouched* by the trouble that comes your way.

I love the Lord and He loves me. He loves you too. Keep your love and trust in Him!! Have a great day!

June 01

Believe And Receive

Luke 18:27 – *Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”*

In this chapter of Luke, Jesus was speaking in parables to His disciples.

After He told the parable of the rich young ruler that had asked what he had to do to inherit eternal life and Jesus told him he had to sell everything he owned and give it away to the needy, the rich man was sad. He was very wealthy and didn't want to give away all of his earthly possessions. Jesus went on to say how hard it was for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. Then some of the disciples asked who could be saved? THAT is when He said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

This is the Word telling us the only way we can be saved is by God's help. What did He do so that we all could be saved? He loved us (as we were, dirty filthy rags) so much He gave His Son, who is sinless, to die for all of our sins so we don't have to.

We only need believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior and we can receive salvation so that we may enter the Kingdom of God. It's so easy...yet we make it so hard.

Believe and receive. It is a gift!

Once you realize Jesus died for every one of your sins...past, present, and future... then you can be Jesus conscious instead of sin conscious.

If we'd keep our eyes on Jesus, in His Word, our thoughts on pleasing Him, honoring Him—our lives would grow with an overflow of His blessings. He loves us so much, and we didn't do a thing to earn it. We couldn't. But what we can't do, God can!!!

Praise God! He gave entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven to us through His Son as a gift to us!

Thank You, Lord.

June 02

Jesus Is Alive And Living Well In Heaven

Acts 1:3, 11b – After His suffering, He presented Himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ... This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”

Jesus spent three days in hell suffering for our sins. Afterwards, He presented Himself to His disciples, showing proof God rose Him from the dead. He conquered death. He defeated Satan. Jesus is alive. He hung around for forty days showing proof to everyone He came into contact with. He talked about the kingdom of God. Then He was gone.

He is living well in Heaven at God's right hand, but He's coming back to get us...all of us who believe and have received the gift God gave us—salvation through His Son! And then all of us, the church of God, His followers and believers of His Son's birth of a virgin, death on the cross, and back to life again, will join God and Jesus in Heaven!!

Praise God for the victory!!!

June 03

Jesus, The Only Way

Acts 4:12 – “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Salvation is the deliverance from the power and penalty of sin. At the time of our salvation we were also delivered from the power of Satan, from the power of death. Yes, our bodies will die here on earth (if Jesus doesn't come before then), but our (those of us who have accepted salvation through Jesus) spirits will go instantly to heaven and wait until Jesus comes back to the earth. At that time our renewed physical bodies will join our spirits in heaven and live eternally in the kingdom of God—In the New Earth, the way it was meant to be in the beginning.

There is only one way for us to be saved. That is by believing that God sent His one and only Son (born of a virgin) to live on earth sin free and then die on the cross and suffer in hell for our sins until God rose Him from the dead.

If you believe that, say it! Thank God for His Son. Thank Jesus for carrying out God's plan. Ask Him into your heart.

At that moment you will repent (change your mind) and start living for the LORD. Don't get me wrong. You will mess up. We all do. But God will grow you from glory to glory (help you sin less and less through His Glory, His goodness). Jesus' blood covers those who come to Him for salvation...freeing us from the bondages of sin. Praise God!

HE is the WAY!

June 04 **Be Thankful**

1 Corinthians 1:4-9 – I always thank my God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in Him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul thanked God for all of us. Through the grace of God He gave us Christ Jesus. God is good, filled with love for each and every one of us. We are blessed that He loves us so much. We should put all of our trust in Him. He is there for us through it all, from the beginning through the middle and to the end (of our time here on earth)...and then on into eternity.

We are blameless, free from sin, because Jesus Christ already paid the price for us. Our bodies are washed in His blood, keeping us pure for God. When He looks at us, He doesn't see our sin. He sees our faith in His Son who died for us.

Praise God!! Be thankful, as Paul was for all of us. Be thankful for all the blessings God has given us through our years. Be thankful for the trials we walk through. Yes I said through, because when we lean on the LORD, He gets us through it all. In fact, He already had the way out before the situation came upon us.

Stay in trust in Him, and keep thanking Him through it all!

June 05 **God Hears You**

Job 22:27-28 – You will pray to Him, and He will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows. What you decide on will be done, and light will shine on your ways.

When you go to God in prayer, He will listen. He hears you. As a believer you should stay in His Word. And if you've been reading His Word, you know you must be holding nothing against someone when you ask Him for something in prayer. The Word tells us this. So if you have un-forgiveness in your heart against someone, forgive them before you pray. That's you fulfilling your vow, because His Word tells us to renew our minds daily. That's staying in the Word daily, keeping your mind fresh with His Words.

When you do these things, then what you ask on earth will be done, and His light will shine on your ways.

If you've never asked Jesus into your heart as your Savior, do it now. It's only too late when you take your last breath here on earth. God is listening. He hears you now. Reach out to Him. Ask Him to come into your heart, thanking Him for His Son who suffered for your sins and He lives again. He will answer your prayer. Then get into the Word, find a church that preaches the grace of God, His love for you, and be a part of the family of God. This church will love you for who Jesus is in you, not for whom you were or who you have become.

If you have questions, feel free to call me at 225/978-5924. I'll pray to God for Him to give you the answer you need, even if it's through me. God loves you. I love you through Christ, and I am here for you. God bless you!

June 06 **God Supplies All Our Needs & Gives Us Even More**

Deuteronomy 8:18 – But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

Yes, this covenant that is talked about in this Scripture was the first covenant.

We are under the second covenant God made with His people. We are under the blood of Jesus (2nd Covenant) not the Law of Moses (1st Covenant). The blessings He gives us are the same. God just made it easier for us to stay pure in His sight. Under the 1st covenant they had to make blood sacrifices constantly. Jesus was our sacrifice, given by God, **once and for all**.

God is here for His people. He wants to bless us with wealth and health and all that is good. He's promised to do this. You need only to listen to what He tells you to do. Believe, receive, and obey. That is the way. God is rich. Everything is His. He wants to share it with His children. That's us...those who believe.

Take time each day to read His Word. Let His love grow inside of you more and more. He will lead you every day, if you just let Him. In the years I've been reading His Word He's made it clear to me I'm here to serve others... bless others...give to the needy...give God a tenth of what He gives me... look out for children...AND SO MUCH MORE.

I know that God has supplied all my needs. They are taken care of daily and He gives me even more than I need. I am blessed to be a blessing. That is a gift from Him. He wants to give it to us all. We just have to trust in Him and His Word!

Have a great day! Be blessed!!

June 07 **Blessed To Be A Blessing**

Psalm 1:1, 3 – Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

This Scripture tells us who is blessed.

The first thing I see, if I'm walking around putting people down or finding fault with them, gossiping with the person I'm with, then I will surely **not** be blessed.

What? You say gossiping is a sin? I thought sin was killing, stealing, lying. You know. Those things listed in the Ten Commandments. And preachers tell

us drinking and cussing are sins as well.

I can take time to explain how when you gossip about others you are murdering their character, which is killing, but that's not what I'm going to tell you. And yes, those ten items that God carved into the stone were commands He told His people not to do, for they are sins (which were being committed, but no one knew). He was giving them a guideline, because before that no one knew anything was wrong.

If you want the litmus test to give to each thing you think about doing but you're not sure if it's a sin or not, ask yourself— Would Jesus do this? —If He would, then it's not a sin. For Jesus never sinned.

But then you ask me, “How would I know if Jesus would do it or not?” My answer to this is, read the Word. He walked the earth for thirty-three years. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John speak of His days on earth. Read them. Familiarize yourself with them, with Him. Then go on to read the rest of the Holy Bible... a little each day. You'd be amazed how quickly you'd know what would be pleasing to God for you to do, and what would not.

God wants to bless you so you can be a blessing to others. He wants to prosper you. Start blessing those you can, maybe by giving a smile to someone who needs it. That wouldn't cost you anything, but you'd be a blessing. God will notice. The more blessings you give away, the more you'll want to give away. And guess what? God will make sure you have more to give. Set your heart on being a giver and you'll be amazed how blessed you will become.

God is so good. Don't lose out!

Have a great day!

June 08 **With Him, Through Him, You'll Lack Nothing**

Psalm 23:1 & Philippians 4:19a – *The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.*

Scripture tells us everything. If we'll take time to read His Word every day, He will fill us with nuggets of wisdom to walk through the day, helping us

through any trouble that may come our way. These Scriptures tell us, those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior; we will lack nothing. God will give us everything we need each day.

Most people think that means He'll give them a big house, a nice car, and a boatload of money. He does do that sometimes, in His time, depending on if we stay in His Word and stay obedient. But what this tells us as believers is we'll have whatever we need each day to make it through. We'll have food to eat, clothes to wear, shelter, warmth, wisdom to respond to whatever comes our way (life), and more. The more we stay in Him, trusting Him, the more His blessings will pour down on us.

The second verse I posted tells us God will meet our needs according to His riches, the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus. EVERYTHING is His. He wants to bless each of us more than we could ever imagine. It's there waiting for us. He loved us first and we need to love Him back. Do our part, loving others, putting others before our selves and trust that He will take care of all our needs in an abundant way.

God is good and wants to bless all of His children. Get into His Word. Be persistent. Be obedient. Love Him. Love others. You'll be amazed how much He will bless you.

Enjoy your blessings each day!

June 09 **Honor Him And He Will Bless You**

Proverbs 3:9-10 – Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

People hear this and turn a deaf ear. Someone wants my money.

Please open your ears and listen to me. What I'm about to tell you is from my own experience. I know for a fact what God says here, He does...but only if you do your part.

I was saved as a young girl, age of ten. I heard this message all my life. I've always given with a heart of joy. Truth be told, I didn't always give 10%. Sometimes I gave more, sometimes less. Depended on how much I had at the

time I was at church.

That wasn't the correct way. I believe because I gave with a cheerful heart, He always blessed me, but not in the abundance of what He wanted to bless me.

As I matured as a believer (sorry to say it was forty years later) I started digging into the Word. Before that, I read it at church Wednesdays and Sundays when the preacher said the Scripture to turn to, and when I started teaching again I read the lessons the Friday or Saturday night before and read the Word then as well. Prayed for guidance and He led me. Well the more I asked for direction and growth, the more it started coming.

Suddenly I was going to two churches, listening to messages on TV, and talking about God with my daughter who suggested I visit Bethany. God opened my heart wide and made me hungry for the Word. The more I read, the more I understood. He gave me Matthew 6:33 – *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* When I took those words deep into my heart, I focused on God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Word and started understanding things more clearly.

Then when Proverbs 3:9-10 came into my sight and my heart, I realized everything was His already. Why was I waiting to give Him back some of it? So I started writing a check for 10% to the church where I was part of the minute my paycheck went into the bank account. On the nights I visited the other church, I gave from what I had on hand, whatever God led me to give. Before I knew it, not only were my debts being paid with money left over, but things were being paid off. After some time passed, God even gave me the money for us to pay off our house. We were debt free, till we sold the house and bought a new one further out on the edge of town. But it will be paid off before scheduled. I know as long as I stay faithful to Him, God will too.

He keeps my accounts full to where I not only give my 10% to the church I'm planted in, but I am blessed to give to various other places of need that the Lord directs me.

As I stay faithful in giving Him back 10% first, God continues to bless me to be a blessing to others. It's a glorious feeling, an abundant way to live my life.

Trust Him. Do as He says, and you will be amazed, living an abundant life.

Have a great day!

June 10 Without Pain

Proverbs 10:22 – *The blessing of the LORD brings wealth, without painful toil for it.*

God has a plan for each and every one of us. He's given each of us a gift that we can use to glorify Him. When we use it, we'll find how true these words are.

In my flesh when I read this in the past I thought, great. I don't want to work, but I want the money.

Again, as I said before, wealth is more than just money. Also this Scripture is not telling us to do nothing. He's telling us we don't have to painfully toil for it. If we let God lead us to what we are to be doing, we'll find joy in our work. There is no pain if we feel joy while we're doing our job that we've been called to do. If we love our work, it's no longer work.

Well, you say, I've been working here for twenty-five years. I can retire in five. I'm not going to go changing my job now, especially after all the hard work I've done and the pain I've gone through. I hear you! The good news is you don't have to change your job. You just have to change your attitude toward your job.

You can use the gift God gave you working anywhere, doing anything. If you remember you're working for God, not for man, it will change everything about your job. You'll find excitement in your heart as you're heading to your job. When you get there and start doing everything you can to do your best because you remember you are working for God, others will see the joy in you. They may think you're crazy because they work at the same place and they know how hard it is to get along with the boss or the management or the co-workers, yet you've found joy and peace in your work. They're going to want to have what you have.

Not only will going to work be pain-free for you when you adjust your attitude, your body will be less anxious, and you'll feel better than you have in a very long time.

God loves you and me. He wants the best for us. He can make wherever you work, the best for you at the time you are there (until or unless He moves you

somewhere else). So keep your eyes on the LORD. Remember you are working for Him. Do it with a smile on your lips and a joy in your heart. Feel His love—Don't feel the pain.

June 11

You Have Been Vindicated

Isaiah 54:17 – “...no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me,” declares the LORD.

God is talking to you and me in this Scripture. He is talking to the servants of the LORD, believers who serve Him. He's telling us that no matter what or who comes up against us, we will prevail. We will overcome. **But** you have to stand up believing this refuting whoever or whatever has come against you.

It's our heritage. The LORD tells us so. So who are you to say you can't do this, or someone has knocked you down and you can't get back up? Listen to what God says. Not what you think or feel...or what others tell you. I can only share what I know. I know that God has given me the vision of what He plans for me (and He has a plan for you). He's the reason I write. I didn't even like to read in school. What reason would I give myself to start writing? I didn't. God did. He showed me He's given me the gift of storytelling. So what did I have to do??? Start writing!!! 😊

I started writing at the age of thirty-three. I was a full-time worker, mother of three, and wife, yet I made (not found) time to write because of the vision God gave me. I didn't know it would be for anyone but myself. As time progressed He showed me a bigger vision. He showed me He was going to touch hearts with my stories—Help them see the love of God, draw them back to Him. Even though my stories are fiction, made-up, not real, my God is real. Every story or idea that has come to me, I believe He gave it to me. So I continued to write seeing a bigger picture. So many times I wanted to give up. I told myself, who did I think I was? Why would God use me to write when He has so many others out there better qualified than I am? As I came close to giving up, God would put someone in my path that said just the right words that spurred me on. So I continued. I wrote for twenty years before my first book was published. Perseverance was the word God kept pouring into me. Many books later I'm still writing as He leads, and readers all around the earth are enjoying the stories He gives me. I believe God has inspired each and every

story while blessing me in the writing of them, both fiction and now non-fiction. I'm sharing in this devotional what God has given me through His Word. I believe He will be blessing you the reader as well.

So keep your eyes on The LORD and keep your trust in Him. God is good and He loves you dearly. Have a great day.

June 12 **God's Blessing Is Waiting For You**

Malachi 3:10-11 – *"...Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it..."*

I live in America. It used to be called "a blessed land." As for me and mine, we are still blessed. God's words are true. Test Him as He says above, and make your land a blessed land. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse. Be the cause for your land to be blessed.

In the early days our forefathers were believers and didn't hesitate to say so. "In God We Trust" was written on our monies. It was our government of early days that decided that. Today some of the leaders have been adamant about taking God out of the government, out of the schools, and out of our lives in general. We as individuals need to keep God first place in our hearts, in our lives, and in our world. He loves us.

Praise God, belief in Him has spread to many nations around the world. Others are growing stronger in their faith every day. We as Americans need to continue to stand strong as well, with other believers around the world. We need to keep sharing the love of God, the promises of God, and the blessings of God. He will continue to bless His believers and their land. He says test Him in this and you will see.

Some may think I got a little off track here because I started with a verse about tithe. Tithe makes everyone think of money. It is that plus so much more.

I believe 10% of what is God's and giving it back to Him is so much more than money. I believe it is money, time, love, goodness, and everything else we are blessed with.

So be fruitful and give 10% and more so you can see your blessings grow.

June 13 **Judge Not**

Luke 6:38 – “...Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Here is another verse that talks about giving and we instantly think (when taken out of context) that it's talking about money.

Again, I believe this is talking about more than money. I believe it's telling us anything we give out to others will come back to us, and more. This could be good, if you are one of those who give willingly of your love, your time, your money, and yourself.

BUT if you are someone who gives grief to others, guess what? You're going to get that grief pressed down, shaken together, and pouring over, running back to you. If you are someone who criticizes people, you are going to get that back in larger doses as well.

So think about it. Are you someone who feels they are always being put down, belittled, ignored, or unloved? Maybe it's because you do those things to others.

Give your heart to the Lord. Have Him lead you daily as to how to treat your neighbor. Turn your sad or bad days into joy. Find His love (because He loves you dearly and it's not lost. It's waiting on you.) Take His love into your heart and then share it with others. You can even love your worst enemy through the love of Christ.

In no time, you'll see your life turn around...and it will be for the better.

If you already know the Lord but are feeling judged, unloved, or condemned by others, pray about it and ask God if you've been doing these things to others. If you have, then stop!

If you haven't, then maybe God is using you to stand strong in Him, showing that no matter what comes against you, you know through God, you'll get

through it all. And when you do this, those watching who don't know the love of God will see they want what you have. Rest in His love for you as you walk the path He's called you to walk. I'm not saying God is making bad things happen to you. He doesn't do that. He allows it, so His glory can be revealed. Know if you stay in faith as Job did, you will come out so much better off than before.

Have a blessed day!

June 14 **Give With A Cheerful Heart**

*2 Corinthians 9:6-8 – Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver**. And God is able to bless you **abundantly**, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will **abound** in every good work.*

Again it appears I am talking about money. This time you're right. I am.

I learned a long time ago to give from my heart.

If you give it any other way, it won't be an abundant blessing to you. God wants us to want to be good to others. Bless others. He wants us to want to obey His command of giving a 10th of our earnings to His house, but He wants us to do it willingly.

We are to obey God in everything He tells us to do or not do. It won't change your salvation. It won't block your blessing. When you give a tenth of your earnings back to the Lord because He said so, you will be blessed. He will supply all your needs. His Word tells you this.

But if you want the abundant life, the abundant blessings, blessings that are pouring over you abundantly, then reconsider how you are giving your tithe, (this also covers any other thing you give or do out of obedience) and what you feel led to give above the tithe.

God blesses His obedient followers, but He blesses in abundance those that follow His direction with a joyful heart.

Go be a joyful giver, in the name of Jesus!!!

June 15
Receive It In Abundance

John 10:10 – *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

This is a great Scripture to remember. Etch it deep in your heart. Satan comes to destroy the growth of the kingdom of God. Even if you are saved, he can still use you to keep others from coming to know Christ and being saved. Satan does it, like he's trying to help you. Just like he did when he came to Eve in the Garden of Eden. He told her how much smarter she would be if she ate the fruit off the one tree God told them they could not eat...the tree of knowledge. They didn't need to know as much as God knew, but Satan made it sound like God was trying to keep them down. All God had ever done for them was good. They were blessed to walk and live in peace and joy. But Satan knew which button to press. By listening to him they learned pain and sorrow...something God had held back from them.

Satan knows our buttons, so watch out!

Don't let him press yours. Realize others are watching all of us who claim to know God. If you do, then act like it as well. Walk in the love of God. Know your tomorrows will be better than your todays. Why? Because His Word says so. Get into the Word. Read it for yourself. Find all the blessings you are missing out on if you don't think your life is very good. His plans are for you to prosper not fail...to have life and have it more abundantly...to live and not die...to bless you so you can be a blessing. Be a reflection of Jesus. Let others see the goodness of God in you so they will want to have the joy you have. Make sure your face and actions reflect God's love. Love, joy, and hope should spill out from you daily.

Live the abundant life God has for you.

If you are not walking in abundance, ask God for direction. Brother Copeland talked about a time when he was going to give a message and God showed him a vision. He saw a long pipe about 5" in diameter spraying out a mist of water. The water was coming from a strong spring. The water was rushing into the pipe, but it only came out in a spray at the other end. Brother Copeland asked God what that meant. God told him he was clogging up the

goodness God was pouring out in abundance. He was only misting it out to the ones listening to him preach. Brother Copeland didn't understand. He thought he was living his life the way God had told him. He knew he was steady in the Word, in his prayer life, and in his life in general, so he asked God what he'd done wrong to clog up the works. God reminded him of a man who he felt cheated Sister Gloria (his wife) with a bag of cantaloupe. The top two were beautiful, but the rest were nearly rotted. Brother Copeland had gotten mad and wanted to give this guy a piece of his mind. Most of us would think, good for you Brother C, but that's not what God would want from His people. We are to forgive, pray for those who do us wrong. Let God handle the rest. As soon as he asked forgiveness and prayed for that man, his messages started pouring out the goodness of God and people were saved in abundance.

You can have the abundant life as well. Forgive, love, and do as God instructs you to do, with a joyful heart. Praise God!

Have a great day!!

June 16 **Find The Right Path**

Proverbs 14:12 – *There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.*

I'm not sure why I was led to share this verse. It doesn't tell us what way appears right but is wrong. It's like trying to hook a reader...let me read more and find what seems so right but it's oh so wrong. That's a great idea, but you need to read more than just a few verses around this one to understand.

Those that have read or studied the Word for any length of time know there is only one way for salvation—through Jesus.

John 14:6 – *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

If we don't have Him in our hearts, haven't accepted Him as our Savior, then we will spend eternity in hell.

The flip side to that is, there is a right way as John 14:6 tells us. The right way is through faith in Jesus Christ. He leads us to an eternal life of victory.

So know the Word. Know God. And know Jesus as your Savior. Talk about put a joy in your heart and pep in your step as you follow the path He has for you...this will do it.

God bless you all.

June 17 **He Will Get You Through**

Psalm 147:5 – *Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit.*

These words have given me strength to make it through hard times that came my way.

Why? Because no matter how big or bad the things were that came into my life, I knew God was greater...and will always be greater!

He has the power to defeat anything and everything that tries to come against me. And even though I may not understand what is happening around me, He does. He understands everything. He sees the big picture.

The same goes for you if you'll put your trust in Him on everything...the big and the small.

When problems come our way we are to take time to talk to God. Tell Him how we feel. Ask Him for guidance.

We may think we know exactly what we want Him to do to fix this problem; however, He may have other plans and they seem to be taking things in a different direction.

Or He may be keeping you there a little longer than you thought you should be in the situation. **But know** His understanding has no limit. He sees everything. He knows the best way to fix anything and everything that comes our way. We need only to trust Him. We need to rest in His mighty power and let Him lead us through.

Have a blessed day. Give Him all your worries or concerns. Then ask for His will in your life and be willing to do what He leads you to do.

Have a blessed life!

June 18 The Best

James 1:2-4 – *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

A lot of people blame God when things go wrong. Some even say He's only punishing me or this person or that person for something he/she did in their life. But I'm here to tell you God loves you. God is love. He wants the best for you.

Don't misunderstand. I did not say bad things wouldn't come into your life. The Bible even tells you trouble will come your way. I can guarantee you, if you make wrong choices, you will have to walk through the consequences. And sometimes we're walking through repercussions due to someone else's wrong choices. The main thing these Scriptures are telling us is to count it pure joy when you face these trials. It's your faith being tested. Persevere and you will come out so much stronger on the other end of this trial that has come into your life. While you are walking through these challenges, if you will rest in Him, trust Him to see you through; you will come out stronger and better off than before.

He will get you through whatever trials come against you, but you have to keep your faith in Him knowing He will finish His work in you.

June 19 Looking For Answers?

Proverbs 1:1-7 – *The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; for receiving instruction in prudent behavior; doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.***

Proverbs 1:1-7(MSG) –*These are the wise sayings of Solomon, David’s son, Israel’s king- Written down so we’ll know how to live well and right, to understand what life means and where it’s going; A manual for living, for learning what’s right and just and fair; To teach the inexperienced the ropes and give our young people a grasp on reality. There’s something here also for seasoned men and women, still a thing or two for the experienced to learn— Fresh wisdom to probe and penetrate, the rhymes and reasons of wise men and women. **Start with God—the first step in learning is bowing down to God;** only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom and learning.*

First let me say I felt led to add the Message version as well. It makes it more plain and simple to understand, although the NIV speaks volumes. These verses told me there is an answer to every question I have on how I should respond to any given situation in my life.

How will I find the answer? By reading the Bible. By praying and asking God’s direction...letting the Holy Spirit in me lead me. The same is true for you. The book of Proverbs speaks in short statements of fact all through the book. Solomon wrote some in riddles, some in rhymes. Jesus spoke in parables in the Gospels.

The answers are there and throughout the rest of the Words God spoke through others as the Scriptures were written. To understand, you must have your heart in tune with the LORD’s. Put Him first in your life and He will reveal the answers to you. Go to Him, not your best friend, every time something comes up in your life. God has the answer.

If you only read Proverbs through a few times, your heart will start to understand more and more. The LORD wants us to live a life pleasing to Him.

With the Word in your heart, you won’t fail...most of the time 😊...and when you do, the LORD keeps on loving you. So pick yourself up and keep moving forward, walking in His plan for you.

God bless you!

June 20 **Looking For Wisdom?**

Proverbs 2:1-6 – *My son, if you accept My words and store up My commands*

within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Wouldn't it be great to be the smartest person in the room?

I'll be the first to admit, although I went to college, I didn't stay long. So education wise, I'm pretty average.

But praise God! I have wisdom, understanding, insight, and knowledge that carry me further than any degree I could have received from the university.

I'm not putting education down so don't misunderstand me. I extend many accolades to you who have achieved great book knowledge, and if you're reading this you must love the LORD so I'm sure you have this knowledge I'm speaking of as well. I'm just thankful, and blessed, that the LORD is willing to give to each of us who ask.

Wisdom, knowledge and understanding, He gives us willingly.

God is using me through writing. I never got a degree, but He has blessed me to write fiction books that entertain. Not only do the stories entertain, but I believe my books give readers encouragement, letting them know God loves them and will help them through everything that comes their way, as long as they rest in Him. Trust in Him. Stay in His Word.

Feed your heart and mind while your spirit soars. Have a great day!

June 21

Turn Misery Into Joy

Proverbs 2:12 – *Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse,...*

This wisdom spoken of in these scriptures is the wisdom of the Word. The Word is God...so the wisdom of God.

When we take time to let the Word sink into our hearts and lead our decisions

we make, we will be saved from the ways of the wicked.

Do you find your life miserable or depressing?

Give God a chance to turn it around for you. He has the answer.

And the great news is He loves you and wants to give you the answer that will help you make better decisions, make better choices. Remember, He's given us free will. He lets us make our own decisions, but when we ask Him to lead us in every decision (even the very smallest) He will, and we'll find our lives more at peace... full of joy. He even promises as great as the day may be today, your tomorrow will be even greater.

So give God a chance to turn your misery into joy, and then make your next days better and better through Him.

Have a great day!

June 22 **From Rags To Riches**

Ephesians 2:2-6 - ...in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...

Those of us who have asked Jesus into our hearts, accepted God's Son as our Savior, should be rejoicing over these scriptures. God is telling us by His grace we have been saved. It's nothing we do or can do in works, actions, or deeds to have salvation. It's by believing, asking His forgiveness, and then inviting Him into our hearts that saves us. That's the only action you take for salvation.

We—meaning every one of us: the good, the bad, and the ugly—were born into this world a sinner. In the natural, our flesh rules us. Our flesh wants to join up with the world and live as they do. Who rules the world? Satan. When

we lived this way, letting our flesh rule, we deserved God's wrath.

BUT because He loves us, He shows those of us who have given our hearts to the LORD mercy. And through His mercy we are alive in Christ, covered in His blood and dead to our sins. It's by God's grace that we have been saved. Hallelujah!!

Isn't that worth jumping and shouting praises to God for? Yes, it is.

Praise God! Thank You, Lord! Hallelujah!

You are rich in God's grace. Have a blessed day!

June 23 **Live By Faith**

Galatians 2:16 – ...know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

We can work and be the best we can be, but that doesn't save us. We can go to church every time the doors open, but that doesn't save us. We can listen to all the preachers on TV, but that doesn't save us. We can go all around the world building schools and churches, but that doesn't save us. We can be the first volunteers at everything going on in our church, but that doesn't save us. We can give a million dollars to the needy, but that doesn't save us.

No acts of work or deed by any man, woman, or child can save them. To be saved you must believe God sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to live on earth, die and suffer for our sins, and be raised back to life by Him. When you believe and receive Jesus as your Savior, then you are saved.

Once we are saved, then we will want to do a lot of those things I mentioned in the first paragraph. We'll want to do this because we'll want to show God's love to others, helping to grow the kingdom of heaven. That is what we are all called to do, but each in the way God planned for us.

You have a purpose and a plan on this earth that God has in mind for you. If you choose to accept it and live for Him, your life on earth will be filled with joy.

Living for the Lord, for me, gives me a peace that surpasses anything and everything I've ever felt before. God is number one in my life and my family right behind Him. I can tell you, even through some sad things have come my way; my life is at rest as I walk in my faith in the Lord.

Let Him guide you and direct your path...one day at a time.

God bless you!

June 24

Don't Be Under The Law

Galatians 3:8-14 – Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Don't let the title fool you. First you must realize, if you are a born again believer you are under the blood of Jesus. Praise God!!! That means you are righteous. That means you are forgiven of all your sins, and according to God He remembers them no more. That means you are loved. The law was given in the Old Testament. It was to help the people see they were living in sin. God wrote the Ten Commandments Himself, so they were very important. He also loved everyone so much He covered the commandments/the cement slates with a mercy seat, His mercy given to the people through the sacrificial blood of animals. Of course, this was only a temporary fix. It had to be done over and over again—until God made a better way for us.

Instead of being under the law, we who are born again believers are under the blood of Jesus. He sacrificed Himself for us; died on the cross a sinless man for our sins, then suffered all the judgment that was due us for our past,

present, and future sins. He paid the price in full. It is finished...not part way, not almost, but finished! Complete! Jesus did it for us, and God brought Him through. Now we are righteous in Christ, covered in His blood.

Use the Ten Commandments as a guideline when you're tempted to lie, steal, murder, argue with Mom or Dad, lust, covet your neighbor's car, tell God to wait a minute, or curse using the Lord's name in vain—let your heart recall one of those guidelines and make the right call. But those of you who know the Lord and read His Word already know the right answer for your situation. If not, you know whom to ask. AND if you mess up and choose the wrong answer and you lie, steal, murder etc...know God already knew the choice you would make. He forgives you. You may have some things to walk through (consequences) because of your bad choice, most likely you do, but know it's not God judging you (the believer who messed up...sinned). He already judged Jesus for that sin. He doesn't believe in double jeopardy. Your choices made things happen, not God. Keep Him first and you will get through your wrong choices. At times, we all make them. We live with or through the consequences. You have to decide. God already did, and Jesus paid the price.

Have a great day!

June 25

Live Your Life For The Lord, Not You

Philippians 3:7-9 – But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Philippians 3:7-9 (MSG) – The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I'm tearing up and throwing out with the trash—along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ. Yes, all the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant – dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by Him. I didn't want some petty inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that

comes from trusting Christ – God’s righteousness.

When I read the NIV version of the verses God had used helping me in my life, I couldn’t even understand these scriptures, let alone remember what or where He had helped me using these. I asked God to help me remember. He had me read the message version and it hit me.

As you all know, I’m a published writer of fiction. I have been doing it now for almost thirty years, published almost ten. As the doors to publication finally opened up (not by me, mind you) I felt blessed. I was blessed, and I prayed my books would be a blessing to the reader.

After my first book was published, I started attending a local writers’ group. I already belonged to RWA and ACFW, but I didn’t have a group of writers I was meeting with anymore. A woman who worked at the local library formed this group. She was a retired teacher who then worked at the library and believed in encouraging others as she too started writing. My career started growing, slowly but surely. I try always to give God the glory. He gives me the stories and the publishing houses that have produced my books.

Down the road, after about five books were published, I found myself a couple of times at the meeting feeling I wasn’t being treated as I wanted to be as a published author, yet I heard others being recognized with their successes. That was so wrong of me. It was my flesh. It was my selfish way of thinking. Because I was thinking that *I was successful. Look at me.* I was thinking and looking at myself. WRONG, WRONG, WRONG. Proudful.

And it’s **NOT ABOUT ME! It’s about God using me**, and the gift He gave me, to bless and honor Him. I did this a few times before I saw what I was doing. God opened my eyes to remember it’s not about me. It’s about Him! PRAISE GOD! I didn’t do it. He did it through me.

I shifted my gaze (my heart) back to where it belonged, on Him not me. I love God. I love that He loves me. I love the plans He’s made for me. My future, my hope is in Him. My readership started spreading all across the US and beyond...by Him, not me. Every time I let me get in the way, the plans He has for me slow down.

It boils down that these scriptures reminded me that all I do is for the Lord. Rest in Him and give Him the glory. He will continue to take care of me.

He'll do the same for you. Put your trust in the Lord and rest on Him.

Have a great day!

June 26 **Keep It A Secret**

Matthew 6:1-4 – “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

These verses are plain and simple. They tell us when we step out to do good in Jesus' name, just do it.

Don't tell others about it.

If you do, the glory that would have come down on you from the Lord won't come. Instead, the glory you'll receive for doing that good thing will be whomever you told about it. So if they said, “Good job, man.” OR, “Big deal. Isn't that what you're supposed to do?” –that will be your glory. Not much, either way. The first words may have been nice to hear, but the words will diminish in your mind and you'll be left with nothing. The second, however, wasn't very uplifting at all. You'll be grateful to forget.

BUT had you done it to honor God and left it between you, God, and the one you were blessing, He would have poured a load of blessings out on you. God is good that way. Remember, He sees your heart and knows what you really feel, no matter what display you put on for those around you.

So when you feel led to bless someone, or when you're put in a position where you can be a blessing, do so. Thank God you are able and then keep it to yourself. God loves to bless those who bless others. If you don't believe it, try it. You'll be amazed.

God is good. And He wants to reward you. So go out and be a blessing today!! Have a great one.

June 27

Short And To The Point

Matthew 6:5–8 – “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

This doesn't mean you can't pray aloud in church or in a group you happen to be hanging with. By all means...pray. Lift your voice up to God; pray with your heartfelt words.

Don't pray to hear your own voice speak, though. Pray asking God for direction, or help, or whatever your group has come to Him about. It could even be your country. But don't drag it out just to see if you can make yourself sound smart. Keep it to the point.

Also, remember, not all prayers are to be spoken for those around you to hear. Like if you have a friend who has confided a need to you and asked prayer, don't use the group opportunity to pray for that person's need. Get alone with just you and God...or get with the person and the two of you connect with God through prayer. Or just lift their name up to God asking prayer for their needs to be met without any specifics. God knows. This group prayer can be asked from the whole group without sharing personal situations with others. Just that they need remembering or lifting. Three or more praying together does make for a stronger bond.

God loves you and wants to answer all your prayers, but remember to let it be a prayer from your heart...something you truly mean.

And don't pray to make you feel like it makes you look good. Pray for God's hand in whatever is on your heart.

Remember, God knows what you need before you ask. He just wants to hear you acknowledge that you need Him to provide. We can do all things through Christ, but without Him, we can do nothing.

I pray, in Jesus' Name, that You bless whoever is reading this right now. Give them direction in their walk today. Pour out Your favor on them. Thank You, Lord. A-men.

June 28 **From The Inside Out**

Mark 7:14–15 – *Again Jesus called the crowd to Him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”*

My momma used to say something about it's the beauty on the inside of a person that counts. Of course, she said it a little rhythmically, but I can't remember exactly how she said it. But I did get the gist of what she was telling me.

She wanted me to remember, outside beauty doesn't make the person beautiful. It's what comes from the heart that makes a woman beautiful. If you are a good and kind person to others, no matter how your nose is shaped, or your eyes, or the size of your body; short, tall, round, skinny...if your heart is in the right place, showing the love of God to others, no one will notice those other things I mentioned. And I can guarantee if you see a beautiful woman with a perfect face and body, and gorgeous long hair flowing down her shoulders, at first glance she is beautiful. However, when she opens her mouth if the first words out are telling you nasty things, immediately that beauty will dissipate and all you'll see is the ugliness of her words. Beauty comes from within.

I remember a message years ago. The Pastor gave such simple similes that they spoke profoundly in my mind making them easy to recall. He told us if you fill a container with salt, when it's dumped over, salt will spill everywhere. If you fill it with sugar and then dump it over, sugar spills out. This same thing holds true with the human body and spirit. Fill your mind with God's Word and good will come out of your mouth and heart. Fill it with trash, and trash will come out. This isn't exactly what the scripture was saying. But I believe it was telling us, if you fill your mind with thoughts of God, with His Word, with His Son, even when bad things come into your mind, heart, or life, good will still come out of you because that is what The Lord's Word stores in you...in us.

What you eat or drink won't tarnish you. What you say or do will. As a believer help make your output more powerful by filling your heart and mind with good things, like God's Word. What you take in your ears and eyes can help make what pours out of you be things that lift those around you. Use His Word to strengthen you on the inside so you can build up others. Purify your inside and let the Godliness pour out.

Have a blessed day.

June 29 **Hope And Faith**

Romans 8:24–25 – *For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.*

I believe that's faith. It's by faith in what we are hoping for that one day we will see it come to pass. I can only use myself as an example.

When I was thirty-three, I felt it in my heart that I was supposed to write stories for others to enjoy. This became a hope for me to see in my life. I was a wife, mother of three, and a dispatcher at a trucking company. We struggled week-to-week to make ends meet, but we kept right on. And I felt God leading me to write. At first I laughed but grabbed a spiral notebook and started writing. Four notebooks later, my first manuscript was written. I shared it with my mother and a friend of hers. They enjoyed it and said I should do more, and I should try to get this one published. Of course, I laughed at that for sure. I never cared too much for English classes in school, rarely read unless forced to. Who was I to write? But then God expanded the words He'd whispered into my heart into a vision for my future. He showed me writing many books with people all across the country reading them. He also showed me I'd be speaking in women's groups at churches, to kids in school, and to other aspiring writers one day. Now remember, these visions and whispers came to me almost thirty years ago. My first book wasn't published until twenty years later. When the vision started to fade in my heart God used someone to bring the spotlight back into focus. He helped me persevere. My hope is for this dream to come true. My hope is in the Lord. He is making it happen. My faith is in Him. He filled my heart with this desire and I believe without a doubt these things will come to pass. Years later some of these things have come to pass. My career as a writer has grown and expanded across America. There are a few ladies I've spoken with via e-mail and Facebook from England who

have started reading my novels. Know I am bragging on THE LORD, not me. He is the one who has spread my works. I've talked at conferences, book clubs, and schools. His vision for me is coming to fruition more and more every day.

My hope is in Him as my faith rests on Him. And although I have not seen everything come to pass, the hope in the vision He gave me has started growing bigger every year. And one day I'll be walking totally in it. God is good.

Trust Him to have big plans for you. Let Him lead you. God bless you!

June 30 **Live Content No Matter What Is Happening**

Philippians 4:11-13 – I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

These scriptures will help believers get through anything and everything that comes our way. God wants us to be able to find contentment even in the worst of times. He's not asking us to love the worst of times. He's saying be content in them because we know He will get us through them. And when we come through something staying strong leaning on Him, we will always come out better than we were before.

God is there for you—In the big problems of life as well as the small situations, if you let Him. He won't push His way in, but if you'll open the door to Him (by prayer-which is talking to God one-on-one) He'll step in and lead you through.

I don't know about you, but I felt when I was young I was taught not to ask God to help me. Only ask Him to help others. I'm not saying for sure that was what I was taught, but that was what my young heart and mind received/understood. It's wrong.

YES God wants us to help others, pray for others, and be there for others, BUT He wants to help us too.

Remember He is there for you through any situation in your life. If you turn to Him for help, He will see you through. While you are going through this given situation, be content in the knowledge He will bring you out of it.

Stay strong in the Lord and He won't let you down!!

Have a great day!

July 01

Promises Come By Faith

Romans 4:13-16 – *It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through **the righteousness that comes by faith**. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.*

The first forty years of my salvation, I believed God's will for me was to keep the Ten Commandments...and that was how I was to honor Him. I tried, but I guarantee I failed daily. We all do.

Then God opened my eyes to the truth for the past ten years plus. I'm not under the law. I am under the blood of Jesus.

The thing is, God knew we couldn't keep them. Our flesh is evil. When we walk in the flesh we are definitely not keeping the commandments.

The good news is God's will isn't for us to walk by law and try and keep it. His will is for us to walk by **faith in Christ Jesus** who already paid the price for our sins...because yes we all sin and fall short of the glory of God.

Jesus paid for all our sins when He said, "It is finished." He suffered so we don't have to.

We need to believe and receive salvation, healing, prosperity, and all the gifts He wants to give us by merely keeping our **faith in Him** and walking in that faith through love for Him and love for others.

God loves you and I so much. Soak in His love. Let Him lavish you in it. Have a blessed day!

July 02

Wisdom Comes From The Word

2 Timothy 3:14-17 – *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,*

and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

I talked yesterday about being a believer of Christ Jesus for the past 50+ years. The Scripture tells it like it is. It tells us to continue in what we've learned...which is the Word. Sometimes we learn it by accepting what someone else tells us it means. As we grow older we learn to read the Word and let God give us the wisdom we need. His Word becomes clearer as we grow in Him.

I am grateful for all I was taught from the time I was ten years old. Looking back I can see where something I was taught was expanded on or made more clear as I grew older and walked the life God has called me to walk. His Word is there for us daily to read and grow by. Things the Word told you at one stage in your life might be more in depth when you read it now. God is the one who opens our hearts pouring out His goodness in and through us. We just need to be open to listen and to grow.

The Holy Bible has answers to everything we face in life. Take time to sink into the Word. Ask God for wisdom and understanding as you go. He will give it to you. That is His desire. His Word tells us so. Have a great day!

July 03 **Word Of Truth**

James 1:18 – He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created.

I love it when God leads me to share something with you all and then backs it up with more Scripture. Read that again – He chose to give us birth through the word of truth. What is the word of truth? The Holy Bible! So through reading the Word of Truth we might be a kind of first fruits of all He created.

When He created Adam, MAN, this gave God someone to talk to, to share His love with. We were created to have a relationship with God. It's yours for the taking. God wants to relate with you, to you. He is our Father. Enjoy the relationship He is offering to you. Get into the Word, read it, and talk to God about it. Let Him lead you daily in your walk with Him.

Have a wonderful day!

July 04 **Time To Grow Up**

1 Peter 2:2-3 – *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

God starts our lives out as babies...in the world and in the Word.

So as a sinner we heard the truth (His Word) and it saved those of us who accepted His Son as our Savior. Salvation is the first baby step to living the life God called us for. As we grow in the word, developing, we should take the next step as a believer feeding on the meat of the word...if we want to live in the peace and abundance He wants to give us.

The good news is we that have accepted Him as our Savior have Salvation, and we know we'll spend eternity in Heaven. Praise God!

But there is more, if we will take it. He wants us to live life in abundance here on earth, loving others, helping others, and doing His will. How do we learn this? We move past the spiritual milk, the Words that led us to Salvation. It doesn't mean we forget or change...we just grow. We do that by continuing to read the Word! As we do, we will mature in spirit.

God is good and wants the best for us. Take it. Move. Grow. And do it all through getting into the Word and having a **relationship** with God. That's what He wants.

It's a new day! Enjoy it! Enjoy God's love!

July 05 **Feed On The Word**

Matthew 4:4 – *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

We today think as long as we have a roof over our head, food in our stomach, and clothes to wear we are good. But there is so much more to life than living

through each day.

God has plans for each and every one of us. Through the plans He will use you and me to grow the kingdom of God. Talk about making your life count for something...this does it!

Not all of us will do the same thing to grow His Kingdom, but we'll each have a part in it if we just let go and let God lead us.

In fact, if you'll just fill up on Him every day, He'll make sure you have those essentials we talked about in the first paragraph. He supplies all your needs when you rest in Him. AND He'll give you the desires of your heart when you delight in Him. How do we delight in Him? By taking pleasure in hearing and reading His Word; by appreciating the life He's given us; by joyfully accepting His Word as the final say in our life.

God loves us and wants the best for us. Trust in Him. Follow Him. Live your life in abundance through Him! Delight yourself in Him!

Have a great life!!!

July 06 **One Step At A Time**

1 Corinthians 3:2 – I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.

We spoke of the Spiritual feeding of God earlier. He starts us out on the baby food, liquid milk, simplicity of the Word – God loves you so much He sent His Son to die for you, so that you don't have to.

But then He wants us to move on to solid food. When we do this we grow in our relationship to Him, with Him, and we spread the Word growing the Kingdom of God.

Not all of us are at the same place in our walks with the LORD. So take your walk one day at a time. Trust Him to nudge you forward to your next step at the right time.

His time is always right. Trust Him. Wait on Him. Walk with Him! Have a great day!

July 07

God's Words Are Sweet, Giving Guidance

Psalm 119:103-105 – *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*

This is David talking to God. As we take that one step at a time, walking the path God has lined up for us, we too should be able to say the same thing.

God's plan for each of us is the best of the best. When we follow His lead we will have the best.

I'm not going to say bad things won't come your way. Unfortunately all of mankind has free will. And because of this, bad things happen because of people's choices. Just know that if you are walking with God, trusting Him to lead you through, you will get through whatever comes your way...and better off than before.

God wants to guide you and me down the right path. Trust Him. Follow Him. Listen to His sweet words as He guides you all the way.

Have a good one!

July 08

Freedom Through Jesus

John 8:31-32 – *To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, "If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

What is the truth? The truth is: Jesus is the Son of God, born of a virgin. He lived on this earth pure and innocent. Yet when He died sinless on the cross, He bore all of our sins, suffered for them, paid the price, and then rose again! Hallelujah!

Jesus Christ was resurrected!! He defeated death, sin, sickness, poverty, social injustice...everything. Jesus defeated it all—for us!!

When we rest in Him, put our trust and faith in Him, He brings us through it

all. He wants to bless us in abundance. We merely need to accept it, trusting in Him.

When we do this we are free through Jesus. We're free to love others. We're free to be all God called us to be.

Doing that myself, I've found peace, joy, and love. God is taking care of my every need AND a lot of my heart's desires. I am so blessed.

Walk freely in His blessings. Have a wonderful day!

July 09

The Law

Joshua 1:8 – Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

God is speaking to His people who are under the 1st covenant.

Does that mean we don't need to know the law or understand what the purpose of it was for? No. We need to realize God was teaching His people, helping them to know they were sinning and needed to stop.

Praise God, we are under the New Covenant. God saw His people could not obey all the laws all the time He'd inscribed on the tablets. He allowed them to sacrifice animals, sprinkling the animal's blood in forgiveness for His people's sins...over and over again.

So He covered us with a New Covenant. One using His Son as a sacrifice for our sins...a Son who knew no sin suffered for all of our sins, past, present & future.

He spilled His blood for us once and for all. So instead of us mediating on the law, we are to meditate on Jesus, on what He did for us, believing, accepting, repenting, and then walking in Jesus' goodness. Being covered by Jesus' blood, God sees us as righteous. Praise God!

Keep walking in faith, believing, and trusting God for His plans for you. Walk in them, reflecting His Son and you too will be prosperous and successful. He tells us so in the New Testament.

By reflecting God's Son we are walking in the law of love. In the New Testament we are reminded to imitate Jesus as He walked in love. Remember: Love for God first and others second.

Have a blessed day!!

July 10 **Be Blessed**

Psalm 1:2-3 – Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

This Scripture is under the Old Testament, under the Covenant of The Law of Moses. But it speaks to us as well, as long as we remember we are under the blood of Jesus.

God still does not want us to walk in step with the wicked. If we do, we are tempted to do as they do. So take heed and don't walk in step with the wicked, etc. Instead, delight yourself in the love of Jesus. The love God showed us by sending His Son for us, and the love Jesus showed us by carrying out God's plan to save us. Walk in that love. Take it in. Feel the awesome love of God and Jesus. Then mediate on His WORD day and night—Old and New Testaments.

The Holy Bible is filled with God's love for you and me, filled with plans to give us a greater future.

Rest in Him. Bask in His glory, in His love.

Be blessed today and every day!

July 11 **Serve Others**

John 13:14-17 – Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater

than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Sometimes I get up in the morning thinking about things I need to do, or things I need to buy, or things I just want to happen. But the truth is, it's not all about me. I find when I put my thoughts on me first; my day is not very productive. Sure I may accomplish what I set out to do, but it wasn't very fulfilling.

Now when I get up thinking of what I can do for others, or just ask God to show me who I can bless today, that day becomes a powerful, fun-filled, happy day. Why? Because my mind was not on me.

God takes care of me so I don't have to. I'm here to serve others. When I remember this my day becomes more than just a day to get through. It's a day of blessings, a day of joy.

Just as Jesus served His disciples by washing their feet, serve your friend, neighbor, co-worker, or family member. Do something to bless someone else. You'll find in turn God will pour out His blessing on you.

Have a great day!

July 12 **Looking for Peace?**

James 1:3 – *...because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*

Under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its colors.
(MSG)

God allows the same things that came into His Son's life to come into ours: temptation, stress, loneliness, rejection, and more. Through the suffering of these things we learn obedience (if we let Him lead us through...not trying to fix ourselves in our own way). Through obedience in the Lord comes the peace that surpasses all understanding.

I know this sounds hard, or unrealistic, but it is fact. If when trials come our way, we trust God to bring us through, He will. And when we have come through the trial we will be refined more than we were before. We'll find

ourselves stronger, ready for whatever comes next, and closer to God.

Who could ask for anything more? I love the peace that God surrounds me with.

Praise God!

Have a great day.

July 13 **Keep His Temple Holy**

2 Chronicles 7:14-15 – ...if My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

(I suggest you read 2 Chronicles 7:1-13) They completed the temple; King Solomon was dedicating it to God. There was a 21-day festival. Then God appeared to King Solomon letting him know if he walked as David did, then God would bless his people too. God loved the temple Solomon had built in honor of God.

We should remember, that although we aren't built as a building, we are the temple of God when we accept Jesus as our Savior because His Spirit comes to live inside us.

We should honor Him with our bodies (as King Solomon did with the temple), remembering our bodies are His temples, and He will bless us as well.

God is good and He loves us a lot. He already proved it when He sent His Son for us. Walk in His love. Keep His temple Holy.

Have a great day!

July 14 **Have You Watered Today?**

1 Corinthians 3:5-6 – What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to

each His task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.

God's plan, to grow the Kingdom of God, works, if we all do our part. Some people think we have to do it all. No. We don't. We only have a part in it.

Your part could be bringing new people to your church so they can hear the Word being taught.

Your part could be reflecting Jesus while you work, not letting the bad stuff around you get you down. Let others see the joy of the Lord in you, shining through.

It's easy to backbite when someone says or does something not nice to you at work. But if you let God speak through you, you'll turn the other cheek and keep on working. Whoa. You just planted a seed if you did that. How about that? 😊

Sometimes you're not planting the seed, but watering one that's already been planted. How do you do this? By living the life of a true believer. Walking in faith. Showing the joy of the Lord shining through you. Help the needy. Help the poor.

God will make the kingdom grow more and more every day while we do our part by reflecting Jesus from within.

Go plant some seeds today. Or maybe just pour out some water along the way. Remember, God will do the rest.

Have a great day.

July 15 **Walking in Faith**

Matthew 14:28-29 – “Lord, if it's you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

Peter—a mere man who walked on water.

How did he do it? He did it by keeping his eyes on Jesus. Peter's trust was in Jesus.

How can we get through the storms in our lives?

By keeping our eyes on Jesus, keeping our faith in Him. We need to know deep in our hearts that He wants what is best for us. We need to know Jesus loves us more than we could ever deserve and that His love will bring us through every storm that comes our way. Sometimes we make it through quickly and other times it may take days, weeks, months, or years. But the thing to remember is keep your eyes, your heart, and your mind focused on the LORD. He will see you through—and—you will come out better and stronger than before.

Keep walking in faith in the LORD! He will never leave you nor forsake you. Trust in Him.

Have a blessed day!

July 16 **Soften Your Heart To The Holy Spirit's Directions**

Ezekiel 11:19 – *I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.*

Being under the new covenant, not under the law, we are so blessed to have the Holy Spirit in us. That is how God touches us, leads us...through the Holy Spirit that is in us (His believers).

We need to be sensitive to His leadings. Our heart has been softened so God can mold it. ... Let Him direct you!

July 17 **Integrity**

Ephesians 6:14 – *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,*

This makes me think of an old country song by Aaron Tippin, You've Got to Stand for Something. The words in the song tell us you've got to stand for

something or you'll fall for anything.

This holds true with our faith. You must know what you believe and why you believe it, or you will fall for any smooth talker who comes along. Stand firm with the truth of The Word in your heart and the belt of truth fastened securely around you, and keep the breastplate of righteousness over your heart.

We as believers are given the gift of righteousness in Christ when we accept Him as our Savior. Walk in it... a life of integrity! When you believe and receive and then walk in your faith you will be a man or woman of integrity, a person with a possession of firm principles.

Jesus tells us to walk in love. When you do that, you are putting others before yourself. Anything you say or do, you'll do in love (just as Jesus did). Stand true to your faith in The LORD. Be a reflection of Jesus as you are called to be, a Christian. Christ-like.

Have a great day!

July 18 **Choose Your Words Wisely**

John 14:28-29 – *“You heard Me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.*

Follow Jesus' lead. He knew when to talk and when not to say a word. He also knew when He spoke; **He spoke in love**...not for personal gain. He told things in advance so when this did happen they would believe.

When you're in any given situation, choose your words wisely. Speak only positive words over your situation, over your friends, over your family, and over your life.

I can hear some of you now, “Well I'm not going to lie. That's not right.”

I didn't say lie. If you're running a fever of 101, instead of saying, “Oh, I'm dying. I'm miserable. This is killing me.” Say something like, “I know my body has a fever right now. Apparently there is an infection that my body is fighting off. But I know I'm under the blood of Jesus so this will not get me

down long. I'm on the road to recovery now. This too shall pass."

This is just a sample of what I'm talking about. So many times we automatically say things we've heard over the years. How many of you have heard someone say, "Oh don't worry about your child. He's going to be fine. It's those 'terrible twos' but he'll get through." Don't take that for a fact with your child. Speak before your child even turns two..."My child is a good kid. He minds me. Even when he is two, he's not going to go off wild like people say. He's a great kid and will keep being great."

I remember when all three of my children were in their teens, but not yet old enough to drive. I would wish them old enough to drive, saying I can't wait. The guys I worked with would try to talk me out of it saying your worries will triple when your kid gets behind the wheel of a car. I'd stand up for all my children saying that won't happen because I know they have great common sense and will drive safe. So guess what, when my kids got old enough to drive, I didn't have to worry. They did great. Speak good over your kids now, and their future will be better.

Basically all I'm saying is watch what you say. Choose your words wisely. Speak favor over your loved ones, helping make their future days better. There are many Scriptures (Proverbs 18:21, James 3:5 and more) that talk about the power of the tongue. Use yours wisely.

July 19 **The Only Way**

John 14:6 – *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

Jesus is the way. This verse is telling us the only way to spend eternity in heaven with God is through His Son, believing in Him.

I think it says even more. Once you've accepted Him as your Savior, He's the answer to even more. Everything that comes on you in life, He has the way for you to get through or go around or jump over it altogether. We need only to listen.

He has the way for you, the answer to your dilemma. Never give up. Look to Him and He will show you the answer.

Have a great day!

July 20

The Right Medicine

Proverbs 17:22 – *A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

Have you ever met a person who is always negative, or always believes the worst is going to happen to him/her? Sad to say, I have. And guess what? They are usually right. They talk about what could go wrong, or what bad might happen, and usually it does. They are down before it happens and get even more depressed once it happens.

Have you ever met a person who always seems to be happy? I mean, even when they are going through something traumatic, they seem to have a light in their eyes saying good will come out of this, or it's okay, I'll get through fine. Or they meet up with the sourest person you know but keep a smile on their face through it all?

I believe this Scripture speaks volumes to us, telling us to be of good cheer. If you don't, you'll crush under the pressure of the problem or the person.

So take the good medicine and have a cheerful heart. If not, you'll dry up and be crushed. It's your choice.

Take a tablespoon of the good stuff (God's love) and have a great day!

July 21

Believe To Receive

Matthew 9:27-30a – *As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When He had gone indoors, the blind men came to Him, and He asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then He touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you;" and their sight was restored.*

Your thoughts, words, and habits can bring victory or defeat in your life. When Jesus touched their eyes and said that according to their faith, let it be done...if their faith had told them miracles didn't happen, they would still be

blind.

According to His Word, Jesus told people they would have what they believed...by your faith you are healed. He gave sight to some, healing from sickness to others. They were healed because they believed and received it.

Get into the Word. Believe its truth. Renew your mind to think like Jesus thinks so you can have the blessings of God. He wants to give them to you, but it's up to you.

Romans 12:2 – Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

A-men! Have a joy filled day!

July 22 **New Commandments Under The Blood Of Jesus**

1 John 3:22-23 - *...and receive from Him anything we ask, because we keep **His commands** and do what pleases Him. And this is His command: to believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He commanded us.*

“His commands” are not speaking of the Ten Commandments, the Law of Moses. No. Here in verse 22 He's talking about His command now, since Jesus died and rose again. In verse 23 it's explained. It tells us **first** we must believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. **Second** we are to love one another. The fact we can receive anything from Him that we ask (v22) if we keep those two commands is the commitment to us under the blood of Jesus from God.

Jesus also gave us this same new commandment on the last day of the LORD'S Supper. John 13:34-35 *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

That Scripture tells His disciples, as He has loved them, so they are to love one another. We as believers knowing Jesus loves us should know we are His disciples as well, so we should love one another.

The Old Testament told the Israelites to love others as themselves. And the others He was speaking of, was other Israelites. The new covenant to love one another is everybody should love everybody like Jesus loved everybody. He's not telling us to love one another as those who believe the same way we do, or those who wear the cross or a Jesus pin, or those who claim to be Christians. He tells us to love everybody...love one another.

The definition of love is found in John 4:10-11 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

His Word tell us that love is not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the appeasement for our sins. God loved us so much that He sent His Son to die in our stead, for sins we committed, not Jesus. I believe this Scripture is telling us to love others even when it's not deserved.

Praise God, He didn't wait for us to deserve it. We'd still be without love if that were the case.

Have a great day!

July 23 **Speak The Word**

Job 22:21-22 – *“Submit to God and be at peace with Him; in this way prosperity will come to you. Accept instruction from His mouth and lay up His words in your heart.*

If we want the promises of God, we have to speak in agreement with Him, with His Word.

Instead of saying what the Word tells us, too many times we say what we are feeling. Unfortunately that doesn't always line up with the Word of God. If you want good things to come your way, start agreeing with God.

What do you think about yourself?

Some think, 'I can't do this or that.' 'Nobody loves me.' 'I'm ugly.'

What does God say about you?

The Word says, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' 'I am

more than a conqueror.’ ‘I am loved by God.’ ‘He has great plans for me, plans to prosper me and not to harm me.’

I could go on and on.

His word should be what we are telling ourselves about ourselves, not how we feel or how we look. Let God speak to you through His Word, telling you who you are!

Go be that winner He has called you to be!

July 24

Reflect Jesus, Not Your Feelings

Ephesians 4:22-24 – You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Satan looks for negative things in your life to focus on, so when you do that, you are following his nature.

God created us in His image. And when we accepted Him as our Savior we were to put that image on us.

As a child of the Most High you should develop new habits that reflect Him. How? By reading the Word and seeing how Jesus walked, talked, and responded. Spend a few weeks reading Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Let it sink in how Jesus was when He walked the earth. Then try to be more like Him everyday.

Let His light shine through you! Have a great day.

July 25

Sow Good Seeds

Hebrews 4:13 – Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

We sow seeds all the time in the actions we take in our day-to-day living. Our

seeds come from our thoughts, our words, our actions, and they produce a harvest.

So sow good seeds: mercy, kindness, love, forgiveness, so that you can reap mercy, kindness, love and forgiveness.

If you sow un-forgiveness, unkindness, judgment, hatred, bitterness, and malice then these are the things you will reap.

If your life isn't full of God's joy and blessings, take a look at yourself.

Are you reflecting Jesus' image? Are you sowing good seeds? It's up to you. You can turn your life around. It won't happen over night, but if you make changes in the seeds you are sowing, you will see the difference come in to your own life, strengthening you, making you a reflection of Jesus.

Verse 14 goes on to speak of Jesus, as our High Priest...the One whom we must hold our faith firmly in...Him...Jesus, Son of God. He can empathize with our weakness. He was tempted too, but He did not give in to temptation.

We are under His blood!! Forgiven and clean. So walk with your head held high, believing all God has planned for you. Look forward to your tomorrows. Sow the seeds today by blessing others.

Praise God!!!

July 26 **No Condemnation**

Romans 8:1-2 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

God doesn't condemn you or me for our sins. He sent His Son to suffer and die for our sins so that we don't have to.

He will, however, convict us of our sins so we can change our ways and become more like Him.

He loves you and me. When He convicted us of our sin, it wasn't to condemn us. It was to help us change more into His image, to help us develop into

Jesus' image. So listen to the Holy Spirit within and follow His direction in your life.

Have a great day!

July 27 **Find Peace**

Psalm 4:8 – *In peace I will lie down and sleep, for You alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety.*

Enter a place of peace.

Trust God.

He allows us to enter in His rest when we do.

It's a place of peace while we are waiting for Him to bring us through whatever sad time is going on in our life, or whatever bad time is going on in our life.

If we stay in trust in Him to lead us through, we can rest in His peace, in the safety of His arms, while He does what is best for us as He brings us through.

Give your worries to God. Trust in Him. Rest in Him.

Be filled with the peace and love only He can give you every day of your life. God is good and He wants to be good to you.

Have a great day!

July 28 **Take Control**

Proverbs 16:32 – *Better a patient person than a warrior; one with self-control than one who takes a city.*

Controlling your emotion is an option you have as a believer.

Most people think because I feel a certain way, I have to act on it. Think before you act. The choice is yours.

When you get mad and act on it, you're stealing your own joy.

So whom did you hurt? The one who got you mad...or yourself?

Through God's help you can get over your emotions. Let the Holy Spirit guide you.

Don't let your anger shut down the power that God has put in you. Use it to become a stronger man/woman of God. Learn to forgive quickly, instantly, and never allow emotions to rule your movements, your responses.

Talk about freedom—this is it!

Have a blessed day!

July 29 **Don't Look Back**

Psalm 23:2-3 – He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake.

Keep your eyes focused in front of you on The Lord. Don't look back.

Your future has no room for your past. Don't get stuck in a moment in time that is over.

God wants us to have peace. Stop running from your past or letting it rule you today. Be still and know that God is with you and wants to help you through whatever you are going through that is keeping you from growing in Him.

He wants you to live in peace.

Through Him you can!

July 30 **Look Around You**

Philippians 3:13 – Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining

toward what is ahead.

This is perfect, following yesterday's devotion.

How do we get through or past what happened yesterday?

We stop focusing on it (our past) and focus on others...helping others is the best way to not think about your own problems. Trust God to fix those.

While you're busy helping others, you'll be amazed at how quick your own problems will disappear. If we stop focusing on our own problems, we can move forward from them.

Believe by faith good things are ahead of you. His Word tells us our tomorrows are better than our todays. Focus on others and believe your tomorrows will be better.

Before you know it, this will come to pass.

Praise God!

July 31 **Live As Jesus Did**

1 Peter 3:11 – *They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.*

This is the best advice in the world, especially today with all the horror that goes on around the world, even in our own country now.

Go after peace. Pursue it.

We are not only to desire peace, but we are to go after it, with ourselves, and with others.

How do we do that? ... God's Word has the answer. Get into it. Read it daily. Soak it in. Make an effort to live as Jesus did. He is our example.

We are to love others. Forgive freely. Serve others. When you look at yourself, see Jesus.

That wristband people used to wear – WWJD – what would Jesus do—That is a question we should always ask ourselves. If we would do this and then respond in the way we believe He would respond, we'd find ourselves living at such peace, even in the midst of turmoil.

Think before you act — WWJD. 😊

Have a blessed day.

August 1 God Is Love

Isaiah 54:9 – *“To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again.”*

I still hear people today saying how angry God is with them or with a group of people.

It hurts my heart when I hear people speak of this. **God is love.** Sure he corrects, shows us the error of our ways, but He loves us through it all. (Us - is everyone, even the non-believers as we once were.) Know you are loved by God.

We believers were forgiven and covered by the blood of His Son when we received Him as our Savior. Through our faith in Jesus Christ...we are under God's grace! We are under the new covenant...the Covenant of Jesus' blood. He died and suffered for **all** of our sins: yesterdays, todays and tomorrows.

So if you truly are saved (accepted Jesus as your Savior), read the Word and hear what God is telling you, you are loved. He created you with a plan for your life. You are special. You are one of His children.

If you have kids this should be easy for you to understand. When your kids do something wrong are you ready to rain down your wrath? Sure, maybe you want to shake them and say, “You know better!” But instead I'm sure most of you correct them, maybe even punish them, but you keep on loving them... and if you're smart you let them know that you still love them and the punishment is because you love them and want to keep them safe. They may not believe you now, but they will understand and believe you as they grow up.

So if you live in fear that God is going to pour down His wrath on you, get into the Word. All over the New Testament it speaks of God's love and His blessings He wants to give you. It's also mentioned in the Old Testament as well. That's why I pulled this Scripture from the Old Testament.

I'm not saying you won't suffer some consequences for your choices, but God will keep on loving you through them.

So go out and have a beautiful day *knowing* God loves you!

August 2 **Under His Blood**

Psalm 103:12 - *...as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

The book of Psalm was written by David...a great man hand picked by God to be a ruler. David praised God with everything within him. And David held on to believing God has great blessings that He wants to give His children.

As written in the Old Testament, before Jesus and after the Ten Commandments, David and the people were under the covenant of the law. They had to have priests sacrifice animals they had given, so blood could be spilt, so they could be forgiven for their sins...a temporary fix. This took a lot of time, yet David still praised God for His goodness, His blessings, His love.

We believers of today are under the blood of Jesus. A **one-time** sacrifice that Jesus made to save us once and for all. Some of you are saying, "Oh I get it Deborah. You believe once saved always saved." You're right. That is what I am saying because that is what the Bible tells me. Just because I sin, I don't lose my salvation and Jesus doesn't have to die again so I can be covered again with His blood so I can be saved again. NO!! Jesus did it for me and His blood still covers me and my sin because I believed and accepted Him as my Savior. So when God looks at me He sees the righteousness of Christ covering me. PRAISE GOD!

And as the Scripture above says, as far as the east is from the west He has removed our transgressions from us. What are transgressions? It's our wrongdoings, our sins. And how far is the east from the west? I know two ways to look at it. Those of you who remember a course in math the teacher had you draw a line on your paper and put a dot in the middle. At the end of each side of the line you made a <> extending those lines. What did that mean? It meant forever, on into infinity. That's how far the east is from the west. Another way to look at it is, hold your left arm straight out to your left, and your right arm straight out to your right, with your fingers pointing outward. When will they touch? Never as long as one is pointing east and one is pointing west. That is how far God has removed our sins from us.

And know these sins you are forgiven for are your sins from the past, present,

and future. I'm not saying once saved life will always be perfect. No. I'm saying once saved you're forgiven for your sins forever. You suffer the consequences of your wrong choices. He loves you still and wants the best for you. Keep Him first and He will lead you to having a wonderful, happy life... even in the midst of problems that may come your way.

God bless you. Have a great day!

August 3 **We Are Justified**

Romans 5:9 – Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him!

This is a continuation of yesterday's message, you might say.

Here it is written for us in the New Testament. When we read this Scripture, we must ask ourselves what does justified by His blood mean? Justified means we were vindicated. The sin we committed has already been paid for by Jesus Christ. He suffered for our sin so that we don't have to. Jesus loved us that much that he took on the pain and torture that was due us. He hadn't committed any sin so He didn't deserve any torture or punishment, yet He took it on for us...for all of our sins. He paid for it **in full** for you and me.

Don't take my word for it. Take God's Word:

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV) – For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

1 Peter 3:18 (NLT) – Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but He died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but He was raised to life in the Spirit.

Remember - God will never be angry with us, believers and followers of Christ – He gets disappointed in us, yes, but never angry, because Jesus Christ bore all our sins at the cross, paying our debt justifying us! God sees us as pure through the blood of Christ.

Focus on your blessings God has sent your way. Focus on the good in your life. Focus on Him!

Have a blessed day!

August 4 **Prepare Yourself For Eternity**

John 1:29 – *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*

Mary’s cousin Elizabeth gave birth to John. Both mothers knew their son was special. Once grown, John the Baptist prepared the way for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord. He told everyone about the Chosen One of God.

Throughout the Word we learn God is love.

Walk in His love. Feel His peace that He gives us through trusting in Jesus Christ...who has taken away all our sins. His grace is shining on us. We, believers, are His beloved children...in whom He is well pleased.

If your heart has opened for Jesus to come in, you should walk in His love, living in peace and joy. Jesus took away your sins. Your face should light up, reflecting the love of the Lord. If you haven’t yet given your life to the Lord, don’t hesitate. Yes you can wait and hope to ask Him into your life right before you draw your last breath...but think of all the goodness you’ll miss while you’re here on this earth. And **if you don’t get that extra second it takes**, then you’ll be spending eternity in hell. Most think hell is here on earth now. It’s so much worse. I myself don’t care to chance it and I didn’t. I love that I am a child of the Most High God and look forward to spending eternity in heaven with Him.

If you are too, praise God! If you’re not...take the time now! Ask Him into your heart and to forgive you of your sins, and then let Him lead you daily. Enjoy your day.

August 5 **Renew Your Mind**

Isaiah 54:10 – *Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor My covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.*

He tells us over and over of His love for us. Nothing we do or don't do will shake His love from you.

Sure when we make bad choices, choices that go against His Word, He is saddened. But the good thing is He doesn't give up on us...and we, His believers, are still saved. He sent the Holy Spirit to live in us when Jesus ascended to the right hand of God. So when you make wrong choices and you feel a niggling at your inside, that's the Holy Spirit trying to speak to you.

Listen. Learn. Renew your mind (that's changing your thoughts and bringing them in alignment with the Word) and walk in the joy of the Lord.

He's waiting to pour out His favor on you. When you walk in the direction He has planned for you, you will find yourself blessed beyond measure. You don't have to wait until you are in heaven to enjoy the glory of the Lord.

Walk in His blessings today!

August 6 **Friends Forever**

Proverbs 18:24 – *One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

This Scripture spoke to me. We all have people we call friends in our lives, but have you noticed how they change over the years. Of course you who are young may not have seen this yet. I'm in my early 60's and have had many friends come and go. Sometimes they left because we didn't see eye-to-eye on something. And who's to say who left whom. Sometimes we had a parting of ways because of a move that took place in one of our lives. And sometimes the friendship fell apart because it just wasn't meant to be.

Usually we can count on one hand how many true friends we've had at any given time.

And if you are really lucky like me, you have one friend who is still around twenty plus years later. 😊

But most importantly, those of us who know the love of God, who has accepted His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior, has a friend who sticks closer

than a brother. He will never leave you nor forsake you.

That's Jesus Christ our Lord.

I feel His blessings and love every day. I hope you do too.

Have a great one!

August 7 **Take Refuge In Him**

Psalm 34:8 – Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.

There are so many Scriptures that tell us to take our refuge in the Lord. God wants to protect us, but we have to let Him.

How do we do it?

By resting in Him. By trusting His Word to be the final say in anything and everything we say and do. When we do this, we'll find a joy that gets us through any circumstance that comes our way. It's Him helping us through, keeping us safe when we take refuge in Him.

The LORD is good. He loves to love us. He loves to bless us.

Trust and rest in Him (take refuge) and He will bless you!

Have a glorious day!!

August 8 **Be That Witness**

1 Corinthians 15:34 – Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

Once you give your life to the Lord, accepting the gift of Salvation from Him, it doesn't mean you'll walk the perfect life. It doesn't mean you'll never sin again.

What does it mean?

It means you'll want to please the Lord.

What pleases Him? You have faith in Him. You want to be a reflection of Him. This pleases the Lord. However, remember as a believer you want to bring more people to Him.

How do you do that? By living the life you were called to live. If people see you happy, loving your life, they will want to have whatever it is that's making you so happy. If you are walking in the joy of the Lord a smile on your face should reflect this. If you are going around sad, down, and depressed, then you are not walking in the joy of God. And that also means you are not being a witness to help grow His kingdom. If people see doom and gloom coming their way, do you think they'll want to hang around and let it catch up to them? No indeed. They'll run the other way.

If you are this person who is exuding doom, gloom, and depression, you want to come back to your senses, as you ought. You need to read the word everyday. Pray, ask God to take these feelings that are bringing you down and turn them around. **God is love.** He wants the best for you, but you have to want it too. You also have to believe He wants to give it to you in order to receive it. His Word tells you how much He loves you. God has given everything. He gave His Son to us. What more could we ask for?

Stay in Him. Stay in His Word. You will find yourself being turned around. The frown will become a smile. The joy of the Lord will be reflected in your face. Then you will be that witness God wants us all (His believers) to be. Remember, you don't always have to speak, quote Scripture, or preach to be a witness. The best witness is in your actions.

Smile a big smile and go out and testify of the Lord through your radiance, without saying a word! 😊

August 9 **Walk In Freedom**

Romans 6:15-18 – *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey*

—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Some people think just because we know Jesus died for our past, present, and future sins that means we can sin like crazy because Jesus already paid the price. The thing is if you have started a relationship with Jesus Christ by asking Him into your heart, you're not going to want to rush out and sin.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying you won't sin. We all do.

Some of us have a sin that controls us daily. The good news is God helps us overcome that bondage...if we let Him. Jesus paid the price for it already. He already conquered it for us. So trust Him, and walk with Him leading you.

There are other sins that we do before we can even stop ourselves. God's already forgiven those too because Jesus paid the price. But when you do, the minute the Holy Spirit pricks your heart letting you know you've sinned, say you're sorry and turn from it. You'll find the peace and joy of the Lord still walking along with you while you enjoy the freedom Jesus gave you when He paid the price for your sins.

Remember...He paid it all for you and me!! Walk in that freedom today!

August 10 **Choose To Be Blessed**

Proverbs 10:6 – Blessings crown the head of the righteous, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.

Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior? If not, it's never too late as long as you are still breathing on this earth. Once you take that last breath, then it will be too late. But why wait? Confess that you are a sinner now. Ask God for His forgiveness and ask Him into your heart today. It's that easy. When you are saying those things to God you are praying the sinners' prayer. He is waiting and willing to give you the gift He has for you. Once you do that, the Bible tells you that you are the righteousness of Christ.

That's because the blood Jesus shed on the cross now covers you. Instead of

seeing you and your sins, God sees the blood of Jesus, which makes you pure as the white snow.

Those of us who are under the righteousness of Jesus Christ, because we are covered in His blood, He wants to crown us, cover us, with His blessings. But you have to choose to receive them. If you are walking in faith in Jesus Christ trying to live the life God has chosen for you, then He will pour out blessings on you.

Accept them and walk in them. The more you walk in faith in Him the more abundant those blessing will become. He wants us to live a life of abundance.

Those of you who choose violence, whether physical or mental violence by speaking and doing wicked things, you cut off your blessings from God. He wants to give them to you, but if you are not trying to reflect Jesus in your life, He cuts off the blessings.

So you choose...to be blessed or not to be. It's your choice.

Have a *blessed* day if you so choose. 😊

August 11 **You Are An Heir Of God**

Galatians 4:7 – So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir.

Do you know what heir means? When you are an heir of someone's, you are entitled to some of his or her things. They can bequeath some to one and something else to another. God is a good God. He gives us all of everything that is His. We inherit the whole kit and caboodle. Isn't that awesome?

We are joint heirs with His Son, Jesus Christ.

If you'd remind yourself of this daily, you'd find yourself walking happier steps...looking forward to tomorrows.

God loves us and wants the best for us. He gives it to us as well, but we need to believe, expect, and look for His goodness, His blessings, His favor, if we want to receive it. He's giving, but we have to take hold of it!

“I believe and I receive. Thank you God for loving me so much. I am a child of the Most High God.” These are the words I speak almost every day, and I am blessed!

Tell yourself that prior statement and watch the joy of the Lord glow from within the more you make those words your own.

Have a great day!

August 12 **Be Blessed By His Compassion**

Psalm 103:13 – *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him;*

Not all of us have been blessed with children, but I believe if you don't have a child of your own you might have a niece or a nephew. If you do, you might understand what compassion is. It's your heart caring for that child, even when the child may not earn your sympathy or compassion...you have it anyway. It's a child. He didn't make his life. He was born into it.

The truth is, no matter what life we are born into, good, bad, or ugly, God can turn it around. We as believers are to show compassion to the non-believer by sharing the love of God with him/her—Same with children who don't know any better. Show them compassion. We as believers should do this because we 'fear the Lord.' It doesn't mean be afraid of Him because He'll beat you up and knock you around. No. God pours out love. The bad things that come our way are from Satan or by wrong choices we have made along the way.

Get under the blood of Jesus and watch how He turns your life around. He'll help you out of that life (which is not what He chose for you) and into the promises of God.

Receive your blessings today!!

August 13 **Under The Blood, Or Under The Law**

Acts 13:38-39 – *“Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through Him everyone who*

believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.

We are under the blood, not the law!!!! What does that mean? As a believer I am under the blood of Christ. He was beaten for my sins, suffered for my sins, and paid the price I should have to pay. He did it for me! He did it for you too. And because He did this and I've accepted Him as my Savior, when God looks down on me he doesn't see the Deborah who makes mistakes, wrong choices, and plain out sins. No. He sees Jesus' blood covering me. To Him I am white as snow. This is true for all who believe Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior.

Because of this do I run around trying to sin as much as I can cause I know I'm protected? No. I'm not saying I haven't sinned either. Unfortunately I have even though I don't mean to. But praise God, He has already forgiven me and He has led me in the right direction. Before I changed my sinning way I suffered some severe consequences. Did God pour those down on me? No. My actions brought them upon me and He didn't protect me from them. He kept on loving me. Kept believing I was His child. He never gave up on me. Praise God.

So what did I have to do to be forgiven? Nothing. I was already forgiven when I accepted Him as my Savior. So why did I feel the need to change my ways and quit that sin? I confessed my new sin and thanked Him for my forgiveness because I wanted His blessings to come back my way, come back on me. I turned back to keeping Him first instead of me.

Had I been under the law God gave Moses, I would have brought the best offering I had to the priest and asked Him to sacrifice it to God so He would forgive me. I don't have sheep or goats, nor do I have grains I raise. The only thing I have would be my cats – Kali & Kole. Thank God I'm not under the law. Just the thought of sacrificing them gives me the creeps.

Thank You God for Your Son Jesus. Thank You for allowing me to believe and be under His blood. Thank You Jesus for paying for my sins. I'm in Christ. I am covered with His blood. I am forgiven and blessed! I am under His blood...not the law.

Make sure you're under the blood. Don't try to have one foot under the law and one under the blood. People think I don't break the law so I'm good. Well know when that simple law says – Don't kill and you say anything negative

about someone else, you broke that law. You didn't kill them literally, but you killed their reputation.

As a believer you're under the blood. Have a great day! Smile!!

August 14 **The Grace Of God**

John 1:17 – For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Those who are familiar with the Word know there are two covenants the Bible speaks of. A new believer may not know this, and some believers think they are under both: the law and the blood. We make things harder than they have to be. Jesus came to make things easier for man. I'd like to clear up the murky waters a little.

The first covenant God made with man through Moses. This is when Moses went up onto the mountain to speak to God while Moses was helping lead the Israelites to the Promised Land, helping them escape from life of slavery to the Egyptians. While he was speaking to God and listening to Him, God carved the Ten Commandments on two stone tablets. The reason God did this was because man had gotten so out of control, living wild and sinning nonstop. He wrote these commandments so man could see how much they were sinning. He made the laws that man had to try and live by. Of course, He already knew that man would fail. But during that time He gave them ways to earn forgiveness through blood sacrifices. Since man continues to sin, these sacrifices had to be done over and over again. The blood sacrifices are spoken of in detail in Leviticus. Feel free to read the bloody details.

Thank God Jesus followed through with God's plan. And thank God I live in the times after Jesus came and sacrificed Himself for me—and you (the second covenant).

God saw man couldn't keep His laws. He loved us so much that He sent His Son to live on earth as a man (God in flesh); walk through the same trials and tribulations as man does daily, and yet Jesus did **not** succumb to sinning. Jesus succeeded where man failed in order to be the great sacrifice for man. When He died on the cross He took on all our sins – past, present, and future – and paid the price suffering for each and every sin. He paid it all! Jesus was resurrected three days later. Divine resurrection. Jesus' resurrection is the

receipt for the debt Jesus paid for us. God made a new covenant with man through the blood of Jesus. He was the pure sacrifice for all of us. **Now** for those of us who believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior we are no longer judged on our keeping of the laws. God judges us based on Jesus who kept the laws. He sees His Son's blood covering us. So to God we are as pure as Jesus.

Does this mean as a believer you can go crazy sinning and think that's okay 'cause I'm covered in Jesus' blood? You probably can—but most who believe in Christ also want to please Him. And that kind of life wouldn't be too pleasing to Jesus Christ. Oh, and don't forget our sins cause consequences. That's the freedom of choice we get to live under. Some of those consequences won't be too much fun. That too is your choice. I think you'll make the right one. We will slip up sometimes and sin...but Jesus paid the price in full, so we're covered by His blood!

Walk in God's grace and have a great day!

August 15 **Have Your Needs Met Daily**

Philippians 4:19 – *And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.*

That's a powerful promise to those of us who believe in Jesus as our Savior. God will meet all our needs! Not just some. And they will be met according to His riches. He owns it all!

Sometimes people don't think that statement applies to them. They say He's met some of my needs, but I don't have that nice home that Jane Smith has. So how come He doesn't supply me a big home like hers? Maybe you don't need it. Or maybe the timing is wrong.

Remember too, you have to have faith in Him and His Word, believing that His promises are for you. Some people I know who are believers tell me God's not going to bless them because they did such and such...and some say if He wants to bless them why did He let such and such happen in their life? It's not fair, they say.

So I say, first, **have faith in His total Word**. Know His blessings are meant for you too. If you don't believe, you won't receive. By believing His total Word, you have to know it. I don't mean memorize every Scripture. I mean

take time to read His Word daily and talk to God (Jesus gave us this right when the veil was torn). He will grow His Word in your heart and you'll see what you aren't doing that's keeping that promise in the above Scripture from coming to you...or not coming to you in the big way you think it should. God showed me that to live in the abundance He wants to give me I had to first learn to be content where I was. AND that wasn't easy. Some things in my life back then were not things I wanted to be content about. This is where faith comes in. We must trust that God is allowing things to happen in our lives to help make us into the man/woman He wants us to be. Remember, He is the potter—we are the clay. Another thing His Word tells us to do is wait on Him. Some of us are not receiving the blessings He wants to pour on us, because we don't want to wait on Him. We start trying to fix things in our time and in our way. **Don't do that.** It will keep those blessings He wants to pour out on you delayed for a while.

Remember, God has plans for you; plans for you to succeed, to have hope, and to have a future. He does not have plans to harm you. This is another jewel in His Word. (Jerm. 29:11) You won't know them until you read His Word soaking in the message of His Word. Make it personal, because it is!

God called each of us to enjoy the provisions He loves to give us, to enjoy health not sickness, and to enjoy a life of victory. Put and keep your faith and trust in Him and He will meet all of your needs. In fact, He will bless you in abundance.

Have a wonderful day!

August 16 **Grace Reigns**

*Romans 5:21 - ...so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also **grace** might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The first question you might ask is...‘What is grace?’ It is the unmerited, undeserved favor of God. None of us deserve His goodness, His blessings, or His favor, but God loves us so much He wants to give us grace. It's a gift. We didn't earn His goodness to come on us, but He gives it anyway. That's grace. All we have to do is believe in His Son, Jesus, as our Savior. Jesus paid the price for our sins and now God wants to pour out His grace on us.

In the beginning, days of Adam and Eve, they lived how God intended us all to live, in the lush gardens where all their needs were met. BUT Eve was tempted by Satan to eat off the only tree in the garden they were not to touch. Why was she tempted? Because Satan told her the only reason they weren't to eat that fruit was then they'd know everything God knows, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Then she enticed Adam. And just like man today Adam and Eve wanted more. Why is it we are never satisfied? You see where it led...destruction and death. Before they ate of the fruit there was no death. Bad came their way when they chose to go against what God had said. They lost everything and then they had to labor for what God was already giving them without a drop of sweat on their part.

We are blessed. We only have to believe in Jesus Christ (God's Son) as our Savior for grace to reign in/on us through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our LORD. The eternal life we'll be living is with Jesus Christ. Those who don't believe will also live eternal life...but in hell with Satan and his evil spirits. Eternal death and suffering.

Praise God, that's not me. Eternal life in heaven with God, Jesus Christ, family members who believed as well, other believers, and angels, is what I'll be living with...the life God wanted to give to Adam and Eve. I've already seen it in my mind; I'll be walking around in heaven with a lion by my side, my hand resting on top of his head touching that soft mane. I've always been a cat lover. I believe the animals in heaven will walk in peace as it was intended in the beginning.

God's grace reigns on you and me today—and every day! Go enjoy it!!

August 17

Jesus Took Your Judgment, Suffered For Your Sins

Matthew 12:34-36 – You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

I must admit I had a struggle with what God wanted me to share with you with these Scriptures. I pray before typing, asking Him to lead me. So for this

I went back and read it again and again. Then I saw.

Jesus is talking to evildoers, brood of vipers. Telling them they are evil so how can anything good come out of their mouths. Whatever the mind and heart is full of, that is what will come out. Pastor Larry Stockstill put this in my mind a while back. If you have a sugar bowl in front of you and you knock it over, what will pour out? Salt? No. Sugar. This is the same with the saltshaker or a pepper grinder. It's whatever the vessel is filled with. So fill your vessel with God's Word. Renew your mind daily filling your heart with His goodness. So when you open your mouth to speak good will come out.

The vipers that never accept Jesus as Lord and Savior will be judged for every action and every word they did and said. Then they will spend eternity in hell paying for their choice.

Those of us under the blood of Jesus won't be judged for our sins. We're under the blood of Jesus and He already paid the price. God also told us so many times of the rewards in heaven we will receive. **Those** will be determined by our works, our words. Don't get me wrong. You **cannot** work your way to salvation. That comes only by faith and it's a gift God gives us when we ask Him to come into our hearts. But our rewards in heaven we earn through our works here on earth...our works with a pure heart. Loving doing good for others. But your words could ruin your blessings and your rewards you would receive in heaven and on earth. Idle words that can hurt others should not come from our mouths, but sometimes they do. So choose your words wisely.

Have a blessed day, blessing others.

August 18 **Live In Love**

1 John 4:16 – *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.*

Are you looking to have a good day today?

You can. Choose to live in love. Make a determined decision to walk in the love of God and you will have a day full of love. This is a very peaceful day.

You say, but Deborah, you don't know my boss. He knows how to push my

buttons. Or, you don't know my co-worker. It's like she goes out of her way to make my day miserable.

Well know you have the power **not to let** them ruin your day. You do this by relying on the love of God. If your boss or co-worker starts to say or do anything that you know will push your buttons, stop allowing it. Instead offer up a quick prayer asking God to control the situation. And no matter what they say or do keep smiling and put your trust in God to handle the situation. Let Him fight your battles. He will take care of it for you, but you have to trust Him and rest in Him to handle it. And remember, it will be in His timing and done His way if you will let go and give it to Him. So don't try to figure it out. Don't fret over it. Don't even think about it. Just smile and do whatever you are supposed to do. I guarantee you will have a blessed day.

Why or how, you ask?

Because you put your trust in the Lord to handle the situation and you stayed at rest. This gives you a peace that surpasses all understanding. It's a great thing to have and God gives us the ability to do this daily. He says He will never leave you nor forsake you. He says He will fight your battles. He says He loves you. So trust in Him. Know He can do what He says He can do... and that He will.

Have a day filled with love today! Smile. God is with you!!

August 19 **Take Out The Trash**

Colossians 3:8 – But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

You don't know how much this Scripture helped me in my earlier days. Life at work became so unbearable I kept asking God to move me away. But He didn't.

When I first started working for the company I retired from thirty years later, I woke up enthusiastic about the day, knowing this was where I was supposed to be. Loving helping my drivers. This feeling of joy going to work lasted through most of the first five years of my thirty. Then the next five or six years my feelings were up and down. Then for a good many years, about fifteen, I spent every day dreading getting up and going into work. The only

thing that helped me continue was knowing God used me to help some of my drivers have a better day...and they did the same for me. It was a living. We needed my job, etc. Of course during those years even though I continued believing in God, my Salvation, my eternal life in heaven, I didn't spend my days focused on what God would have me do. I was more into getting through each day. So needless to say my mind was more focused on the situation around me. And because of that, the way I talked, the bad language that slipped through my lips daily, the anger and rage that boiled within me, it only grew.

Life was miserable! And I wasn't a happy person, the fun to be around kind of girl I used to be. About seven of those years I also started thinking about me, me, me, or I, I, I. My kids had grown up and started living their adult lives. I quit worrying about being the caregiver, taking care of fixing everything. Sure I fixed our meals, cleaned our house, and washed our clothes, but I quit putting God first in my life. I put me first. I made wrong choices, lived through the consequences. Thank God my dear friends Emy and Nancy never gave up on me...and neither did God!! Praise the Lord!

God led me to this Scripture and it drew me back to living the life God wanted for me. And by doing this He started fixing the things around me. My last year before retiring was an awesome year at work. And God changed my way of thinking. Helped me to put Him first and my husband, kids, and grandkids second. Talk about the joy of the Lord filling me to overflow. He did. Thank You Lord! But I had to take the first step. I had to decide to get my life back in order. I had to take out the trash and refill my mind with His Words, His promises. As I did, I grew in my faith, my marriage was blessed, my finances overflowed, my health was strong. God is good and wants to bless all of us. We just have to do our part.

Stay in Him, stay in His Word, and be blessed today!

August 20 **He's Chosen Not To Remember Your Sin**

Hebrews 10:14, 17 – *For by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."*

I don't know why we have such a hard time remembering what the Word tells us. Jesus paid the price for all of us who believe in Him and have received

Him as our Savior. Not only did He pay the price, He chose not to remember our sins.

These aren't just the sins we committed before turning our hearts over to Him. It includes all the sins we commit after becoming a Christian. Believe me, we will all sin after...even the strongest Christian you know sinned after becoming a believer. It's our fleshly nature.

The good news is because of Jesus' sacrifice, God has forgiven those as well. We, as believers, are covered in Jesus' blood. His blood paid the price for our sins: past, present, and future.

I know I've touched on this with other verses before, but we love to beat ourselves up over our sins. We are the ones who keep reminding ourselves. Also, the devil whispers in our ear, "You did that and call yourself a Christian?" He's just putting doubt in your head. He can't turn us away from God, but he can keep us from being a witness.

The point I'm trying to make here is for you to know, as a believer you are forgiven. Put a big smile on your face and show the joy of the Lord through you. Let's grow that kingdom of heaven, fill it full while we are still walking on this earth.

Have a great day!!

August 21 **Live As A Chosen One**

Colossians 3:12-14 – Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Have you ever wondered why there aren't more believers than there are in this world? Could it be because sometimes those of us who profess to be believers of Jesus Christ as our Savior don't act like it all the time?

The Word tells us clearly that we are chosen people. What are we chosen for? We are chosen to represent Christ on this earth so that the Kingdom of God can grow. He tells us through His Word that we are to clothe ourselves with

compassion. What does that mean? I'm thinking it's telling me to help others. One way is to give to the needy. I have a **walk-in closet** full of clothes. Do you? We can't wear them all. Give some away...donate them to a shelter or a church that gives to those in need. Walk in compassion for others. This is just one way.

It also tells us to forgive one another if we have any grievance against anyone...so do it. It didn't say forgive them if they deserve it. It said forgive them. Remember, the Lord forgave us.

Last but not least it tells us to put on love. So that tells us we don't have to **feel** like loving others. They don't have to be nice and deserve our love. It tells us to put on love as we are getting dressed. We should make a point each day when we go out into the world we are to love the people we come in contact with. Show God's love.

If all of God's children gave to the needy, forgave those who hurt them, and showed love all around, this world would be a greater place and the Kingdom of Heaven would grow more and more.

Clothe yourself today with love and forgiveness as you have a blessed day!

August 22

Dos and Don'ts To Follow

Joshua 1:9 – Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

This Scripture along with verses 7 & 8 is God telling Joshua to obey the laws He had given His servant Moses to give to His people. Remember the covenant God made with them kept them under the law. To keep themselves acceptable, clean, wholesome, and pure to God they had to sacrifice animals constantly.

We, however, are under the new covenant...**we are under the blood of Jesus**. There we are pure, acceptable, clean, and wholesome. We are saved through the gift of Jesus' sacrifice for us. So we are **not under the law**. I'm telling you this to make sure you know this verse is not referring to your salvation. If you've accepted Jesus as your Savior, then you are saved.

This verse is telling His people (that's us) to be strong and courageous, not afraid and discouraged. We are to realize and know in our hearts God goes with us everywhere we go. He will keep us safe. He's not here to destroy us or make us discouraged (sad and/or depressed). That's what Satan does.

So keep your eyes on The LORD and know that He's got plans to use you to further His kingdom. And He can do that when you remember to walk victoriously, joyfully, through your life. Others may try to bring you down, but through Christ you have the strength not to let them. Keep your mind and heart renewed walking under the protection and blessing of God.

Again realize I am not saying that nothing bad will ever happen in your life. I'm saying God is with you and He will see you through. Be strong. Keep your trust and faith in Him! And do not be discouraged!

Have a blessed day!

August 23 **Live Your Life In The Light**

John 3:21 – But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

I don't know about you, but I know that before I go to one of the conferences or festivals I attend with my books I pray and ask God to let His light shine through me. I want to be a reflection of Him. This is a prayer I've prayed from the time of my first book signing.

He answers my prayer. I know because one of my customers who purchased one of my books at one of the bookstore signings told me that he and his wife were about to go check out, but he saw a light shining down on the other side of the store. He wanted to see what that was all about before checking out. So they followed the beam of light. At the end of it was the table with my books and me sitting behind it. They came up and started talking to me asking about my book and how and why I started writing. We ended up talking about the Lord and how good He is. For the record, there was no natural light shining down on me. It was God lighting the way to one of His children, doing what I was called to do. Sharing Him through my fiction...and now through my nonfiction.

We are all called as children of God to share His love with others so we can

help grow the Kingdom of God. He uses us as vessels through the gifts He gives us.

Let Him use you through the special gift He has given you. Be the reflected light of God. Let Him live in you and through you while you live your life in the light!!

Have a wonderful day!

August 24 **Keep Your Trust In The Lord**

Psalm 56:3-4 – *When I am afraid, I put my trust in You. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?*

This world is rough. Times get harder every day. People all around the world have things they are going through, some harder than others.

What is the good news?

Those of us who live under the blood of Jesus have no need to worry, fret, or be afraid. We are to keep our trust in The Lord.

We should praise Him no matter what we are going through—knowing that He is there with us and will see us through. He has great plans for us (see Jeremiah 29:11). He plans to prosper us not to harm us. We have to believe that in our heart. Stand firmly planted in His Word knowing that He will get us through and we will come out better than before. (See Haggai 2:9), with your present house being greater than your former house.

That is why it's so important to stay in the Word so you'll know the promises and blessings God has planned for you.

Stand believing, trusting, and expecting them, and you will receive them... through His grace.

Have a wonderful day!

August 25 **Only One Judge To Concern Yourself With**

1 Corinthians 4:3 – *I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself.*

In today's world we tend to worry about what others think of us. We let them be our judge in our dress, in our style car to purchase, in our actions, and in how we treat others.

The only one we should concern ourselves with is God and how He sees us, our hearts. Those of us who have accepted His Son as our Savior, He sees us as righteous through the blood of Jesus. He paid the price for our sins so in God's eyes we are pure and acceptable to Him.

I'm not saying you should go to work tomorrow and do whatever you want to do as long as God is seeing you as pure and acceptable to Him even though you are. (Remember He knows your heart.) I'm saying go to work and do your job as if it is unto God you are working for. God wants us to do our best, follow the laws in our world while we are living on the earth, and reflect Him. (And yes this also goes to you who are still in school. Do as your teacher tells you to do. This honors God. Or what your mom or dad says to do...again honoring God.)

God is our one and only judge to concern ourselves with. I've noticed in my life when I'm honoring God with my actions, words, and deeds, whoever I'm working for is pleased as well.

So go dressed to honor God; when buying a car (or any other purchase) honor God; when living your daily life honor God. Others I'm sure will find you acceptable, but in the end it doesn't matter how they judge you...only God's judgment counts.

Go reflect the Lord today. Be a blessing! Have a great day!

August 26 **Living In Order Or Disorder**

1 Corinthians 14:33 – *For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people.*

Do you find your daily lives chaotic? Do you find nothing is where you expect it to be? Do you find the more you do the less you feel you've accomplished? Do you hurry through your day trying to do this and that and

then find you missed other things you planned to do? Do you find your day in disorder?

Slow down. Take a breath.

Before you start your day spend a few minutes with The Lord.

Give Him control of your thoughts, words, and actions for the day.

Ask Him to lead you, guide you, and direct you throughout your day. At the end of the day you'll find yourself in a more peaceful state of mind.

God is the God of peace and order. Trust Him to help you fill your days with what truly matters.

Have a blessed and peaceful day!

August 27 **Love Rules**

1 John 4:8 – *Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

Have you ever looked around in church or in your job place or even in your home and wondered why am I not as joyful as he or she is? Why don't all those good things come my way like they do for him/her?

Think back over your past few days. Have you been walking in love?

What do I mean by **walking in love**? I mean are you putting other people's needs or desires before your own? Or are you only thinking about what pleases you, putting your needs and desires first? Walking in love is putting others before you.

Jesus did this as He served others while walking on this earth.

A lot of people when they think of love they think of being in love. But love is so much more. God is love! What does that tell you? It tells me God's heart wants to bless everyone, doing the best for them, taking great care of them, and so much more. We as God's children should embody the word LOVE. We should be that reflection of God loving others as we walk through our lives, putting others before ourselves. You'd be amazed at how blessed your life

would become if you'd practice letting love rule your heart. Scripture even tells us '*Whoever does not love does not know God...*'

The good news is for those of us who are saved, we do know God and know that He is love. The bad news is sometimes we forget and start putting ourselves first instead of God. When we put Him first in our hearts and minds, we'll walk in love and let Him rule.

Go walk in love today, letting God rule...or letting Love rule...as Scripture tells us GOD IS LOVE!

Have a great day!

August 28

Don't Let Anything Of This World Control You

1 Corinthians 6:12 – *"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.*

God gives everyone the freedom to choose. That means we can do whatever we want whenever we want to do it. The question we as believers should ask ourselves, is this what God wants us to do?

Then you might say, but God doesn't care what I do in this situation. It's not important enough to affect His creation or His plans for eternity. That might be true when it comes to things like which pair of shoes should I wear today; or should I wear my hair up or leave it hanging down today? You're right. Those kinds of choices won't change the world or have any major impact on eternity.

But some things we do or don't do have an impact. Like should I smile at this not-so-nice clerk who has been mean and nasty since I walked up to the counter? The answer is easy if you're a child of God. YES. It shows the person love. Or this beggar on the street corner, should I give him/her a donation? What if they spend it on...? Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to give? Then give in love, not begrudgingly. Don't question it. Know God is in control. Be a blessing. Pass God's love on in any way He presents the opportunity to you. These things make a difference in the lives of others...as well as plant a seed to grow the Kingdom of God.

You have every right to choose what you want, but make sure your choices are not controlling you. Don't choose to eat more than what is healthy for you. (I say this first, because it is what I'm working on in my life.) Don't choose to do anything in excess. And don't ever let that choice take control of your life. Eating, drinking, words you use, thoughts you have—Don't let them control you.

Let the Lord lead you in your choices. If we learn to try to please Him in all our choices, we'll make the right ones. Keep your heart full of Him and His love for you. Love yourself by making the right choices, choices that will make a better you.

God bless you!

August 29 **Watch Your Mouth**

Proverbs 18:21 – *The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

I know we've talked about this before...the power of the tongue. It's so important; apparently God has led me to speak of it again. We don't realize how many times we speak things that hurt us or someone we love.

Have you ever said, "Oh, my head is killing me?" Or, "My son is so wild." You don't realize it, but you are speaking curses over yourself or your son. When I point this out to friends of mine when they say something like that, they tell me they didn't mean it literally. I understand. But if you believe the Word, you should know your tongue has the power of life and death in it... and that you will eat its fruit.

So instead of just tossing your hand, blowing off what you said because you didn't mean it literally, just figure out another way to say it so you won't be cursing yourself or someone else. You could say, "My head hurts." Because it already hurts so you're not bringing something onto yourself. Better still, since you have power in your tongue, why not say, "I have a headache now, but I know God will take it away. Thank You, Lord." That's speaking in the positive. And wouldn't you much rather bless yourself than curse yourself?

So today as you walk through your day, pay attention to what you say. If something negative or curse worthy comes out of your mouth, speak positive

over it immediately. Watch how quickly your life turns around as you start speaking positive things over it.

Wouldn't you rather be blessed than cursed?

You have the power. Use it! Have a blessed day!

August 30 **Live Your Life For Him**

2 Corinthians 5:11-15 – Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.

What does it mean to fear the Lord? Are we to be afraid of Him? No indeed.

To fear the Lord means you know He has the power in His hand... the power of life and death. That is what we are to fear. But we get past the fear immediately when we accept Him as our Savior. We continue to honor Him in our actions and words.

Those of us, who have given our hearts to the LORD, should know we are now children of the Most High God. It's plain to God. He sees our hearts and knows. It should be plain to you. It's not about building yourself up in front of others, being prideful and boastful about your self. No. It's about being proud of the one and only God, God our creator, God who loves us, God who sent His only Son to save us. Take pride in Him and what He's doing through you.

We are to live our lives serving Jesus Christ our Savior. Live everyday for Him, so others can see Jesus in you. Go out and be a blessing today. In your actions you can lead people to the Lord.

Be a blessing today!

Live your life for Him and have a great day!

August 31
Choose The Word As Your Weapon

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 – The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

This Scripture teaches us that casting down our imaginations, thoughts, reasoning, and theories not in agreement with God's Word **require us to use our spiritual weapons**, not physical. He gives it to us freely. We need only to read the Word and take it into our hearts. Then use the Word as your weapon.

When we speak the Word of God out of our mouths, it becomes a two edged sword, defeating the enemy with one edge and opening the blessings of heaven with the other.

The Word is your offense. With it you defeat your enemy. But it only works when you apply it.

Knowing the truth and not acting on it in faith, doesn't do a thing. You must act on it in faith. You must walk in obedience with your heart attuned to His Voice. It doesn't mean you'll work perfectly. We are all human, and none of us are perfect. But God sees our hearts. He knows if we are trying to please Him.

We release God's Word through prayer, confessing His Word aloud, and taking God inspired action.

Go fire-up your spiritual weapons today and bring joy to a lot of people's hearts. Have a great day!

September 1 **We're Commanded To Love**

John 13:34-35 – *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*

Jesus tells us plainly to love one another. How does He tell us to love others? He says, as He has loved us. This way others will know that we are followers of Jesus Christ.

What exactly does that mean? How has He loved us?

If you aren't familiar with the Scriptures of the gospel, take a few minutes every day and read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Four men who walked the earth with Jesus Christ wrote these four books...all God inspired. They each tell stories in their own point of view. When you read them you'll see Jesus loving those around Him.

He didn't wait for others to show Him love. He looked around and saw people in need and He stepped in to help them. Sometimes people needed food. Other times they needed guidance. Sometimes healing. And still other times they needed to see the error of their ways so they could turn their lives around.

Did He judge any of them? No. Did He tell them things are the way they are because they did this, that, or the other? No. He reached out His loving hand and healed, fed, and/or directed them.

Jesus was kind. He loved us even though we didn't deserve it and that is how you are to love others. Think of their needs and try to feed their need if it is in your power. If not, lead them to where they can get help.

Love is putting others needs before your own. If you do this, God will bless you. Why? Because He loves you and wants you to be more like Jesus. He poured out His favor on Jesus and He'll do the same to you.

Walk in faith...walk in love.

Have a great day!

September 2

Living The Godly Life He's Planned For You

2 Peter 1:3-4 – His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

These Scriptures are talking to all of us who have made Jesus Christ our Savior. If you've made Him your Savior then you too have everything you need to live the godly life He's planned for you.

“Whoa, Deborah,” you say to me. “I don't have everything. There are a lot of things I don't have that I want.”

Read the Scripture again. He didn't say we'd get everything we want, but that we'd get everything we need for the godly life He's planned for us. Sure in another Scripture He says He'll give you the desires of your heart. He'll do that too, but you need to be walking in the godly life He has planned for you...the one He has called you to live. I'm not saying you have to live a perfect life, because none of us can, but your heart should be trying to live as Jesus lived. Remember—God knows your heart.

When you take time everyday to spend with God, He'll show you that godly life He's planned for you. And then when you start walking in it, you'll see more of His promises coming your way. First you'll have everything to live the godly life He's planned, and then you'll start receiving blessings of more than you need. You start receiving blessings in abundance. Your life will overflow with His goodness. His love. His blessings.

And guess what? Some of those things you thought were so important, things you thought you really needed in the beginning, won't be as important after all. Other things will come your way and give you more joy than you would have ever imagined.

Go start walking in the godly life God has planned for you!

Have a blessed day!

September 3 Our Hope Is In Him

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

First let me remind you what I mean by our hope is in Him. Most of you reading daily devotions have already accepted Jesus as your Savior. If you haven't, I wish you'd take the time right now. Knowing Jesus is the Son of God, born of a virgin, died sinless on the cross for all of our sins, ask Jesus to forgive you and come into your heart right now. If you do, He will. The Holy Spirit will take up residence inside of you.

It was that easy. By doing that you just became saved. Now you have the promise the rest of us have which gives you (and us) hope in Him and His Word. Now feed on His Word daily and grow as a believer. We know when we die our spirit-man will immediately be in Heaven with The LORD. Praise God! Our perfected bodies will join us when Jesus comes again...the rapture.

The hope we have in Him is that He is true to His Word. And if He is (which we believe He is because the Holy Bible is the truth), then our hope is for all the promises He makes in His Word to be for us, His believers, His followers.

The first one as you know is when you die you'll spend eternity in heaven—not hell! Praise God! Then there are so many more. To know them you need to read the Word. While you are reading it, know the promises belong to you because you are under the blood of Jesus...not under the Ten Commandments. Don't get me wrong; by walking in the love Jesus has in you and you in Him, you'll obey them most of the time without trying, but stay focused on Him not the Ten Commandments. By being under the blood of Jesus if and when you mess up you won't lose your salvation because Jesus died and paid the price for your sins already. Praise God!

I'm going to name a few more gifts He promises to His people (us). In Jeremiah 29:11 He promises to give us **a hope and a future**...and He plans to **prosper us**, not to harm us. Another promise He gives us is **peace**. Philippians 4:4-9 tells us to Rejoice. Let our gentleness be known to all. Don't be anxious, instead ask in prayer and petition with thanksgiving and God will fill us with a peace so fabulous that we can't even explain, but we as believers can rest in it! In James 1:2-8 Jesus' brother tells us to consider it **joy** when we face trials. Through the testing our faith produces **perseverance**. With that, we'll become

mature and complete, and we'll **lack nothing**. Hebrews 13:5-6 tells us to keep ourselves free of the love of money and stay content in our life, know **He will never leave us**. In Haggai 2:9 He says He'll make our **tomorrows better than our todays**.

There are so many more, and they are for all of us who believe. So take part of every day and read the Word. Draw closer to Him. Let Him lead you daily and be blessed!

September 4 **Believe!**

John 11:40-42 – Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard me. I knew that You always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that You sent Me.”

Most of you are probably familiar with this story. It's when Jesus' friend Lazarus died. His sisters, Martha and Mary, had tried to get Jesus to come when Lazarus was dying so their brother could live. The good news Jesus shared with the two sisters was – it's not too late, it's never too late...if they would believe, they could see the glory of God.

Jesus commanded Lazarus to rise and come out. If He'd just said rise and come out, all the dead within the sound of His voice would have come back to life. Jesus was specific, and by doing this Lazarus rose. He also knew many would believe that Jesus was sent by God and that He gave Jesus the power... and they did and they believed. The Pharisees were angry, scared and knew they had to stop Jesus from converting anyone else into believing Jesus is the Son of God. This was all part of God's plan, so the Pharisees carried out their plans to have Jesus killed.

I believe what the Word is telling us through the above Scriptures is that we are to keep our faith in Him. Don't waiver. Trust Him and know He will get us through whatever we are going through...in His time.

Every day new things come into our lives; people, circumstances, tragedies. But if we keep our faith in Him, He will see us through. This is told to us over and over in the Scriptures...this was just one more example. Jesus gave Martha and Mary the strength to hold on. He wants to give it to us too. So

keep your eyes on the Lord and let Him lead you down the path He has chosen for you. You'll find more success, more comfort, more joy in your life than you ever thought possible. He loves you! Keep loving Him!

Let Him be your Comforter today. I know He is mine. Have a great day!

September 5 **Eating The Good Things Of Life**

Isaiah 1:19-20 – *If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.”*
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

So what are the good things of life? If you're thinking in terms of the flesh it's lots of clothes, a cool car, a big house and things you don't really need. We tend to want to have more. We think that shows our success as a person. Oh, and don't forget a bank load of money. Again...this is how we see it when we measure the good things of life through our flesh.

If you really want to know what they (the good things of life) are and to have them, I suggest you read the Word. If you are willing and obedient—you will eat the good things of the land. If you resist and rebel against the Word, the sword will devour you. The LORD tells us so.

I know in my early-married life, I wanted to have the best of everything for my family and me. I was blessed to grow up in a life where I believe my parents tried to give me the best as well. The truth is, no matter how hard we try to give our kids the best material things life has to offer; someone else will always have something a little better given to them by their parents.

As I matured and read more of the Word I discovered eating the good things of life is walking in peace; resting in the joy of the Lord; staying in the place where I am doing what God leads me to do daily.

The **good things of life** are things you can't buy. It's things you can have for the asking. God loves us. He wants what is best for us. If we will stay in His Word, being willing to live the life He's called us to live, and being obedient to what He tells us to do, we will have the good things of life.

Peace that surpasses all understanding is better than a million dollars in the bank. If you had that million you'd be worried about losing it or figuring out

where to spend it. If you're meant to have millions, then God will see to it you have it, and He will give you the wisdom as to what to do with it while you rest in His peace.

So rest in His peace and you'll find yourself filled with the best!!

Have a great day.

September 6 **Grow Your Enthusiasm For The Lord**

Romans 12:11 – *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.*

How can you grow your enthusiasm for the Lord?

I suggest you read more of His Word every day. I know if you've known the Lord for a while, then you have heard several scriptures over and over. But just remembering them won't feed you. Just like the remembrance of a juicy cheeseburger won't fill you up. You need to eat food daily to satisfy your hunger.

Same with the WORD. You need to feed on it daily, reading it out loud, filling yourself with the Word of God.

As you do, your enthusiasm for Him will grow and grow. He loves you and wants what is best for you. But for you to stay connected, you need to put Him first in your life.

Oh don't get me wrong. He will never leave you nor forsake you...but it is you who turns your back on Him, or should I say we who turn our backs on The Lord?

Make a point not to. Make a point to put Him first by reading His Word every day. In the morning? At night? In the middle of the afternoon? Whichever works best for you! If you can do it two or three times a day or a night, even better. There is no such thing as reading too much. You can't OD (overdose) on the word.



God bless you and have a great day serving the Lord.

September 7 **Living Your Best Life NOW!**

Jeremiah 20:7-10 – You deceived me, LORD, and I was deceived; You overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. But if I say, “I will not mention His Word or speak anymore in His Name,” His Word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. I hear many whispering, “Terror on every side! Denounce Him! Let’s denounce Him!” All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, “Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him.”

Living your best life now is living with enthusiasm and being excited about the life God has given you. It is believing for more good things in the days ahead, but it is also living in the moment and enjoying it to the hilt by being and doing the best you can for The LORD.

Jeremiah had some good times in his life – times when he heard from the LORD telling him He knew Jeremiah before he was formed in his mother’s womb. And the LORD appointed him to be a prophet to the nations. But not all was perfect for him. Jeremiah suffered at times, and the fleshly part of him let God know how he felt about it.

Guess what? It’s okay to tell God what is on your heart, even when what you are feeling isn’t the best. God loves you and wants to hear from you. AND He wants to help you move forward in your life, living the best life for you now.

But you have to be willing to hear what He has to say to you. Be willing to do what He tells you to do. Sometimes it makes no sense. Sometimes it sounds like a waste of time, but know that God knows best. So after you’ve complained to Him by spilling your heart out, take time to hear what He has to say. Listen with an open heart and mind. He speaks to us through the Word, He speaks to us through dreams, and He speaks to us through messengers of the Word, preachers He has called to share His love and grace, and He whispers gently in our ears and hearts through the Holy Spirit.

So don't wallow in your anger or frustration. Spill it over onto God. Give Him your burden and take His love and direction. You'll find your tomorrows are always better when you keep your hope in Him!!

Have a blessed day!

September 8 **Shine – Reflecting Him!**

Isaiah 58:9-11 – Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The LORD will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

Sometimes you find yourself in a place you don't want to be in. You ask God to get you out of that job or that situation. But God may have you there for someone else.

Remember, He is in control. Trust Him. Trust that He will have you in the right place at the right time – that is if you are living each day for the Lord asking Him to lead your steps.

We sometimes miss it even then, but He will get us where He needs us or wants us to be...as long as we keep trusting Him.

If you look around and see the hurting and the needs of others instead of focusing on your self, you'll find your problems fading in the background. Some will even be fixed miraculously. And sometimes you'll find you never had a problem to begin with. It was only because you held your focus there that it seemed so insurmountable.

Focus on the Lord and what He's called you to do and you'll find yourself walking in a daily peace. You'll find more joy than you could ever imagine. Let the Lord reflect on you through your actions and words. Watch your light become a bright beacon!

Have a great day!

September 9

Give From The Heart

Acts 2:44-45 – All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

I've heard a lot of people say I can't just give to anybody begging. Who knows what they'll do with the money I give them?

That isn't how to see others. See them through the eyes of Jesus. Trust in the Lord to lead you where to give. He wants you to be a giver.

The more you give, the more blessed you are. He blesses you so you can be a blessing.

As much as we have in our homes in America, we probably don't even need to sell our stuff to be able to give. Give some of your things. Give a smile. Give a blanket. Give a coat. And give money wherever you are led.

The main thing is to **give from the heart** and give what your neighbor needs.

Have a blessed and fulfilling day!

September 10

Sow To Be A Blessing

Galatians 6:7-8 – Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

When a farmer plants a seed, he wants to grow a crop to feed his family. When we plant a seed it should be to grow the message of God, sharing His love, His grace, His goodness.

If we sow for our own selfish reasons, it will come back to haunt us. I know you've heard this all of your life. I know I have. **You reap what you sow!** So what is that saying?

As a teenage girl growing up in the 60's some of the things sown around me

weren't always nice words. Teenage girls know how to hurt other girls. I'm sure it's no different today. And it probably isn't even different with the boys. Kids know how to put down other kids, thinking it's lifting themselves up. But it's not!

As adults hopefully we grow into the truth of The Word. God tells us we will reap what we sow. So as an adult I know that means if I want to be blessed, I need to bless others. If I want to be forgiven, I need to forgive others. If I want to be liked, I need to like others. In other words – I'll reap what I sow. If I sow blessings, I'll be blessed. If I sow forgiveness, I will be forgiven. If I sow smiles and good thoughts to others, I'll receive those same things back. You will too!

BUT if I sow ugly words, or put down others, I'll receive the same type treatment.

So do you want good things to come your way????

Then send out good things from you to others around you. Start the outward flow, so it can come back ten-fold. Walk in the Spirit sharing the love of God. You'll feel His blessings chasing after you and pouring out all over you if you dare to start being a blessing to others around you. Go be a blessing today!

September 11 **Speak In Faith!**

Romans 10:10-11 – *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame.”*

All who are reading this devotional I believe are believers of Jesus, the Son of God. My question to you is, do you hide your faith – or – do you share it?

Don't be afraid to shout it out! -- **I love You, Lord! You are a blessing to me! Thank You for Your goodness! Thank You for the life You've given me! Thank You for the plans You have for me! Lead me, Lord!**

Growing up, I was blessed with a wonderful Sunday-School teacher who was always thanking God for something. She made a lasting impression on my heart. Thank you, Mrs. Harris. I love you dearly!

I believe everyday I should thank God for everything that goes on in my life. Sometimes it's thanking Him for getting me through something that wasn't so great. The good news is He never gives up on me. He has stayed right there with me to get me through everything...even now with the death of my husband. I just needed to stay faithful in believing He was with me getting me through it.

If we will take time to speak out loud what our hearts believe, we will be blessed.

We are saved when we confess our sins and ask God to come into our hearts. We understand Jesus, God's Son who lived a sin free life, died on the cross and suffered for our sins, paying the price so we don't have to. And because we believe this, receiving it as truth, we are saved and know when our earthly body dies (or the rapture comes) we will spend eternity in heaven.

THE GOOD NEWS IS God wants to bless us here on this earth while we are here as well, while we share HIS GOOD NEWS with others, growing the kingdom of God.

As you speak out loud your faith in Him, He will pour out His favor on you.

Thank You, Lord for this day! Pour out Your favor on us as we reflect Your love onto others!!

September 12 **Jesus Paid The Price So We Don't Have To**

Romans 4:7-8 – *“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”*

Wow! Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven. Well guess who that is?

THAT'S YOU AND ME!! All who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Jesus died and suffered for each and every one of us. He suffered for all of our sins. He sinned not, but suffered - so we don't have to. Isn't that awesome?

Jesus suffered for our past sins, present sins, and future sins. And because He did that, we (those who have asked Him into our heart to save us) will never have our sins counted against us.

The penalty has already been paid in full by Jesus Christ! So hold your head up high and know that you are blessed. Your sins have already been paid for. The Lord will never count your sins against you.

God is so good! Have a blessed day!!

September 13 **God Is Watching**

2 Chronicles 16:9a – For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.

The eyes of the Lord are searching the earth to show himself strong in those whose hearts are turned perfectly toward Him (committed to Him). God is not looking for a perfect Christian, a perfect believer. He's looking for someone who loves Him, lives for Him, and has a perfect heart toward Him...a willing heart.

He is the perfect one. We see this in the scripture.

The Pharisees lived a perfect life according to following the rules. They worshipped at the right time; they did all the religious things that were set for them to do at the perfect time. They had it down *perfectly*, living as they read it written. They performed *perfectly*. But their heart wasn't in it. They didn't have a personal relationship with God.

God knows our hearts.

The Pharisees were proud of **themselves**, and what they did, and they were very judgmental over everyone else. That does not please God.

He tells us plainly to love others, and not to judge. Jesus chose His twelve disciples by looking at their heart, not their outside, outward appearance, or the duties they performed. He chose a tax collector. He chose a few fishermen (rough, crude men).

He chose doubting Thomas...and He chose one whom He knew would betray

Him. But that was part of God's plan. The main thing was He searched their hearts and knew whom the right ones were to choose to follow Him, and make fishers of men.

So search your heart, and line it up with God's love for you. Fill yourself with His love that spills out on others.

Bless you and have a great day!

September 14 **His Love Is Power**

Ephesians 3:17b-19 – And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power; together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Good things happen to people who believe that God loves them. He proves it over and over, but you must believe.

Read the Word. Soak it into your brain, your heart, and your soul. He loves you even when you fail, even when you make wrong choices.

His love never ends. His love is unconditional. It doesn't depend on what you do, how you do it, or how you feel.

His love is shown through His grace (a gift) that He pours out on you. It's contingent entirely on Him. He loved you so much He gave His Son in death to save you.

And it's because of what happened with Jesus, His death, His suffering, His resurrection, that you should know God loves you so. When you know the love of Christ with the fullness of God...you know you are loved.

It's not about how much you love Him, but how much He loves you.

And you need to know this. You need to believe this. And you need to accept it and be thankful. Take in His love for you today...and then show His love to others.

Go be powerful in His love today. Have a great day!

September 15 **Hope In The Lord – Wait On His Timing**

Psalm 33:18-22 – But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, LORD, even as we put our hope in You.

This is the key to having a peaceful life. When you've come to know the Lord, you learn to lean on Him, rest in Him. He gives you hope for your tomorrows. When unhappy circumstances come your way, if you start to fret and try fixing things yourself, you'll lose that peace, but if you learn to keep your hope in Him and wait on Him and His timing in fixing things, you stay in peace.

When you take the burden on yourself, it's like saying to God you don't think He can handle it. Trust me! He can handle things so much better than we could ever hope to do.

If you fear Him—that doesn't mean to live frightened of Him—It means to live in awe of Him, knowing He is in control of your future if you follow His lead. Give your life to Him and trust in Him. That is when your hope is in Him... where it belongs.

While we are hoping in Him, and trusting Him to lead us down the right path, we rest in peace waiting on His timing. His timing is always the right time... the perfect time. He will shield you and protect you through it all. His unfailing love will cover you through it all.

His love is the best thing we could have. Rejoice while hoping in the Lord. His time for you is perfect, and know He will see you through.

Have a blessed day!

September 16 **The Blood Of Christ**

Hebrews 9:11-12 – But when Christ came as high priest of the good things

that are now already here, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, is the High Priest. The Son of God came, perfect, sinless, and lived His life the same way. When He died on the cross it was for all of our sins, every one of them. He paid the price for each and every one of us.

He suffered, bled, and died for us and then suffered some more. He paid the penalty for our sins. He took the judgment for us so that we don't have to. Because He did this and God raised Him from the dead afterwards ... defeating Satan, defeating death, defeating disease ... we who accept Him as our Savior obtain eternal life.

We were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Rejoice in the Lord! Live your life under His grace, walking in peace and joy, resting in Him.

Praise God! Thank You, Lord.

September 17

Jesus Is Our Strength

Proverbs 18:10 – *The name of the LORD is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*

Have you ever had a day that left you drained of energy, drained of life, and then you wondered could you, should you, even go on? What's the point? The more you think on it the worse it becomes.

That's called worrying. You're focused on your problems and they only seem to get bigger/worse.

Change your focus! You can. It's your choice. Turn to your inner strength... The Holy Spirit. The good news is because you are a child of the Most High God you don't have to stay feeling so low. Yes we are human and no matter how much we love God and know He loves us, we sometimes let life get us down. BUT we can bounce back. Again, change your focus. Instead of meditating on the problem, mediate on how good God is to you. Meditate on

His love for you.

We need to remember to call on Jesus! He is our strength!

You may have to whisper His name a few times or call out loud to Him while you are meditating on His goodness, but He will hear you. He hasn't left you and won't. He is right there to help remind you, **you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you!** He is your power. He is your fortress. God wants to be there for you through it all.

Trust in Him. Run to Him. Lean on Him. Rest in Him.

When you do you'll get through that day and be stronger and ready for the next day. Run to Him and be safe and strong!

Have a great day.

September 18 **Living Free From The Fear Of Harm**

Proverbs 1:28-33 – *“Then they will call to Me but I will not answer; they will look for Me but will not find Me, since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD. Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; **but whoever listens to Me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.**”*

I'm sure when you started reading this Scripture you thought, has Deborah lost her mind? Surely she doesn't think God is telling her He's not listening to His Children.

No. I'm not.

I'm pointing out that God warns everyone who calls himself or herself a believer isn't necessarily one of His children.

You know if you are. You know it in your heart. I'm not saying you'll be perfect, but He is perfect...and He knows.

I'm saying the pretenders that talk a good talk and put on a good show will be

surely lost in the end. He tells them plainly He won't answer them when they call, and they won't see Him when they seek Him.

When is this time I'm talking about? After they've drawn their last breath.

Until then God is waiting for everyone's knock, and until you draw your last breath He is ready to accept you as a child of the Most High God. He wants to be your Savior.

And those of us who are His, while we are walking the earth we should be sharing His love with others all around so they too can live in safety like you and me. So they can live at ease, without fear of harm.

I'm so glad I'm one of those...one of His. I'm secure in the arms of Jesus living my life without fear of what may come my way. Aren't you glad you are too? So smile and share Him with others around you.

Have a wonderful day!

September 19

The LORD Surrounds His People Always

Psalm 125:2 – *As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people both now and forevermore.*

We all go through trials and tribulations. In fact, Scripture tells us not to worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will have enough worries of its own. So when we go through the day and things come our way trying to pull us down, what are we to do?

We look to the Lord. We get in His Word. Or we just talk to Him. He is right there with you. He not only filled you with The Holy Spirit to help you through your day, He surrounds you throughout your day...both now and forevermore. He will never leave you nor forsake you, but you have to trust Him, trust in Him, and renew your mind with His Words to keep you strong in your faith.

I'm not saying when your faith is down a little that you'll lose your salvation. When your faith is down you'll find it harder to cope with the daily things life throws at you, but you'll never lose your salvation. If you'll keep yourself strong in His word, remembering that He is there for you all day every day,

you will skip joyfully through the life you are blessed to have. Even the bad things won't get you down because you'll remember He is there with you helping you through...carrying you through if you'll let Him.

Praise God for loving me! Praise God for loving you!

We are lucky to be loved so much. Have a great day!

September 20 **The LORD Watches Over His People**

Psalm 121:5-8 – *The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all harm—He will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.*

Sometimes I wonder how people who don't believe in Jesus Christ, in The Holy Bible, get through the day. I know even though my heart is fully committed to God and I know He loves me and blesses me daily, continuing to move through my days after my husband died was not easy. I was blessed that God held me close to Him walking me through each day. And He didn't give up on me...and I made it through. Now I shed tears here and there, but mostly I get to smile knowing Scott is whole once again.

For over two years after Scott's passing some days were better than others, and at times I wondered if the pain and loss I felt would ever go away. God helped me focus not on my loss, but on Scott's blessing.

He was no longer suffering with the cancer that the Agent Orange had put in his body. And even better than that, the last few years of his life he spent rejoicing that he was a child of the Most High God. Scott counted his blessings every day. Sometimes you don't notice the blessings at the time they are being poured out on you, but if you take time to look back over your life you can see the hand of God pouring out His favor on you.

Scott did this and realized how that decision he made as a teenager really turned his life around. When God gave him these extra three and a half years, Scott didn't waste them. He made sure everyone he talked to knew that God was blessing him even more, giving him a little longer with his family on earth. And when it came time to go home, Scott was smiling. He knew what was coming his way. As much as he didn't want to leave us, he was looking

forward to being with the Lord, and seeing his family in heaven.

We all still miss him...friends and family both...but we remember him with smiles on our faces and a song in our heart. Put your trust in The Lord so you can know you are being watched over by Him. And if you already have, then take time to share Him with others around you.

Go be a blessing today!

September 21

The Authority Of Jesus, The Son

John 5:19-20, John 14:12-14 – Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. Yes, and He will show Him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. (NIV) “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in Me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask Me for anything in My Name, and I will do it! (NLT)

Isn't it grand to be a child of the Most High God? Because we have the authority God gave His Son; He gave it also to you and me. So what does that mean to us, believers of Jesus Christ as our Savior?

It means if we have a problem today, don't struggle over it trying to fix it on our own...take it to Jesus taking Him at His Word.

Ask Him for the answer in solving the problem or the situation you are in. If you do, believing and trusting in Him, you will receive the answer. You may have to wait for it, or He may give you the answer immediately. The main thing is be open and ready to receive it.

Tap into His authority. It's there for your taking. God loves you as much as He loves His Son, and He made promises to you. But in order to receive them, you have to believe. It sounds simple...and it is. We make it difficult.

So rest in Him. Rest in His Word. Let Him lead you to the right answer using His authority to get you through and come out on top!!!

Have a blessed day!

September 22 **Jesus Is Always Willing**

Luke 5:12-13 – *While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged Him, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” He said. “Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him.*

Here a leper came to Jesus and asked Him to heal the leper’s sickness, if Jesus was willing. His answer was – He was willing!

That’s the same answer He gives us today. He is always willing; we only need to ask. Once we ask though, **we do have to believe He did the healing.** Sometimes it doesn’t happen to the physical body instantly so our faith wobbles. The spiritual healing is instant...the physical will catch up if we keep believing.

We have to stay strong in His word. We are healed by His stripes. That’s what the word says, but we have to take it personally. We have to believe and receive...and then keep our faith steady knowing we are healed.

Don’t give Satan any wiggle room to come in and steal your healing.

It doesn’t matter what you feel, it’s what you know. You can feel all you want but watch what you say. When the pain is still there and you are still suffering, you can say it BUT be sure and follow those words with, **but I know what the Word tells me so I know I’m healed. I’m just waiting for the physical to catch up with the spiritual.**

Some of you are saying, I did that for two weeks but it didn’t help me. Guess what! Your physical healing might have happened in the third week. All I know is the Word is the truth. You have to believe and stand on the Word.

I know there comes a time for all of us to die, but God’s in control of that too. He’ll only take you at the time He’s planned. According to the Word you can extend that time through obedience to your parents and praying believing for more time. But again it falls back on faith.

The good news as believers whose faith wobbles, even when your healing doesn't happen here on earth it happens in heaven. Praise God. Remember though, you have the power to believe and receive it here today...just follow it through, cause Jesus is always willing.

God bless you! Have a great day!

September 23 **Storing Up Treasures**

Matthew 6:19-21 – “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

I don't believe God is telling us not to have a savings account, or a retirement fund. I believe He's telling us to spend and save wisely, but most of all, be willing to give to and where God leads you to do so. He's talking about your treasures.

So if I was storing all my money up to hoard for me for selfish reasons, that would mean my eyes are only on me and taking care of me. But I believe since I know God is the One taking care of me, He gives me enough to put aside for my days to come as long as I remember it's all coming from Him... and that I'm willing and ready to give wherever He tells me.

When I do that, He usually gives back more than I give away. God is a good God who loves you and wants to care for you, but you have to put your trust in Him.

Don't hoard your blessings. Share them...give them away...help whomever He puts in your path to help. Don't worry if it feels right to you—by that I mean don't look at the one you felt God said “give” and think, but that's a bum who's going to spend it on booze or drugs. I don't want to support his habit. Instead, trust God. He told you for a reason. Let Him worry about what that guy is going to spend it on. Our job, as believers, is to do what God leads us to do.

I'm not saying to give money to everyone who crosses your path. I'm saying to start your day listening to the Lord and when He tells you to give, do so.

That stores treasure in Heaven for you. While you are blessing whomever, God is blessing you.

Know that God is watching over you and as long as you lean on Him, trust Him to provide all your needs, He will. And the more faithful you are to Him, the more blessings He will pour out on you.

Thank You Lord.

Have a blessed day.

September 24

Serve Only God

Matthew 6:24-27 – “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other; or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

I've heard this for years and believed God was the only one I served. There was no way I was serving two masters. What I didn't realize was that every time I put myself, or someone, or something else before God I was no longer serving Him first.

I'm not saying God doesn't want us taking good care of ourselves, physically, spiritually, emotionally, nor am I saying He doesn't want us to care for others. We are to do those very things. BUT when we put any of those things before God and we are more focused on achieving our personal goal than we are on pleasing God, we have let Him slip out of the number one position. We should always keep God first.

In my early fifties I found some changes I needed to make in my life. Although I'd been saved since I was ten years old, and I prayed every day several times a day, went to church three times a week plus more when things were going on, and read the Word a few times a week, I wasn't having as close a relationship with The Lord as I could have. Yes, He was always there

for me. And I thought I was always there for Him. But I learned how to have a deeper and closer relationship with God. It was amazing.

I started reading a little bit of the Word every morning. Yes, I got up a little earlier than I needed so I could do this. As I read the Word my heart seemed to grow, the wisdom and understanding of the Word grew, and my relationship with God grew. I found out He was there for me for **everything** that was going on in my life. I need only talk to Him about it. Even ask directions on how to handle this problem or that.

God listened and answered me. Our relationship grew. My life was more peaceful. Don't get me wrong. I still had problems and issues that arose, but I'd learned to give them to Him and let Him sort them out. He tells us to give Him our burdens and for us to take His. His are light. Praise God, He was telling me the truth all along. Only sometimes I kept trying to take back my problems and fix them myself. I didn't want Him to have to deal with it. Finally I learned He knows the best way to handle everything. And when I rest in Him and let Him lead me, I walk in a peace that surpasses all understanding...a peace I didn't even know existed. So leave your problems at Jesus' feet and walk in peace and joy today!

September 25 Effective Prayer

Matthew 7:7-8 – “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

This Scripture pretty much backs up what I shared with you on the 24th. The only way it works though is if you ask...you seek...you knock. For you to find the answers to your problems, your issues, you must talk to God about it.

As you do this, take time to read the Word. He'll lead you to Scripture that will strengthen you in your walk.

Another thing I believe you need to do when you ask God for His help, you must wait on Him all the while believing He will answer. Then when He does, you must receive it. It's like your neighbor comes over and wants to give you a \$100 bill. If you don't take it when he offers it to you, he'll stick it back in his pocket and go home. You missed it.

Lucky for us God doesn't give up on us as easily as the neighbor did in the example I just gave.

When the Scripture talks about seeking and you will find...I believe that is seeking Scriptures in His Word that will give you the answers. You take time to read the Word; He'll lead you to the right Scriptures that will open your heart to your answer.

Knocking is another thing you must do. I believe it means you have to make the effort. When you feel or sense or hear God telling you to do something, you must be willing to take that step. Some people go around killing people claiming God made them do it. Well if you know God, you know He is love. Love does not kill. God is good. Some things He tells you to do may not make sense, but know if you're hearing something bad to do to someone else or just plain mean, that is NOT God. That's Satan trying to mess you up. Bind him away from yourself and loose the Holy Spirit in you so that you'll know when God is speaking to you.

So my message to you today is to pray to God. Ask for direction. Tell Him your woes and let Him direct you in your actions. Seek His Word for further direction on how to live your life to please Him. And step out when He leads you to do something that will bless and grow the kingdom of God.

Have a great day!

September 26 **Build On A Solid Foundation**

Matthew 7:24-27 – “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

This reminds me of the three little pigs. One built their house made of straw; another of sticks, and then the third took time to build it right with bricks.

Matthew 7:24-27 is telling us the same thing. If we want a strong house that

won't fall down with the first storm, then we need to make sure we build our house (our heart) on a solid foundation...on The Rock, on Jesus Christ!

Young couples just starting out should make sure they spend time with the Lord. Find a good church that preaches God's love, God's grace and get you and your family involved. Read the Word everyday—a verse or passage here and there, but everyday. You'll find you are building your home upon The Rock. I'm not saying nothing bad will come your way. I'm saying when something does; you'll be able to make your way through it, leaning on the Lord, on His Word, and each other. God will never leave you nor forsake you. He is there for you. Trust in Him.

If you are older in life, don't fret. You can make your house a strong home built on The Rock. Just take time everyday spending it with Him and you'll see a difference in no time.

I've mentioned before that I read devotionals every morning. I do. There are so many good devotionals available that would help you grow in your foundation. I know four that I've spent a lot of years reading over and over. It's so cool how God will show me something in one and then the next year I see something else in that same daily devotion. Sometimes there have been days when all four lined up and were talking about the same thing. And guess what...it was what I needed to hear that day. I add more devotionals as God leads me to them, and sometimes I drop one or two for a while, but I love starting my day with one or more each day. Try it. You might like it. I hope that mine has helped you however many days you've been reading it. And as I've found with some, if you read them for more than one year, you may be blessed with another revelation on the second go round.

The main thing to do is build your life on solid ground. Build it on Jesus Christ your Redeemer...His Word.

Enjoy the day!

September 27 **Faith Of A Roman Officer**

Matthew 8:5-13 – When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, asking for help. “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.” Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?” The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof.

But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, He was amazed and said to those following Him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.

This story is so profound. Jesus is talking to the Roman Officer who is concerned with one of his servants who lies back at home, dying. The Roman soldier knew who Jesus was. His faith was in the power of Jesus...knowing He could heal his servant.

Jesus as usual was ready to heal the sick. If you'll notice all through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Scriptures that tell us about Jesus' walk on the earth, Jesus always wanted to heal the sick. Sometimes He delayed His healing touch so that the Glory of God was shown brighter (like in His friend's death – Lazareth, Mary & Martha's brother), but He always healed them, the ones who had faith and God received the glory.

When the soldier spoke of the power of Jesus, telling Him He need only speak healing and the Roman knew his servant would be healed; Jesus said He'd never seen such faith. That's the kind of faith we need to have. Know that when you ask God in Jesus' name for healing, even if you don't feel it immediately, just keep praising Him and thanking Him for the healing... knowing His Word is truth and you received the healing. He did what you asked. Why? Because He said He would.

Let your **faith** grow stronger every day. Don't let doubt creep in at all. Stand strong in The Lord!

Have a glorious day!!

September 28

Jesus Wants To Bless You

Matthew 10:40-42 – *"Anyone who welcomes you welcomes Me, and anyone*

who welcomes Me welcomes the One who sent Me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is My disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

Some people say the blessings God poured out was only in the biblical days. That's not true.

He still loves His children and He still blesses us. He wants to bless us even more, but some of us cut off those blessings by not trying to live the life He's called us to live or by not believing He wants to bless them. It's the little things that cut off your blessings. Like not forgiving others—whether they deserve it or not. He forgave us even though we didn't deserve it. In the New Testament Jesus speaks several times telling us to forgive those who hurt us.

Another thing that can be blocking your blessings is judging others. We are not to judge others. God is everyone's judge. Leave it in His hands. He sees the big picture. Let Him do all the judging. Sure we are to be smart enough to know if someone isn't living the life Christ called them to live, these aren't the ones you want to hang out with making them your best friend, however you are to love them and share the love of God with them.

Another is not believing He still blesses us...or not believing you deserve it. You probably don't, but you must realize God loves you and wants to bless you. So listen to His Word and walk in love.

What I'm trying to say is if you don't feel God's blessings pouring out on you, take a moment to look at your life and see if you are doing, saying, acting, in the manner Jesus did. Where you fall short ask God to help you, so you can be more like Jesus, so you can have a closer walk with Him. As you make these little changes in your life, you'll see your joy, peace, and blessings grow. God is good. He loves you no matter what. He just wants to bless you more, but you have to open up the gateways. You must welcome Him with love. Love others through Him. And if you are led by the Spirit to give to a stranger or a friend, then do so.

Walk in love today, sharing your smile with everyone you pass. Have a great day!

September 29 Scattering Seeds

Matthew 13:3-9 – Then He told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

This is a story that most of you are familiar with. Jesus is speaking in parables. Being a farmer was a common thing back then so He used that to explain how we hear the Word (the seed), accept it as truth, and then grow as a believer.

As the Word was shared with many, some of the people listened, but then moved on. They didn't take it into their heart. Others heard it, took it in, and believed it but didn't grow in the Word. They didn't have others around them or enough background to encourage them to read more and grow in their relationship with Christ. So therefore they didn't grow at all but because of their belief in Jesus, they were saved. Some more heard the word, accepted it for truth and chose to accept Jesus as their savior. But as times got rough, and troubles came their way, they gave up and strayed from the Word.

Don't misunderstand me. The last two groups did not lose their salvation... they only cut off their open communication with God. So the blessings (that I talked about yesterday) were cut off as well. Know one of the biggest blessings I believe we receive is the power to walk through any situation no matter how difficult it is. We can do **all** things through Christ, which strengthens us! These two groups also quit being a witness to others. So therefore they were no longer dropping seeds or watering seeds to help others come to Christ or grow in Him.

In the last category, the people's hearts were ready to hear the message of Jesus Christ the Savior. They wanted to know Him, grow in Him, and share Him with others. This group accepted Him as their Savior and was bubbling over with excitement to share Him with others, truly helping grow the kingdom of God. They will yield a bumper crop! That is the group we all want

to fall into.

If you find yourself slipping into one of the others, know you haven't lost your salvation. You've only cut off your blessings and your ability to be used by God to bring others into the family. You can change that. Just start digging back into the Word. Put the Lord first and let Him lead you through each of your days. Be blessed. Be a blessing. Have a great day.

September 30 **Let Jesus Calm Your Storms!**

Mark 4:35-41 – That day when evening came, He said to His disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat. There were also other boats with Him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, don't you care if we drown?” He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to His disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

What are you going through today? Are you being tossed and turned on the waves, being overwhelmed by problems all around you? So where is your focus? Is it on the problems?

Have you taken them to Jesus?

If you are experiencing bad, sad, or horrific troubles now I suggest you stop and take a deep breath. I believe if you are reading this, you are in the family of Christ. He wants to help you through whatever difficulty you are facing today, but to help you, you must take your focus off of your problem and put it on Him.

Know He can fix anything. Not only can He, He wants to. Jesus died for you. He wants you to have a good life sharing Him with others through your joy and peace so the family of God can continue to grow. But you have to trust Him to fix it. You must lean on Him and know He knows what is best for you.

Take another breath. Now share your troubles with The Lord. Ask Him for His Will in that situation. Know that He always wants what is best for you. You

may not be seeing the big picture and in your mind you think a certain thing must happen before you can get out of this trouble. But remember – God knows what is best. Trust Him to lead you in the right direction, walking you through your situation. You'll always come out better than before as long as you let Him take the lead.

God bless you. I pray your days get better and better everyday, just like the Word promises. You only need to lean on Him and let Him take control.

October 1 We Are Made Righteous Through Faith

Romans 3:21-28 – *But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. The righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of His blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—He did it to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. **For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.***

First let's talk about what being made righteous means. It means our sins have been bought and paid for. For those who profess Christ as their Savior, those who have faith in the Son of God, their sins have been washed clean, and the price for each sin has now been paid for by Christ taking on the punishment for the sins we committed—and will commit. So being made **righteous means that we have been made right with God through Christ**. God sees our sins no more.

Isn't that exciting?

Some people think if we believe this it makes us want to go out and sin, sin, sin because there is no penalty for us to pay. That's not true because if you **believe** Jesus died on the cross and suffered for your sins - past, present and future - you'll want to do everything you can to make the Lord happy in your actions. Sure, we'll mess up sometimes and fail...but God still loves us.

Remember, He loved you before you came to Him. He still loves you.

And the scripture above makes it clear that you can't work your way in to being righteous. By faith alone you will be made righteous. Any works that you do after, are works from your heart trying to show God how much you love Him; showing Jesus how much you appreciate what He's done for you.

Walk joyfully in your righteousness today and every day. Be blessed. And be a blessing!

October 2 **Do It God's Way**

2 Kings 5:10-11 – Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed.” But Naaman went away angry and said, “I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy....”

Don't let your own ideas of how you think God should do what you are asking of Him rob you of your healing...your deliverance...your prosperity. Trust Him to do it right. Trust Him as He does it His way, the right way. He has great plans for you. Let them happen His way!

In the above scriptures, Naaman, a leader of a great army, had gone to Elisha and asked for healing because Naaman's wife's servant girl had told him he could be healed. Well, being the great man that he was, he got a letter from his king and went to Elisha's house to make the request. Being the leader of a great army and having a letter from the king Naaman felt certain he'd get his healing in a special way. Was he in for a rude awakening! Not only did he have to do something to receive it, it had to be done in a place he believed was beneath him.

As far as Naaman was concerned there were so many other clean rivers he could climb into instead and douse himself underwater seven times to get that cleansing. Naaman thought he knew what was best.

It took his servant reminding him how willing he would have been to do something great if Elisha had told him so to be healed. He would have done it in a heartbeat. So Naaman went back and did as he was told. He was healed instantly after the seventh dip in the Jordan River. He did it God's way and it paid off.

So how do you know what God's way is?

You read the Word. Keep your ear and heart attuned to the Holy Spirit who lives inside of you. Let God lead you.

Have a blessed day.

October 3 **Clean Up Your Messes With Miracles**

Proverbs 18:6-8 – The lips of fools bring them strife, and their mouths invite a beating. The mouths of fools are their undoing, and their lips are a snare to their very lives. The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts.

The Word tells us – we have what we say. As a believer you should know that's a biblical truth. Here are two examples. (Mark 11:23 *Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them.*) (Matthew 21:21 *Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done.*) By the way, the mountain you can throw into the sea is problems that come upon you that you are trying to overcome.

No matter how true we know the Word to be, sometimes with the words we speak we make all kinds of messes happen instead.

If your life is starting to crumble around you, how can you change it? How can you turn your destructions into miracles or blessings?

Change the words you are speaking. To turn your life around you must speak positive things, good things that you know the Word tells you, you are. Use the Word to turn your life around.

I am more than a conqueror. I am a victor not a victim. I can do all things through Christ, which strengthens me. I am blessed to be a blessing. He has great plans for me, plans to help me not harm me...plans to prosper me. I am healed by His stripes.

Those are some that just popped in my head, but there are so many more. Get into the Word and see His plans for you. See the blessings and miracles He wants to do in your life.

So clean up your messes, and start speaking the words that will make miracles happen in your life today.

Have a great one!

October 4 **Be A Good Representative**

1 Corinthians 5:11 – *But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.*

In this Scripture, Paul was telling his brothers in Christ to watch out whom they associated with on a daily basis. This is a message to us (brothers and sisters in Christ) as well. He didn't mean we are to be hurtful or negative when your sister or brother in Christ, who doesn't walk the way God leads you to walk, asks you to hang with them, and you know in your heart you have to turn them down. Don't sound like you think you are better than them. Instead, turn them down gently, letting them know why; Decline to be involved in the conversations they are having if it involves gossiping or criticizing someone else, or if they use foul language as you know the Word tells you not to do, or if they are drinking till they are intoxicated and are no longer acting as they should as a child of God. Turn them down in love.

The thing is if you try to stay to be a witness to them, there is a chance you could be infected with the bad choices you are surrounding yourself with. Bad choices bring consequences. You may already be forgiven for your bad choices (sin), but you still have to suffer the consequences.

I remember when I first became a dispatcher at the trucking company I worked at for 30 years. Everyone said, Deborah you don't cuss. You can't be a dispatcher. You have to talk tough with these guys. Show them you can hold your own. Well as much as I'd like to say I stood strong for the Lord and remembered to keep my words clean, I didn't. And guess what? This carried over to my home life until one day one of my daughters said, "Mom, you cuss like a sailor. What happened to you?" That was a rude awakening. I asked God for His help and learned to separate myself from talking like that. I focused more on letting my mouth represent my love for the Lord. In time, the guys I worked with realized I had cleaned up my mouth and when they cursed in front of me, they apologized. They too watched what they said around me. God is so good.

We want to be a good influence. Don't let others infect you, instead be a good influence on them.

Have a blessed day.

October 5

Where Did The Time Go?

Proverbs 12:11; 12:25; 16:9 – *Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense. Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up. In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.*

Has your day ever ended and you thought *where did the time go?* When you woke up that morning you had plans to get so much accomplished, but other things got in the way. Right? Right!

Do you know what this causes in your life? Stress. Anxiety.

My first suggestion is you start with the Word. I've said this all along. You'd be amazed at how uncomplicated your life becomes as you put God first. (Matthew 6:33 *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*)

Next, make a list. Don't just jump in and start doing this and then remember, oh wait, I was supposed to do this first. I better jump on it quickly. If you take a couple of minutes to jot down what you need to accomplish, and decide the important things for that day, put them in order and then get started, you'll find yourself accomplishing more than you could imagine.

Proverbs 12:11 *Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense.* Be realistic in making your list. You know what you can or can't do. And remember, you don't have to do it all. Some things were meant to be shared.

Proverbs 16:9 *In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.* Make sure the items on your list are things God wants you to do, otherwise you're pretty much wasting your time. Or at least make sure when you make your list and start following it, if God leads you to do something else, listen and follow HIM!

Proverbs 17:24 *A discerning person keeps wisdom in view, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth.* Sometimes our desires are based on worldly views instead of what we really need or want in this world. Make sure your dreams coincide with the plans the LORD has for you. If so you'll find things easier to do.

When you make that list, cross off anything that really isn't important. We sometimes put too much on ourselves or even let others pile our plates full. Learn the words—Sorry, I can't—Let God lead you in what is important and what can wait a few days. One of my favorite scriptures that helped me lighten my life up was Matthew 6:34 – *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Here are a few more.

Proverbs 12:25 – *Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.* So instead of worrying about tomorrow, speak some kind thoughts of things that could happen instead.

Proverbs 14:30 – *A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.*

Some things on your list may be things you want to do because you want what someone else has or you want to be like someone else. Stay true to yourself. Be happy who you are, where you are, and what you're doing. If it's not God's best ask Him to lead you to change these things...but not to be someone else. Give your heart a rest.

Proverbs 17:22 – *A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.* Keep your list reachable so you don't stress the heart. Stay happy. That's good medicine...and it doesn't taste bad at all!!

Take God's Word to heart and take control of your day's schedule. Stay in that day—not worrying about tomorrow. Don't get me wrong. We can plan our future. It's good to have dreams of accomplishments and move toward them, but don't give them priority of the day you are in. Follow God's directions in each day. He'll help you achieve your dreams at the right time.

Have a blessed day!

October 6 Balance Is The Key

Mark 6:30-31; John 8:12; 5:30; 8:14 – *The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but Him who sent Me. Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going....”*

The four gospels tell us how Jesus walked the earth handling the same type problems we face daily. He was a man who didn't let the worries of the world get in His way. He didn't let the problems He came in contact with disturb His peace of mind. He faced them without letting them interfere with His peace. We can do the same thing by following His lead, by walking in perfect balance.

He knew who He was. He was the Son of God. Well guess what? We are the children of God and He loves us as much as He loves Jesus. So when troubles or pressure come our way, we need to remind ourselves who we are! I am the daughter of God! You are too. He loves you and me. Sure, we don't deserve it. None of us do. But He loves us anyway, so rest in that love.

Also know who you are in this world. I am a mother of three and a grandmother of 4. I am a writer of Inspirational books, fiction and non-fiction. Am I a bestselling author? No, not yet, but one day I might be. If not, that's ok. It's okay as long as I remember who I am and what I'm here to do. I'm here to be a good mother and mother-in-law to my kids and their spouses, and be a good influence in their lives. I'm here to be a good Granny to my grandkids. And I'm here to write whatever God leads me to write. But most of all, I'm here to share God's love with people He brings me in contact with throughout each day. I'm to keep my focus on Him and walk the steps He leads me to walk.

As long as I keep my mind and heart balanced with God and His Word first and family then friends and acquaintances, my life stays in peace, a peace that

God gives me that surpasses all understanding. And I know by His Word with this peace, I will live a long fruitful life sharing Him and His love with others...as well as the love that continues to grow in me.

Get your life in balance—your Spiritual and physical life lined up as it should, and your emotional life in your day-to-day living will balance out.

Have a blessed day!

October 7 **Handling Irritation In Your Life**

Galatians 6:7b – *A man reaps what he sows.*

I'm mentioning this because we are all human and we sometimes let the irritations of life get the best of us. I used to get mad so easy...or hurt...or angry. It didn't take much for people around me to get under my skin. Sometimes I still do...but I'm working on it. The sad thing about it is, when I allow them to ire me, I know I am wrong letting them get the best of me. It's my choice, and it's yours too. So do you want to rise above it and learn to live your life in a peaceful surrounding? You can.

The first thing you need to do is ask yourself when you feel that anger starting to rise within, did you bring it on yourself? Did you do something to cause this? If you did, then you need to fix whatever you did wrong.

If it's an apology you need to make, do it. If it's forgiving someone who hurt you earlier and you chose to bury it in your heart and mind and not forgive them, forgive them now so you can move on! I guarantee the family member, friend or co-worker didn't even know or care that they hurt you. You are only hurting yourself by not letting go and forgiving them.

That statement I just made deals with the second point I feel led to share. If someone hurts you, whether intentionally or not, forgive him/her. Jesus said, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." Most people who hurt others don't even realize what they have done. If they are the type who hurt people deliberately, forgive them anyway. This way you've become a blessing to them and have shown them the right way to live. You planted a seed that someone else will water. You may be the big turning point in their lives and not even know it. And you've saved yourself a lot of grief.

When I'm driving down the road and someone pulls out in front of me, it can irritate me quickly. In the past I used to always let other drivers get the best of me. I'd call them names like idiot, stupid son-of-a-gun and worse (because I wasn't letting God be #1). But over time, through letting God lead me daily through His Word, I've learned to control my reactions better. I may start to react, but **most of the time** I quickly remember past experiences where I let the driver steal my peace. Instead, I smile and think, '*thank You Lord for slowing me down. Keep them from causing a wreck down the road.*' My peace stays intact and I have a good rest of the day. We can all learn from our experiences.

In Romans 8:28 we are told that all things work together for the good of those who love Christ. Well I love Him. So I know when things like that happen to me (and I respond in the correct way), there is something God is working out for my good. He is possibly keeping me from an accident down the road, or keeping me from going in the wrong direction, not allowing me to make a wrong turn, or so much more. God is good to us, we just need to trust Him and stay in faith with His Word.

So have a great life not letting irritations interrupt your peaceful day.

Put a smile on your face and have another great day!!

October 8 **We Were Created To Praise Him**

Psalm 150:6a – *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.*

All who draw breath were created to praise our Lord, Jesus Christ. Those of us who claim Him as our Savior, should definitely praise Him all the daylong. In fact, Psalm 132:9b NKJV says '*And let Your saints shout for joy.*' That's you and me, so shout!!

I was saved in a Baptist Church where I was taught to be reverent. I pray I'm always reverent to the LORD. As a young one, I thought being reverent meant staying quiet with respect. You can worship from within, but God loves it when you shout out your praise as well, honoring Him, respecting Him, praising Him, and loving Him.

When we gather together as believers and are preparing to hear the Word preached we are there to praise Him in our worship. In the Word they danced

and sang and played instruments praising God. We have a voice. Sing out your praises to our Lord and Savior. Dance if you are so led. Don't look down on others around you who show praising by dancing for the Lord. They are connecting with God, showing Him the joy that He is pouring into their hearts. Those who were taught to be silent in church may find it a little awkward to begin with. I know I did. But that's okay. Remember—praise causes the glory of God to shine in your life. It causes you to walk in the light of His countenance. It says so in Psalm 89:15. Revival will bubble up inside of you. **Let His Spirit work through you.**

The good news is you don't have to wait to be in church to praise the Lord. You can do it in your car driving to work. Talk about make your day go more smoothly, it will. I know it made mine better. You can do it in your time you spend with Him in the morning, or afternoon, or at night.

Just remember all blessings that come your way are from Him, so don't hesitate to thank Him for the blessing as well as praise Him for it. The Word even tells us to do this through the bad days. It doesn't mean praise Him for the bad days or the bad things that come your way (because they don't come from Him but He allowed them to come your way for a reason). We are to **praise Him knowing He will get us through them** and we will come out better after the troubling times if we only keep praising Him for His love for us...and His plans for us...and thanking Him for getting us through the troubling times.

So throughout today open your mouth and praise the Lord every time the thought comes to you. Have a very blessed day!!

October 9

Turn Away from Self - Turn Toward Jesus Christ

Mark 8:34 – *Then He called the crowd to Him along with His disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me....”*

Have you ever thought about that before...deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Jesus? I thought deny yourself, meant to deny your selfish desires...but it's so much more.

It's telling us to realize we do not have the final say. We are to know that apart from God we are nothing...we are merely man/woman. God is sovereign, and

God has everything that's important under control. And He loves you and me. His plans are the best for us if we let Him lead, put our trust in Him. The Word is telling us to accept that we depend on God for everything. Praise God, because through Him we can do all things! And that is what we are being told to do. Let the Lord lead you. As my friend, Ina, used to always say, "Let go and let God..." Those are very wise words. When we give each day to God, asking Him to lead us through the day, helping us to make decisions based on what He would want us to do, then we've denied our self and trusted Him.

So what did He mean by 'take up their cross'? Jesus hadn't died on the cross carrying our sins and paying the price for our sins at the time Jesus said the above to a crowd. But we know what happened to Him after He made the statement. So pretty much, I believe, He was telling us to rely on the cross where Jesus paid the price for us. Trust in Him. When you're tempted in so many ways, trust in Him to help you not give in. Jesus wants to help us through our daily life...even the little things. So let Him. Lean on Him. Trust in Him. He paid the price for you.

And do what He said lastly – follow Him. Jesus is there for us. Take Him up on His offer. Don't rely on yourself – rely on Christ Jesus!

I found another Scripture which explains what He meant by deny thyself.... It's found in Psalms 33:17-22 (NLT) *Don't count on your warhorse to give you victory—for all its strength, it cannot save you. But the LORD watches over those who fear Him, those who rely on His unfailing love. He rescues them from death and keeps them alive in times of famine. We put our hope in the LORD. He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. Let your unfailing love surround us, LORD, for our hope is in You alone.*

Have a great day.

October 10 **Don't Be A Stumbling Block To Others**

Luke 17:1-2 – *Jesus said to His disciples: "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble.*

This Scripture's meaning was taught to me when I was 18. I'd lived my life trying to please God. I know I missed it here and there, but I believe most of the time He was smiling down on me, glad to have me as a child of His. I know I loved Him and was pleased to call Him, Father.

When I was eighteen my date wanted to take me to a nightclub. Back then it was legal. I'd never been and never thought I'd want to go, but I loved to dance AND I loved music. So I said yes. I'd gone several times—my date later became my husband of 43 years...when he went on to be with Jesus. We always enjoyed ourselves listening to the music and chatting with his friends. He drank his beer and I had my coke. It worked for me.

Then one day I was talking to a young man, a friend of my date's, who was a godly man. We talked about the fact I didn't see anything wrong in going to the nightclubs and dancing. He helped me see clearly—although there was nothing wrong in what I was doing, people who didn't know the Lord as their Savior but knew I stood strong in my faith—if they saw me doing what others thought was wrong—I could become a stumbling block for them in ever coming to Christ as their Savior. The word a lot of people called some believers was 'hypocrite'. It doesn't matter that I'd always said I knew God had no problem with me dancing. David danced. I always knew if I wanted to have a drink now and then, that wasn't the sin. The sin was drinking to excess. So in my mind and heart I knew God was still smiling at me, glad I had peace from Him.

But as this Scripture pointed out—I didn't want to become a stumbling block. So yes, as a believer, I needed to make sure I reflected Christ in every way. And sometimes when we step right on the edge, we may become our own stumbling block. So while you are free in your love in Christ and from Christ, don't be a temptation to someone else, causing them to falter or turn away. Keep your heart set in reflecting Jesus and be a blessing to others. Thank you, Randy for that wonderful advice back in the day.

Have a blessed day!

October 11 **Last Chance For Salvation**

Luke 23:40-43 – *But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don't you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your*

kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”

One of the men hanging on a cross waiting for his death asked Jesus to remember him when He enters His kingdom. To me this is very important. It tells me that as long as you are still breathing you have a chance to be saved. Of course, I’m not telling anyone to wait for that last moment in their life to do this. There are two main reasons not to wait.

First you may not have a moment. You could die instantly when your time for death arrives. Those who wait too long will spend eternity in hell, suffering, gnashing their teeth, and being miserable. I wouldn’t want to see that happen to anyone.

Second, you would miss the opportunity to live an abundant life here on earth. Although your life will be perfect in heaven, you can have a pretty awesome life here. Those who give their life to the Lord, asking Him to be their Savior, asking forgiveness for all their sins, will be welcomed into the Kingdom of Heaven. AND while they are waiting for that glorious moment they can live in peace and joy, living the life God planned for them here on earth...in abundance.

When we take time to ask God to lead us into the life He’s planned for us, spending time with Him through reading the Word, talking to Him throughout our day, and doing what we hear Him tell us to do, we’ll find our lives full of living in the abundance of The Lord.

Those of us who accept Him as our Savior can be blessed with all the blessings He mentions in His Word. Everything in Heaven and Earth is His, and when we accept Him we become a part of His family. Our inheritance is more than you could ever imagine.

Thank You, Lord!

Have a blessed day.

And if you know someone who hasn’t given their life to Christ yet, let your joy shine through so they will want what you have coming your way!

October 12
Jesus’ First Miracle

John 2:1-11 – *On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no more wine." "Woman, why do you involve Me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you." Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water;" so they filled them to the brim. Then He told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which He revealed His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.*

This was the first of many miracles. Jesus performed them every time revealing God's Glory. Have you had a miracle in your life? Those who have and realized it came from God usually gain a belief so strong no one can change your mind. I've had a few and I know that's why my faith is so strong.

The biggest one, I believe I shared early in the devotional, but in case someone started afterward, I'll share it briefly here. My 3-year-old daughter had a malignant brain tumor and God turned it to benign. How do I know God changed it and it wasn't just a mistaken identity in the beginning by the doctor? God left His print on it. By the size, color, and shape the doctor knew it was malignant and almost didn't remove it, but when the lab tested three different samples, their review said it was benign each time. Finally the doctor removed the whole tumor, which was the size of a soft ball in the base of her head. When the lab tested the removed tumor they found the seeds (God left in) were malignant but the whole tumor surrounding it was benign. Everyone in the hospital (including doctors and nurses) called her God's little miracle. And God gave me peace through the whole 9-hour surgery, letting me know He's got this and for me not to worry. I trusted and rested in Him.

A smaller miracle He performed in my life was when I had a major problem with my heel. It had gotten worse over the last week, so much so it hurt to walk. I was sitting in my living room watching a Joyce Meyer 30 minute episode (rerun), and she started praying for someone with a hurting heel. I

knew immediately she was talking to me so I was agreeing with her prayer. Suddenly I felt a heat surround my heel up to the ankle and midway of my foot. It went on through the whole prayer. I knew that was God healing me immediately and started praising Him and thanking Him. When she said, “Amen,” I said it too and jumped up and started running around the room. All pain was gone. I was healed. And it never came back! Praise God! Have a blessed day looking for your own miracle to appear!

October 13 **Jesus Blesses**

John 4:21-26 – “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe Me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus declared, “I, the One speaking to you—I am He.”

Here Jesus was talking to a Samaritan woman. He’d asked her for a drink of water at the well. She was shocked a Jew talked to her. Jesus knew her whole story without having to be told. Even though she had been married five times and was now living with another man, Jesus offered to give her water that He gives and she’ll never be thirsty again. He’ll give her eternal life, a fresh bubbling spring that will come from within.

She admitted she knew the Messiah was coming, and when Jesus told her He was the Messiah, she grew so excited she rushed off to tell everyone He was there. She knew He was The One!

The good news is what He offered to her, He offers to everyone. We need only to believe and receive.

Jesus blessed this woman and He wants to bless each one of us. We need only open our ears and hearts to Him. If you’ve done this, then know He has blessings He is waiting to pour out on you. Be ready to receive, expect to receive if you are living your life for Him. It’s His promise to you.

Have a wonderful day.

October 14 **Receive Your Nourishment From The LORD**

John 4:27-34 – Just then His disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” Or “Why are You talking with her?” Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” They came out of the town and made their way toward Him. Meanwhile His disciples urged Him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” Then His disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought Him food?” “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work....”

Although the disciples had been walking with Jesus for some time, they did not quite understand that Jesus is the One who will take away their sin for them. He will be offering Himself for their sins.

He is the bread of life. If we feed from Him, we will never be hungry again.

God sent His Son to earth to pay the price for all of our sins, so we won't have to. But, in order to receive His righteousness and have our sin debt paid in full, we must believe Jesus is the Son of God, born of a virgin, died sinless, suffered for our sins, and rose to live again—defeating death, defeating hunger, defeating Satan!

Receive your nourishment from the Lord. Feed on His Word every day, and find yourself resting in His peace! Praise God!!

Have a blessed day!

October 15 **The Day Of Resurrection**

John 5:28-30 – “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. By Myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and My judgment is just, for I seek not to please Myself but Him who sent Me.”

This is a day all believers are looking forward to. I, myself, can't wait. The time is coming, and it's getting closer and closer. Praise the Lord.

One thing we know as a believer because The Word says so, is when we (the believer) are absent from the body, we are present with The Lord. It tells us when the earthly body that covers our heart, soul, mind, and spirit dies; our spirit will be in Heaven with The Lord.

So on the day of resurrection, however long our spirit has been running around in heaven, our body **renewed** will be reconnected with our spirit in Heaven. We will then begin living eternity with our fellow believers, with God, with The Lord, and with angels all around. Our home will be what God had planned earth to be in the beginning, but this time we won't fail. What a glorious day that will be!! We will all be there pleasing God, fellowshiping with Him...the One who sent Jesus to save us.

Have a great day as you look forward to eternity.

October 16

Spend Your Energy Seeking The Life The Son Of Man Gives You

*John 6:26-29 – Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for Me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval.” Then they asked Him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “**The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.**”*

This verse clearly tells us the work He requires of us is to believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. Once you believe in Jesus, the Son of God, as your Savior, (which I think all who are reading this has already given their life to Jesus Christ or are on the threshold of doing so), start asking Him for His plans for you. As we walk in His will for us, we will be energized. And as we keep seeking His Word, His love for others will flow through us sharing Him with others.

God is good and wants the best for you. If you want it too, take time to have a one-on-one relationship with The Lord. You'll find yourself filled with a

peace that surpasses all understanding, a peace you won't be able to explain, but a peace that gives you a wonderful rest from the worries of this world.

Seek Him, His Word, and His plans for you so you too can be energized with the renewing of your heart, soul, and mind.

Have a blessed day!

October 17 **Anyone Who Believes...**

John 6:43-48 – “Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered. “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from Him comes to Me. No one has seen the Father except the One who is from God; only He has seen the Father. Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.”

God called all of us who have come to know Jesus as our Savior. And as we talked about two days ago, we will be resurrected.

While we are waiting for that day, we are to be learning from God through His Son, Jesus Christ. How do we do that? By reading the Word daily. As we take time to hear Him whisper in our hearts His Words we will be feeding on the bread of life. He will sustain us. He will bring us through anything and everything that comes our way. We need only to trust in Him and on Him. Keep believing Him and His Words that He shares with us through the Holy Bible.

Eternity is a very long time, longer than we could ever imagine. So get ready while you're waiting for that day to come. Enjoy the time you have left on this earth by doing His will for you. Each day will get better than the day before as you keep your faith and trust in Him.

Have a blessed day!

October 18 **Let God Reign In Your Life**

Psalms 14:1-2, 15:1-5 - The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are

corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart; whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor, and casts no slur on others; who despises a vile person but honors those who fear the LORD; who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind; who lends money to the poor without interest; who does not accept a bribe against the innocent. Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

Non-believers are foolish. They won't hesitate to deny God's existence. When the book of Psalm was written believers had to try and live holy, walk a blameless life, be kind to others around them, give freely, and help others. They did this by living under the Ten Commandments, which we all know no one succeeded at until Jesus, the Son of God.

All of us living now have come after Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection. Now for us to be righteous we need only to be covered by Jesus' blood. We are when we accept Jesus as our Savior. Because He already suffered for our sins: past, present, & future. God only sees us pure through the blood of Jesus.

However, when we walk the earth, already a believer, already saved, already covered in the blood of Christ and then sin a little here (gossip about or with your neighbor) and a little there (watch a show that you know teaches against the Word) we become a stumbling block to others. We lose the opportunity to reflect Jesus' love on others, planting the seed to bring one more person to Christ, we stop letting God reign in our life. In fact, by the way we are acting others are thinking - they don't really believe there is a God either. Look at them.

Don't give in to a little sin here or there. Before you know it, you'll be as corrupt as they come.

Let your life shout your love for the Lord. Use His wisdom that you learn from reading the Word daily to walk in the reflection of Jesus Christ our Savior. Be a great example to non-believers, and as they see your joy they'll want what you have. Don't be a stumbling block. Let God reign in your heart, in your life. Be a witness to others as you walk as the Word tells you.

Have a blessed day!

October 19

Honor God

1 Samuel 2:30b - ...But now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from Me! Those who honor Me I will honor, but those who despise Me will be disdained.

God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Here in the Old Testament He said He would honor those who honor Him. That hasn't changed. In fact, He does more. He blesses those who bless others in His name. Honor Him with your life and with the words you speak.

Don't let the little (or big) problems that creep into your life get you down. Remember who your God is. He is bigger than any problem, as long as you let Him take care of it. Trust Him to do what is best for you. Honor Him by staying faithful and believing Him so that He will honor you.

God never forgets. He'll remember that in the midst of your worst nightmare (battle on earth) you didn't give up. You kept your trust in Him. You kept your faith in Him. You stood by Him knowing He was right there with you. He will honor you. His Word is truth. Believe it and receive it.

He will keep speaking promises and blessings over you as you keep trusting, believing, and honoring Him. It will work deliverance for you in this life. You'll be glad you did, because we live for eternity...right?

Have a great day today and every day honoring God!

October 20

God Has A Plan For Each Of Us

Acts 17:24-28 – "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything. Rather, He Himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us. 'For in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are His offspring.'

As a resurrected creature, you're no accident going somewhere to happen. Your life isn't by accident full of events and circumstances that just happen. God has a specific plan for you, for your life.

Do you want to know what He has planned for you? If so, you must put your focus on Him, on His Words. Talk to Him in prayer. Give Him the lead in your life and you follow.

Most of us think we don't have time to figure out what He wants for us because we are too busy just trying to survive the life in front of us. As long as we keep our focus on our problems and the situations around us that is all we'll have time for. We must do what the Word tells us to do: *Seek first the Kingdom of God....* When we put God first. Seek Him instead of waiting to see what will happen, He will supply all our needs and then some. He will lead us on the path to walk in the plans He has for us. And His plans are not to harm us but to bless us, make us prosperous.

The devil works overtime trying to keep you so busy you don't have time to think about God and His plan for you. The truth is, you must make the time. When you start looking toward God (your answer) instead of all the problems surrounding you, you'll find the answers and your life will be more at peace. DON'T MISQUOTE ME AND SAY I'M SAYING YOU WON'T HAVE PROBLEMS. I'd be calling the Word a liar because it tells us we'll have plenty. The difference is if you trust God to lead you through, you will thrive on the other side. And as you are following His will for you, you will be growing the Kingdom of God. What a blessing!!!

Have a great day.

October 21

Don't Quit!

1 Peter 5:9-11 – *Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To Him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

Have you hit a wall? Has the situation in your life gotten so hard you just can't keep fighting it? You know you've been living faithfully for Christ,

doing as His Word tells you to do. So why aren't things getting better? Why can't you get passed this situation and move on?

Don't quit now. Hang on. Keep believing. Keep doing God's will. He will see you through. And afterwards, He will restore you and make you stronger.

Don't let this setback stop you from moving forward. Keep your eyes on the Lord, His Word. As you do, you will grow in your knowledge and understanding of the Word.

You will get to the other side of this situation, and when you do you will be better off than before. Don't quit! Keep your trust in Him and in His Word.

Stay steadfast in your faith, and in the end your victory is guaranteed.

Hang in there leaning on Him. He will see you through.

God bless you!

October 22

Love Is The Answer

1 John 2:5-6 – But if anyone obeys His Word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did.

When we read the Word we learn that faith works by **love**. When we step out of **love** and refuse to forgive others, our prayers are rarely answered. Forgiveness is an act of **love**. God is **love**. Without love, your giving will not work. It is written when we give joyfully (our heart is loving what we are doing) then we will be blessed. So, when your giving isn't working, it's because your heart is not in the right place. It's not giving through love.

1 Corinthians 13 is the book on love. It tells us what love truly is. It is patient, kind, not envious or boastful. Nor is it proud. Love doesn't dishonor others. It is not self-seeking. It's not easily angered. Love keeps no record of wrongs. And it does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, trusts, and hopes.

Fill yourself with His Word and let Him work His love through you. Don't

you want to be more patient? I know I do. I've prayed about it a lot and God has helped me as He's taught me to walk in love.

I used to lose my patience in traffic all the time, at the checkout counter a lot, and at times with my family.

The Lord showed me as I rest in Him, letting Jesus be my guide, I don't react like I used to. In traffic, if someone cuts me off, I try to forgive him immediately in my heart and mind, and I choose to believe he is rushing somewhere he believes is important.

At the checkout counter, when the man or lady is rude, I remind myself how it felt to stand for eight hours a day pushing groceries across the scanner and loading them up for the customer. And who knows what is going on in their home life. Give them the benefit of the doubt. Show a little love. Pass on a smile.

And when it comes to family, I love them more than life itself, so I surely don't want to offend or hurt them. The main thing I always try to do is not take offense. I remind myself, they love me and I love them, so nothing else really matters.

Love is the answer. Walk in the love of Jesus! Be a blessing today!

October 23 **Lacking Wisdom?**

James 1:5 – *If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

When you, the believer, face a new problem, what should you do? Figure out how to fix it yourself? Try to pay your way out of it? Let someone else deal with it? **No!**

Pray your way through it. Ask God for wisdom. He is waiting and willing to give wisdom to any who ask for it. He won't tell you that you don't deserve it. Or you can't handle it. If you ask Him for it, He will give it to you... His wisdom for that situation, that problem. He wants to help you through.

It's the key to unlocking every door in your life. I'm not saying beg God to fix your problem. I'm saying ask, in Jesus name, for His wisdom for the problem

you are facing, wisdom to know what you should do. Then get into the Word. Listen for the answer. It will come to you in your reading, or in a still small voice from within...that's the Holy Spirit...and He says whatever God says.

AND if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him or her and thank God for forgiving you. This opens the doors of communication to Him. As you're listening, learn from what the Word is telling you, what the Holy Spirit is saying. Then do what He tells you to do. Be obedient. Seek His wisdom. He's ready and willing to give it to you in abundance, generously. Be ready to take it...and use it.

God bless you. Have a great day!

October 24 **Shut My Mouth**

Proverbs 29:11 – *Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end. (NIV) A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back. (NKJV)*

One of the things I'm learning as a believer is when to keep my mouth shut. For some reason me, and people like me, think if a thought comes to us, share it with the one you are talking to. If it makes them mad, so what? Tell them what you think about it anyway.

No, no, no, no, no. 😞

That's not the case. Sometimes you do better keeping your mouth shut.

I used to have a boss that loved to rile me up. And back then I played right into his hands. But one day, a year or so before I retired, the Lord gave me this wisdom. When I read the above Scripture I remember hearing, do you want to be a fool? If not, listen. Hear what he has to say. Think on it. Then answer only what he's asked you. Don't go giving him your opinions. Sometimes you might only need to nod and say, "I hear you." OR "I'll try to do better." But don't open your mouth and try to out talk him.

First, God reminded me the man was my boss and I was to honor him in his position. Secondly, I'm a child of the Most High God and He will protect me and defend me as long as I'm trying to live as He tells me to. So once I heard

this (and believe me, this message is in many scriptures – so it must be important!) I learned to always say a quick prayer before going into his office when called. I'd pray God would shut my mouth unless He wanted me to say something. And talk about peace that surrounded me at work. Each day only got better and better. In the final days, when my boss and I chatted it was with friendly conversation. He no longer tried to rile me.

God is good. And He knows what is best in all our lives. We need only be faithful to Him and hear what He tells us to do. Trust His Word. Keep renewing your mind daily while feeding on the Word.

Choose your words wisely, or say nothing at all. Keep the calm. Keep the peace.

Have a great day!

October 25 **The Father's Heart**

Luke 15:20 – And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

Do you love sinners?

Praise God, He loved us even though we were sinners.

We should never lose our compassion for those who are still lost.

Unfortunately, even in church sometimes “the Christians” talk about the guy stumbling down the street drunk, or the one who hangs out at the bars getting wasted. Sometimes a Christian may hear someone telling a dirty joke and they turn up their noses, thinking they are better than them.

For sure you don't want to hang around that type conversation. It's best to quietly walk away. If someone asks you later why you walked out, you can tell him you don't care for that type talk. Share your love for Jesus, and how you want to reflect Him. But turning your nose up isn't how Jesus reacted to sinners. He talked with them in love, shared the good news.

Instead of talking about the neighbor who is a drunkard, try to share the love

of God with him and tell him the good news.

Have a blessed day!

October 26

Look For The Best In People

Matthew 5:43-44 *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”*

Jesus tells us to love one another, even your enemy. He tells us to forgive. Jesus wants us to walk in love as He did. Notice Jesus spent time with the ones the religious people wouldn't even associate with. Why do you think He did this? He looked for the good in them. He knew their pasts, their hurts, their troubles, but He also knew there was hope for them. They need only to feel Jesus' love.

When we look for the best in people, we are showing Jesus' love. I know it's natural instinct to pick out the worst in others. I think it's our way of feeling a little superior, but it's wrong, and in the long run it will give you grief, an unsettled heart, and no peace.

I find, when I look for the good in people I can usually find it. And if I stay focused on the good in them, I can remain joyful and at peace no matter what they say or do in any given circumstance. You can too! Also, when I leave that person and go home, I try not to think on what they said or did to me trying to make me feel bad or hurt...I try to remember whatever good came from that gathering.

I know bad things happen to good people, and mean people say hurtful things. I'm not saying deny it. I'm saying not to focus on it. If we can learn to focus on the good instead, no matter how small, we can find joy in our everyday life.

Have you ever had someone suggest you make a list of things you are grateful for or happy for?

I was told that somewhere a long time ago. I actually did it, and whenever I find myself getting down because of something that is going on in my life or something someone said to me, I pull up that list. I have it on my laptop as

well as my iPad. It makes me focus on the good things in my life. And when I'm doing that the joy in my heart comes alive and keeps me moving forward.

Remember your God is bigger than any problem or person in your life.

Turn to Him. Ask Him to lead you through the situation while asking blessings for that person. And then trust Him to take care of it. While He is fixing things, stay focused on the good in your life. Focus on the good (no matter how small) in that person, resting, knowing God is taking care of it.

And for those of you who are thinking, 'But Deborah, you don't know this person.'

Maybe I don't, but I do know your God. He is good. He is love. He is the best. He provides more than enough. He loves. He gives. He uplifts. He heals.

Stay in Him and He will stay in you. Have a blessed day!

October 27 **Don't Open The Door For The Devil**

Ephesians 4:26-27 – *"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*

Has anyone ever told you not to open the door to the devil?

Trust me. He'll gladly come in and wreak havoc on your life. For non-believers, he can do it any time because they don't have the Holy Spirit living in them protecting them. But even we believers can open the door just a crack and he'll jump right in. The Holy Spirit wants to keep us from harm, but we must listen to what He tells us. He only says what the Father says and all of that is found in the Word. So, familiarize yourself with it daily. Renew your mind daily or the devil will take advantage of any crack in your armor.

It doesn't take much of a space for him to push his way in. Little things like getting angry at someone—even when they deserve it—and holding on to it. Sure, we are human and we get mad or angry at others when they do us wrong, or hurt someone we love.

The trick is not to hold on to that anger. Realize they are the ones messing up. As a believer, we're told to forgive them and pray for them. That's not easy to

do, but if you don't you will open the door a crack for the devil. He can use this opportunity to wreak havoc on your life with one thing after another.

We're told to love. We're told to forgive. We're told to serve. We're told to help others when it's in our power to do so. We're told to turn the other cheek. We are told so many things, all of them good things to do, say, and think, but if we choose to ignore His teachings, we are allowing Satan to do whatever he wants in our life.

If we're smart we'll start every day asking God to forgive us for sins, forgive us for holding anything against anyone, help us to walk in His love, bind Satan away from us and loose the Holy Spirit in us. When we do, we're making sure the devil won't have a foothold today.

Do your best to keep God first in your life living as He's called you to live.

Have an absolutely glorious day!

October 28 **Call On Him For His Guardian Angels**

Psalm 91:9-11, Psalm 34:7, Hebrews 1:14 – *If you say, “The LORD is my refuge,” and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them. Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

I live in the South where we get a lot of hurricanes. Psalm 91 is my go to Scripture when I call on the LORD for His protection. It wasn't until this last storm that verse 11 jumped out at me. I knew then not only was I reminding God by quoting Scripture of His promise to protect me, but that I also found He'd even send His guardian angels to guard me. Oh how great that is!!!

The good thing is God wants to protect all of us all of the time, but He gave everyone free will. Not everyone has taken the time to ask Jesus (God's Son) to be their Savior. That is one of the first things we must do to receive this protection along with His angels guarding us. It says His angels are **ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation**. We inherit salvation by having faith and asking Him to come into our hearts. When we do, the Holy Spirit comes to live in each and every one of us, and

His angels are there to minister and serve us.

For no harm to come, we must do a little more. We must make God our dwelling...go to Him first, know He is the one who provides for us, protects us, and more. In verse 7 of chapter 34 of Psalm where it tells us the angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him...it's telling us we must fear Him for His angels to protect us. Does that mean God wants us to shake in fear at the thought of Him? No indeed. To fear Him is to know **He is the One with the power** that can do all things; He holds the power of life and death in His hands. He is the powerful One. So when we call on Him to bring us through these storms unharmed, we also have to believe He is the One with the power to do just that and rest in Him.

I'm not saying if a hurricane is coming your way you can just pray and sleep tight. You can do that, if you keep Him first, pray believing, and do as He says. If God doesn't tell you to move to safety because He's allowing all this area to be damaged, rest in Him. I'm telling you pray, standing on His Word, and listening for any directions. If He doesn't give you any and allows His peace to settle in you, then I believe He's letting you know you are safe to settle in and ride out the storm.

Keep Him first. Live for Him. Trust in Him. Listen to Him. And do what He leads you to do. Know He walks in love and never tells anyone to do harmful, hurtful things. God is love.

Have a blessed day.

October 29

Listen To God

John 10:3 – The gatekeeper opens the gate for Him, and the sheep listen to His voice. He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out.

I don't know about you, but I know sometimes I'm trying to figure out if that is God talking to me, or just my wishful thinking. This is obviously when I'm trying to figure out the next thing God has for me to do with my writing. I'm praying and asking, seeking His Word, and then when I hear an answer that sounds too good to be true, or too easy, I think, 'That can't be God. That must be my wishful thinking.'

The thing to do is trust that it is God...**if you are asking Him for an**

answer...if you've been seeking Him through His Word and prayer. When you hear the answer and you feel a peace settle within you, don't question it. Follow through believing God for the answer. **If it's not Him**, He will turn you around. He will let you know. The main thing is keep listening to God.

His Word tells us how much He loves us, how He has plans for us, and how we are to reflect Him in our actions. So walk in faith. Walk in love. Let His light shine through you as you share His love with others, putting others before yourself. That's what Jesus did in His short time on earth. That is whom we are to imitate.

Have a blessed day!

October 30 **Glorify The LORD, Not Yourself**

John 7:18 – Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the One who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.

As I've said before over these ten months of devotion, God has a plan for each and every one of us. While we are walking this earth, if we are following His lead, then in some way as we walk through our days we are sharing the Good News with others. Each of you has been given the way to do this with the plan God had for you from the day you were born. Sometimes it takes us a lot of years before we get on board with God, yet some see it clearly early on in life. When we look to Him to guide us, we will join in on the plan He has made.

As you start walking in His will for you, things will start happening around you. His goodness will explode with great things happening. Remember—Don't think it's you. Know it is God working in you! Give Him the glory. Give Him the praise.

He loves blessing His children and He will keep blessing them as long as we keep our eyes on Him, knowing He is the One. All good things are from Him and He wants to pour them out on you. Open your arms and start receiving...praising Him!

Have a blessed day!

October 31 Together In Christ

Amos 3:3 – *Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?*

Who should you be agreeing with when it comes to your faith? The world? The preacher? The teacher?

You should be agreeing with the **Word**. When you believe what it tells you and you stand on it, your faith grows.

Some believers believe what they've read, but when they are going through a personal situation that the Word applies to, they start thinking maybe the Word wasn't speaking to them. Those words were written back in the day, personally written for whomever the Word is speaking to in the Scripture at that time.

Read the verses around it. If He is talking to His believers, His followers...**He is talking to you!**

But you must not only believe the Word; you have to watch what you say. Believing His torn flesh and dripping blood heals you is one thing, but when you are in pain and suffering some health problem if you say things like, "Am I ever going to get better?" Or, "I can't stand the pain. I wish I'd die." Or, "This is killing me," you are contradicting the Word.

I know when I hear someone close to me say that and I try to remind them to watch what they say, they'll tell me, "God knows I didn't mean it literally." Well for sure He knows. **But He also knows His Word tells us to speak things as though they were if we want to change the situation.**

So when you step out of line with the Word you are no longer in sync with God. You won't be healed, or financially blessed or whatever you believed for. You are letting your belief waiver. But when you stay in the Word, agreeing with what He tells you, you'll see changes in your life...changes for the better.

Stay in agreement with Him—TOGETHER IN CHRIST—and have a blessed day!

November 1 **It's Your Responsibility**

1 Peter 5:6-10 – Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.

It's that time of the year. In fact, at the time I'm writing this month's entry it's the year we the people of America have the responsibility to vote for a president. The good news is we are not voting on the man or woman who is running for this office. We are voting for the party – the platform – that they represent. This happens every four years. Other officials are voted on at other times and every time it is your responsibility, our responsibility, to cast our vote...plant a seed for our future.

To vote is more than a right; as I said, it's your responsibility. Before you vote, might I suggest you quit watching the commercials, the debates, the news reports and you get into your computer. Research the platform each candidate is representing and then as a believer follow God's Word as to which party to cast your vote for. When you vote you are planting a seed for this great nation – one nation under God – so be wise. Read and discover the platform that follows the Word. When our great nation was first formed, it was by men who believed in God. The families moved to this country for the freedom of religion...the freedom to choose...the freedom to speak. God loves this nation. It was built on His Word.

Trust Him, not man. God is still in control. He used David, an adulterer, a killer, to rule His nation. He used Noah, a drunk and a man who had sex with his daughters, to start the world over. He used Rahab, a harlot, to save His people. He used people we would have never chosen to lead a country. God sees the big picture and will continue to care for this great country as long as we keep putting Him first and trusting Him. Even when things don't seem to be lining up around you, know that God's got your back as long as you stay with Him.

God is working on the future; we just need to continue to live daily for Him.

Trust Him. Go vote every time the opportunity arises. Plant your seed with a vote for God. Remember, it's your responsibility.

Have a blessed day!

November 2 **Do What Is Right!**

Galatians 6:8 & Proverbs 3:5-6 – *Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.*

I've been watching Brother Copeland's show Believer's Voice of Victory. This week and next week Brother Copeland's guests are Bishop Keith Barber and David Barton as well as Pastor George Pearsons. They are focused on reminding us to follow God's leading when we cast our vote in this and every election in the United States. We the people have that freedom. Not only is it our right, it is our responsibility.

They said some powerful things that I feel led to share. When we plant our seed with our vote we are looking out for our future as a nation. If we follow God's lead when it comes time to vote, He will take care of the person chosen to lead our country. In the beginning of time the entire Word of God was based on this: plant the seed, time passes during the growing and nurturing time, and then comes the harvest. Genesis 8:22 *"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."* It's in His hands—let's leave it there!

If we listen to the slogans, protests, fights between the politicians, if we let our flesh sow the seed when we vote, we will reap destruction from the flesh. If we trust the Lord with all our heart and lean on Him not on our own understanding, He will make paths for us to follow and they will be straight.

This is what Jesus did; He let God lead Him. And that's why Jesus never missed it. So let the Lord lead you to plant the seed He tells you to and you won't miss it either. You will be blessed.

3 John 1:2 tells us we'll have good health and our souls will prosper. Stay

following Him, His Word. Be blessed.

The duty is ours, but the results are God's. One of the people Barton was talking about (John Quincy Adams, I believe) when asked why he kept trying to free the slaves, Adams said he didn't do it for how it turns out...he did it because **it was the right thing to do**. And we know how it turned out...the right way. Freedom for all!

So let the Lord lead you. God is for life. Let the Spirit of the Lord lead you in your voting every time, and have a blessed day today.

November 3 **Purity Is From Within**

Mark 7:1-8 & 14-15 – The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of His disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles). So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus. “Why don't Your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?” He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: ‘these people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship Me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.” Again Jesus called the crowd to Him and said, “Listen to Me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

So many of us worry about what others see us do.

Are we following tradition, trying to look good to the world around us? We can show perfection, but does it mean your heart is perfect with Christ?

It's what is on the inside that counts. If you love the Lord and put Him first in your life, then what you do should come naturally to you. It should be what the heart is filled with that is pouring out of your actions.

If you are putting on a mask for the world to see, it doesn't matter if you fool them. God knows your heart. So if you want to be right with Him, fix the inside—your heart—by renewing your mind with His Word.

We'll make mistakes, but if the heart is trying to do what it believes is the best (what Jesus would do), then the LORD will see that your heart is in the right place.

Don't do something because it's a tradition...do it because it's right. Love the LORD with all your heart and soul, and love others as you love yourself.

Have a great day!

November 4 **Overcome Your Unbelief**

Mark 9:23-24 – *“If You can?”* said Jesus. *“Everything is possible for one who believes.”* Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, *“I do believe; Help me overcome my unbelief!”*

Have you ever found yourself saying the same thing? Help me overcome my unbelief!

I do believe in You Lord. I know You love me. But are You really saying You will do this for me? You love me that much? I'm sorry Lord. I can believe it for others, but not for me. Who am I that You would love me that much?

I think for a lot of people that is the first thing we all need to understand...we need to believe God loves each of us. God loves us more than we can fathom. He loves us so much, that when He sent His Son to suffer on the cross, it was for you and me. And He did it so we don't have to suffer or pay the price for our sins. Jesus did it for each of us! We need only believe and accept.

We all know that when we believers get to heaven it will be a glorious thing, a glorious life, a glorious sight. Everything will be perfect!

Guess what? God wants you to find a piece of heaven right here on earth. I hear so many people say they are living in hell right now on earth. Well guess what? This isn't hell. It will be so much worse.

So those of you who think they are living in hell now will have a rude

awakening when their earthly body dies. But you believers don't have to live in such a hellish place here on earth while you are still in that earthly body. God wants you to have an abundant life while you are here.

Guess what you have to do for that life to be yours? **You have to believe the Word is for you, because He loves you that much.** So start asking God to help you overcome that unbelief you have.

Read the Word. Find His promises to you the believer. AND BELIEVE!!

Have a great day!!

November 5 **His Will**

Mark 14:36 – *"Abba, Father," He said, "everything is possible for You. Take this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what You will."*

In the above verse this is Jesus talking to God. Jesus was about to give up His life for us on the cross...suffering for us. Remember, He was both God and human. He didn't want this for Himself. But because He loves us and He knew His Father knows what is best for all, He said not My will, but Your will.

If we'd keep that thought in mind as we walk through our day, maybe we wouldn't be so quick to ask God to change the other person...or move them or yourself...or ask 'why me'? If we were more God-minded than me-minded, we might find life more at peace.

Remember God wants what is best for all of us, so take time to say to God each day – Not my will, God, but Yours. In Jesus' Name!!

I promise if you'd do that, you'd find your days running more peacefully. I'm not saying trouble won't come your way, because the Word tells us tomorrow has enough trouble of its own. But if we'd be more Godly minded, asking Him to lead us in His Will each day, we'd find Him walking us through whatever trouble comes our way in an easier, more peaceful, fashion.

He knows the right way. We're only guessing when we try to do it our way.

God bless you today as you walk in His will for you!

November 6

The Power Of Belief

Mark 16:15-18 – He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

God tells us what He wants us to do. He wants us to go tell the world about the Good News. He may not tell us how right away, but know that He gives you the power to do it. Ask Him. Listen to Him. Wait on Him. And then follow His plan.

The part of the world He puts you in is where you are to be going and telling the Good News. Sometimes He'll even move you miles from home. Great! Follow His lead and then share the Good News there too.

Where He sends you, He will keep you safe in His arms. How He plans for you to share Him to others, He will supply your needs and/or ability. As long as you are leaning on Him, trusting Him to show you the way, He will give you that ability, but you must use your power of belief to believe in His Word and follow it.

Go; be a blessing to the people God puts in your path today. I dare you!

Have a blessed day!!

November 7

His Word Is Truth

Luke 1:37 –For no Word from God will ever fail.”

I start my day out every day with God's Word. Since I made a conscious decision to do this, my life has gotten better every day. Why? Because I know His Word is truth. I know everything He tells me through His Word is truth and I can rest on it...on Him. As I live my day believing Him, His Word, His love, my life is resting in His peace.

In His Word He gives His believers promises. I read the number of promises in the Word the other day. It blew my mind. I said when I finish writing this devotional; I want to go find all 7000+ of the promises and write them down. I also want to claim every one of them for my family and me. There are promises of success, confidence, health, prosperity, strength, wisdom, love, and more. I don't want to miss out on any. And any He can use me for to share with others, or give to others, I want to do that as well.

God has great plans for each and every one of us, we need only to read His Word, believe it, stand on it, and then wait. His Word never fails. If it doesn't happen as He says it will, it's because we aren't doing our part. So don't give up. Look at yourself and what you've done or not done. Get in line with the Word.

It is the truth, and it never fails!!

Trust the Word today and every day. Start your day with it. End your day with it—Or sometime in between—Whatever works for you. He is there waiting on you to be with Him.

He's already there, just open up the flow. Talk to Him. Trust Him. Lean on Him.

Have a blessed day!

November 8 **We All Must Grow**

Luke 2:52 – And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

That verse told us Jesus had to grow in wisdom and stature. He didn't start out from an infant being wise. He had to grow in His wisdom.

How did He do it?

He did it by staying close to the Father. He didn't have a Bible in ten different versions making it easy for Him to understand and grow. He had to go where the scrolls were. But He didn't stop there. He hungered for more and He went after it, making a more in-depth connection with God.

He talked with God through prayer. He made a point daily...sometimes more than once a day...to separate Himself from others and get alone with God. He had daily conversations with God.

While He grew in wisdom and stature, He found more favor with God.

The Good News tells us we can have that same connection with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

We must read the Word. Make it personal; believing it is God talking to us. Spend quiet times with Him in prayer and conversation.

God is waiting to hear from you. He wants to talk to you. Make Him welcome in your life.

Grow in His Word and in your relationship with God...and grow in favor with Him as well.

God bless you. Have a great day!

November 9

It Is Written

Luke 4:4,8, 12 – *Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.’” Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

Satan was trying to tempt Jesus after He'd been in the wilderness for forty days. Jesus was hungry, so what did Satan do? He questioned Jesus' authority as the Son of God. Then he led Jesus up high and tempted Him with his and his evil cohorts authority and splendor if Jesus would worship Satan. Lastly, he led Jesus to the highest point of the temple in Jerusalem and told him to jump because God can send angels to keep Him safe.

Jesus knew He had to stand strong on God's Word, trusting it and God, so what did He do? He fought the devil with God's Word.

Do you want victory in your life? Do you have a mountain in your life that you just can't seem to cross or overcome? First off, as a believer you **must**

believe God wants what is best for you. In His Word He tells you He will supply all your needs. He also tells you that you can have your heart's desires. Another thing He tells you is that the blood of Jesus has healed you.

Is all of that true? Yes it is. The Word says so, and it is truth.

But in order for the Word to work in your life you must believe and receive it...and stand on it trusting God. Fight Satan with God's Word. If you have a sickness or an ache or pain that keeps tormenting you, believe what the Word tells you as a believer. Speak out loud **-I am healed by His stripes**. And say that...**Satan is a liar**. He is the one tormenting you trying to make you doubt God's Word.

Ask for healing, knowing that it is what God wants for His people and then believe. State out loud that you're healed by the blood of Jesus. And if and when the pain flairs up after you've accepted that God's Word is truth, say again, as often as needed "Satan, you're a liar. I am healed by Jesus' blood. And keep thanking God! The physical will catch up to the spiritual any day. Thank You, Jesus for shedding Your blood for me and taking the torment that was meant for me." Keep believing you're healed and don't give up. Put your trust in God.

Stand on the Word. **It is written** the Word is strong medicine and it always works when you keep your faith in Him.

Have a great day!

November 10 **Share The Good News!**

Luke 4:18-19 – "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Jesus was in His hometown, sharing the Good News to the people. He let them know the Spirit of the Lord was on Him. God anointed Him to go around sharing the message with the poor, proclaiming freedom for the prisoners, recovering sight for the blind, and setting the oppressed free while proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

What God sent Jesus to do, He also sent us to do. We are to share the Good News of God's love and His plan to bless all who believe. This is freedom to us all. On top of the freedom, we are to receive the Lord's favor. It's there for each and every one of us who choose to accept Jesus as our Savior. Praise God!

Sure His Word also tells us there will be troubles in our lives. It won't be perfect, with smooth sailing all the time...but He promises He will be with us through it all and bring us to the other side better off than we were before.

Fill your heart to overflow with the **Good News in His Word** and share it with everyone God leads you to. Go be a blessing today, and be blessed as well.

I love you and hope you know He loves you even more. What a good God we have! Have a blessed day!

November 11 **How Are We To Live Our Lives?**

Ephesians 5:1-4 – Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

God tells us plainly what He expects of His people through this Scripture.

First you have to know you are one of God's children, who is dearly loved and then you are to walk in this love. Jesus Christ walked in God's love, sharing it with others. We are to do the same thing.

Jesus gave Himself up for us. Am I telling you that God expects us to die for others? I'm pretty sure the answer to that for most of us is no. Christ Jesus did that. God wants us to die to our fleshly desires. Die to putting our needs before others. He wants us to be a blessing to those around us.

Can we do that if we're in the middle of a gossip session with coworkers talking about the boss or another worker?

No. Or what about hanging out with fellow church members and talking about the Pastor or someone on staff...or even a member?

Is that what we are supposed to do? NO!

Or what about when we are alone and no one is watching, is it okay to watch a movie that uses the Lord's name in vain and shows a lot of immoral sex? NO. You may not be hurting anyone else there, but you are surely hurting yourself. Remember what you pour into yourself will come out. So be careful what you fill yourself with. If you're not sure if what you're watching is on the edge of going against His teaching but comes close, ask God. He'll let you know—but then listen to Him if He says no. You'll hear it or feel His answer in your heart. If He leaves you with peace over it, then there is no problem.

The main thing is to keep yourself close in your relationship with Him and let Him lead you and guide you daily. Live a life worthy of Him.

Verse 8 says, *'for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.'*

Let your light shine. Have a great day!

November 12 **Why Me?**

John 1:16 *From His abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. (NLT)*

Do I deserve these blessings? No. Then why does God pour out His blessings on me?

He does it because He loves me. He pours out His grace on me. His grace is giving me something I don't deserve...but it's always a good thing.

He loves each and every one of us, and God wants to pour out His grace on every one of His believers through His blessings. That's right. Not one blessing, but many. And He is saying this to you as well as me. Sometimes we don't even see how blessed we are. But if you don't want them to stop, pay attention. Notice His goodness around you and thank Him for it. Be

aware.

He loves you and wants to bless you, so stay close to Him while He stays close to you. Receive His blessings and share His love with others, so that they too can be a part of receiving His graciousness, His goodness, His blessings.

“Why me?” you ask. Why not you!! He wants to bless everyone, and if you are a believer He will bless you. Expect it.

He loves us all, so open your arms to receive a downpour of His goodness and receive it joyfully.

Have a great day!

November 13 **He Has A Purpose For Each Of Us**

Psalm 138:8 – The Lord will vindicate me; Your love, Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works of Your hands.

God has a plan for each and every one of us. As we’ve read before, His plans are to prosper us not to harm us. (Jeremiah 29:11) You need to know this.

You also need to know that whatever He has planned for you to do, He will supply you with the resources and opportunity to do it.

If we miss out on it the first time around do you think He’ll give us another opportunity to fulfill His purpose for us? I do believe He will.

I can only go by my experiences and ones others have shared with me. Not everybody gets it right the first time.

Look at Jonah. He not only didn’t do it the first time, but he ran in the opposite direction. So he was truly trying to not do what God called him to do.

We sometimes do the same thing, run in the opposite direction. Sometimes we miss it because we aren’t listening to God. And sometimes we miss it because we don’t think we are good enough—like Moses.

What I'm trying to tell you is you won't be the first one who didn't do what God planned for you the first time around. Know God doesn't give up on us...it's us who give up on Him.

Don't be the one who gives up. Put your trust in the Lord and follow His lead. Do His will for you each and everyday. He wants what is best for you. Trust Him!

Have a fulfilling day!

November 14

A Strong Prayer

Colossians 1:9-14 – For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the kingdom of light. For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

This is a prayer Paul prayed to the holy people in Colossae. I came upon this prayer a couple of years ago and felt led to pray it over my family daily. As time passed God has had me add my nieces and nephews as well as my sisters-in-law to this prayer. I found in my own life how important it was for me to know God's will for my life. Of course it grows more as time moves on, but when He first opened my eyes to His plan for me, it implanted a goal in my heart. My goal walking in line with God's plan for me makes it stronger than just a dream; 1st because I know His plan for me will be fulfilled. 2nd because I know He only wants the best for me, so I know His plan is the best for me. This gives me a peace and a joy that I can't explain... but as well it gives me a satisfaction in my heart. I know that I'm living the life God has for me. I want that same thing for my kids, kids-in-law, grandkids, and the rest of my family. When they have that same joy and peace in their lives, (and they will) I know they'll be fulfilled.

You can have it too for your life as well as your family. Just start praying it

daily, and then turn the prayer into a prayer of thanksgiving for these things, because when you ask you must believe and receive. So now when I pray this prayer it's a little different because I'm saying, "Thank You, God for filling me and my family with the knowledge of Your Will. Thank you for bearing fruit in every good work as we are growing in the knowledge of You, being strengthened with all power according to Your glorious might. And Thank You for the endurance and patience that you have filled us with." And then I close letting Him know I'm looking forward to all of us sharing with everyone the inheritance with His Holy people in the kingdom of light.

I look forward to every day He allows me on this earth...and even more for the eternity I'll spend in heaven with my family and friends who have gone before as well as those who will be joining in soon...and especially with God and Jesus Christ, His Son. Praise God! I can't wait!

Have a great day!

November 15 **Live Your Life To Please God**

1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 – *And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.*

This is Paul, Silas, and Timothy talking to the believers in Macedonia, but it's God encouraging His people through these brothers in Christ. So this message is to us as well.

It's telling us to love the family of God even more than we already do, and while we are doing this, we are to lead a quiet life, not sticking our nose in other people's business. Are they telling believers not to pray for others? No. We are not to butt-in on other people's lives, but we can pray for their guidance when we see things aren't going right for them.

If they ask for your opinion, make sure you dish it out with love. In the meantime, if you see you brother or sister in Christ having a problem, lift them up in prayer. If you know what it is, you can share it in your prayer with the Lord. He already knows. BUT don't share it with your friends and

neighbors. It's none of their business or yours. Stay out of it.

While you are loving your family in Christ and praying for those who need prayers, you should also show respect to those who don't know the Lord as their Savior. Walk in Christ's love for them. Show your love for the Lord to them by leaning on Him and trusting Him. Share your faith in Him with them when God opens the door. Be a blessing to others around you so that they will want what you have—the peace and love of the Lord that's living in you.

When you are walking in love for others, you are pleasing the Lord. And as you are pleasing the Lord you are sowing seeds for others to come and know Him as their Savior. You don't have to be a preacher to bring the message of God's love for them, just live in the love He has for you and they too will want what you have.

Please God today. Walk in love. Have a great day!

November 16 **Listen To The Holy Spirit**

2 Timothy 1:9-10, 14 – He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

We have been called to live a holy life. He didn't leave us on our own to do this either, praise God! He left the Holy Spirit to live in us, helping us to make holy choices in our lives.

It sounds easy and it should be, but we tend to let our fleshly self have its way a lot. Why do we do this? Because we tend to live in our natural self more than listening to the Holy Spirit inside of us.

We don't have to. It really is easy not to when we stay focused on Christ Jesus and what He has done for us. To do that, we need to stay in the Word daily. Keep up a conversation with Christ.

He wants to be number one in our life. When we let Him, the rest comes easy.

You'll find the Holy Spirit that's living inside of you (believers) leading you to make the right choices.

Of course, God gave us free will so we can still make the wrong choice. But if we are giving the Lord first place in our lives and heart, I don't believe we'll make too many wrong choices. We'll find we'll want to please the Lord. When we do, we'll find ourselves living the holy life we were called to live.

Listen to the Holy Spirit and make the right choices throughout your day. Have a blessed one!

November 17 **Give Thanks**

Psalm 107:1 – *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever.*

I believe these are three of the most important things to remember throughout your days as you walk through various circumstances.

Remember to **give thanks** to the LORD. He is the One who can help you through anything and everything. Some people believe God only wants to help with the big things. That's not true. He loves helping with the big things, and He's willing and waiting to help with the little things. Talk to Him and then listen. Most of all be thankful to Him for all the good things that happen to you because they came from Him. Be thankful through the other things, rough times, bad times, sad times, for He will bring you through those times and make good from them for you, if you love Him. (That's based on another scripture with promise in His Word...Romans 8:28).

Another thing to remember is **He is always good**. People have a bad habit of blaming Him when bad things come their way. God is good. God is love. He does not send bad things to anyone. We have free choice and sometimes our choices (or sometimes someone else's choice) bring bad things our way and He allows it. Keep your faith and trust in Him **knowing He is good** and He will get you through.

Last but not least – **His love endures forever**. Forever is a mighty long time. He won't give up on you, so don't give up on Him. Know He is there for you through everything—big and small.

Give thanks to Him and enjoy your day.

November 18 **Make For A Glorious Day**

Ephesians 5:19-20 - ...speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Each day is a new day. Every morning when you wake up, God has given you a clean slate to start your day. Do you know how to make the most of it?

You do it, by putting Him first. Thank Him for another day. Ask Him to lead you through it. He tells you in Ephesians to speak to others with psalms and hymns and songs from the Spirit. What is that? That is speaking with joy and expectations. Believe God has His best plans for you and others around you. We only need to believe and rest in Him letting His Will be done in each of us every day.

And here again we are told to give thanks to God. What do we give thanks to Him for? For everything! And we do it in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As we talk to God, in the name of His Son Jesus, He is listening to us. He loves us as much as He loves His Son, so stay connected to the Lord. I promise you every day that you do this, you will have a glorious day.

God loves you and wants to bless you. Keep Him first and give thanks to Him in everything and He will bless you!

Have a great day!

November 19 **Peace Throughout Your Day**

Colossians 3:15-17 – Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Here in America, we celebrate Thanksgiving in November being thankful we are an American. America is the land of the free and the home of the brave. People from all over the world come here to have the freedom we who are born here are blessed with. With open arms we welcome others—that is what the Statue of Liberty represents. (Some Americans have lost sight of that, but we are praying for them.) Those who come to gain this freedom must follow the laws of our country to become a legal adopted American.

The good news is people everywhere all around the world can find peace throughout their day in their own country. How? By inviting Christ into their hearts and then letting Him lead. Not all Americans practice walking in the peace of the LORD. Unfortunately things that come easy seem to be what people take for granted. Sad to say they aren't truly walking in peace throughout their day.

To walk in peace we must let Christ rule in our hearts. To walk in peace we must read the Word and let it lead us in our daily walk, then being a member of the body of Christ we too can walk in the peace we are called to.

Be thankful. Let the message of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ fill you to overflow every minute of every day. As you do this you'll be sharing His love and goodness with others—and that is what we are all called to do.

Share your peace today with others around you. Enjoy your day!

November 20 **Strengthen Your Faith**

Romans 1:17 – For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

When you speak your faith out loud, you are increasing your faith. It strengthens your heart as you are standing on God's Word.

Throughout the Word believers speak their faith out loud and do mighty things through their faith. The book of Psalm is filled with confessions of faith. My most favorite as I've said before is Psalm 91. I proudly say, “He is my refuge. He is my fortress. In God I trust and rest in Him.”

You can do the same thing. God tells us in His Word how much He loves us. He tells us we are more than conquerors...and so much more. Pick these out and strengthen your faith in Him as well as building yourself up in Him. His blood runs through your veins. Accept His truth. Speak affirmations daily over yourself using His Word to back up what you say. I dare you. I guarantee you will become stronger every day.

I bought Joel Osteen's book, *I Declare: 31 Promises to Speak Over Your Life*, in December of the year it was released, 2007, I believe. Over the years I've been faithfully speaking those declarations over my life. I took time to find Scripture to match up with every promise I'm declaring. Some days I declare each one over me and other days I read the one that matches up to the date of that day. Also know that I personalized each one to fit my life (even though Joel had written them to be read as a personal declaration to begin with). Since I started speaking those affirmations over my life followed with the Scriptures that back it up, I've had 10 of my books published including a book of collections of Deborah Lynne novels. It was released in 2015 nationwide, *Bayou Secrets*. God has also encouraged me to write this non-fiction book, a daily devotional encouraging others as He has encouraged me daily since the passing of my husband Scott in March of 2014. This book released in 2017. He's also given me the idea for a YA series. BK1 will be released in 2017 along with BK4 of the mystery series that started back in 2010. God is good. The LORD is fulfilling my affirmations. Praise God! It is all HIM!!

His Word reveals His love for us. His Word is always true, and if we stand in faith we will receive His promises. Strengthen your faith by speaking His Word over yourself daily.

Love Him. Trust Him. And lean on Him. Have a blessed day every day!

November 21 **Don't Choke Out The Word**

Mark 4:18-19 – *Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the Word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the Word, making it unfruitful.*

Have you ever wondered why your life doesn't seem to be as fulfilling or as peaceful as it had been years ago? Maybe you too have allowed the worries of your world to come in and interfere with your life.

I can't say we all do it, but I can say I've done it before. Praise God, He didn't turn His back on me when I was letting my life bombard me. He kept whispering in my ear, I'm here for you. Talk to Me. Listen to Me. Of course I ignored Him for a while. Instead of trusting Him to fix things and lead me the right way, I started leaning on self. In fact, I remember I was thinking, "What about me?" I put me ahead of my connection with God.

Thank God I learned or was reminded, the first thing I should do in every problem that comes my way is give it to God. Ask for His wisdom in doing what He would have me do.

His Word, His wisdom has the answer to every problem that can come your way. Start reading it daily. As you do that, listen to what He tells you—through His Word, through whispers in your heart, through dreams, and sometimes through other people (as long as what they are saying is Bible based). Then be obedient and act on what He tells you to do.

You'll see your life turn back around. Suddenly that seed in you will be growing fruit, growing the Kingdom of God.

When you reconnect with The Lord and let Him lead you daily, you'll find your life more at peace, more enjoyable. And you will be a blessing to others around you as well as to yourself.

Don't let the worries of the world choke out the goodness of God in you. Let Him fill you to overflow and have a great day.

November 22

Get Serious With Your Giving

2 Corinthians 8:7 – But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

Has giving become a habit to you? Don't get me wrong. It's a great habit to have, but you need to be aware when you are giving to God in the name of the Lord, be sure and let your heart be in it all the way.

If you are a giver God will bless you. He dares people to test Him in this, in His Word. And know you can't out give God. But have you ever come to a

point in your life where you know you give above and beyond what God has asked of you but you don't feel like you are seeing that abundance flow out over you?

Maybe it's because giving has become as natural as breathing. By that I mean you do it without thinking about it. That's good in a great way, cause God does bless the giver even when they are doing it out of a habit that started from obedience. The thing that you're missing out on is the **abundance** of His goodness coming back on you. Sure, He is still supplying all your needs, but if you'd give with your whole heart at the time, He will bless you as well as the need you are blessing, and He will do it in abundance. I believe the verse above is telling us to excel in this **grace** of giving.

When this verse came to my attention, I realized He was talking to me. It was a 40-year plus habit (because I love God and wanted to be obedient) to give 10% of all that comes into my home back to Him through the church. And it became a habit to give to other places that God led me to over the past ten years and more as they came into my life. But over a time I just did it. I no longer prayed asking God to bless whomever I was giving it to, nor did I ask Him to stretch it farther than it would normally go, nor did I thank Him for blessing me to be that blessing. Again, God has still been blessing me over the years, but seeing this Scripture helped me to see He wanted to bless me in a bigger way. I needed only to be aware of my heart when I gave this money away...asking Him to turn that small amount into a large amount to bless more than I possibly could on my own...like He did with the fish and bread.

Be aware of what you are doing even when it is something good that you are doing out of habit for Him. Let the joy in your heart overflow. Be a blessing to others and let God bless you!

Have a great day.

November 23 **Grow Your Fellowship With God**

Philippians 3:10 – I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death,...

Did you know God's Word tells us we have the same power He gave to Jesus? We do! God said He gives to us the same power He gave His Son. The

problem is we don't use it. Truth be told, I don't think we believe it.

I was reading *Faith to Faith*, the daily devotional by Brother Copeland and his wife, Gloria. I've been reading it since my daughter gave it to me as a Christmas gift in 2006. The amazing thing is I'm still getting more out of it every year. It's 2016 as I'm writing this devotional...ten years later.

On one of the days Brother Copeland talks about the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment. That is my most favorite story; because it taught me several years ago I have to **believe He will heal me** in order to receive my healing. The thing is, God wants to heal everyone. We just don't believe that includes us. Most of us always seem to have enough faith to believe for other people's healing.

As my family and friends can attest to, I do. And I know the blood of Jesus heals me through my faith. Sometimes it takes days or months for the physical healing to catch up to the spiritual healing. But I keep believing and praising God through it.

Praise God, I learned that years ago. This time God opened my eyes to more and I want to share it with you.

The latest thing that spoke to me in my 10 years of reading the devotional of the woman touching His garment was how Brother Copeland went on to tell us how God let Kenneth know when he was reading this story he should put himself in the place of Jesus; Let the robe be on his back that the sick one is reaching out for to be healed. And Brother Copeland reminded us that is how all believers should think of themselves. **We are to be the witness of Jesus Christ.** Let the anointing flow through us to help others. We should grow our fellowship with God through Christ and use the power He has anointed us with to heal and bless others as Jesus did in the days He walked the earth.

Don't get me wrong, neither Brother Copeland or myself are saying that we the believers are the ones doing the healing. God is still the one doing the healing through Jesus' sacrifice and the blood of Jesus Christ that flows in us as we keep our faith in Him. Go be a blessing today.

November 24 **A Mature Christian**

1 Corinthians 13:11 – *When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like*

a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

Does being a mature Christian mean you are an old person? No. To be a mature Christian you need to grow in the Word (like I talked about yesterday). You grow in your fellowship with God by spending time with Him...in the Word, in prayer, in hearing messages, in sharing Him with others around you.

A mature Christian is one who learns to hear His Word and walk in it daily. When reading the Bible and studying it, you grow in knowing His will for you, and then going out and walking and doing His will no matter how difficult it might be.

The Holy Spirit is there for you. He will help you walk through whatever God calls you to do. You must believe and trust in Him. We as believers must do what Jesus did and what the Holy Spirit does. They do and say what The Father says and does. We must do the same.

When we do this, we will no longer be led by our emotions, but will be led by the Spirit that lives in us.

Have a happy Thanksgiving Day! ... On whichever date it falls on in the year you are reading this devotional.

God bless you!

November 25

Words To Help Us Live A Better Life

*Titus 1:7-9 – Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, **he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.** He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

First let me say, I see Paul wrote these words to the people who would be leaders, elders of the church. I believe as one called to share the Good News with others it was written to us as well.

So what is it telling me? First it says I/we must be blameless. Well I admit I'm not perfect and I will mess up...I did just yesterday. It's only 8 in the morning while I'm writing so I haven't really had time yet today to mess up too badly. I'm human, but praise God I am covered by the blood of Jesus!! That means God sees me blameless through the blood of Christ Jesus! As I'm covered in His blood, I still should try every day to not be quick-tempered, to not give in to drunkenness, to not be violent, and to not pursue dishonest gain.

Now that I've highlighted the things not to do, let me emphasize the things we are to do. We are to be hospitable. I believe this not only means to be welcoming to people in my home helping them feel comfortable to be themselves, I believe it means when I greet someone on the street, I'm not to judge them. I'm to love them through Christ and let Him be their judge. I'm to love what is good. This tells me to walk in goodness, be a reflection of the goodness of Jesus Christ. I'm to be self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. It sounds very hard but I know all things are possible through Christ my Lord. And I know that all He tells me through Paul's message, He is telling you.

He loves us and wants us to be the best we can be so that we can be that witness to others, so we can grow the kingdom of God. We may not be preachers who stand up at the pulpit every Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday preaching the Word, but as believers we are preaching the Word **daily** in our actions. So keep this in your heart and mind as you walk through your day.

God bless you and have a great day!

November 26

Devote Yourself To Doing Good

Titus 3:4-7 – But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, Whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

When reading the above Scripture it reminded me I am on this earth to do good while representing Jesus, my Lord and Savior. I didn't earn His favor

and love. He gave it to me freely as a gift, and He's done it for everyone who has accepted Him as his or her Savior.

The Holy Spirit came to live in us to help guide us in doing good. I'm so thankful for that. In the years He's been in me, a lot of good seems to come natural to me. Of course I know it's Him, not me. But unfortunately I still sometimes let my flesh take first response and that is usually the wrong response. Needless to say, I usually know within minutes that I've made the wrong choice. Thank God, He loves me enough to help me turn things back the way He intended them to go down. His way is always the best way for everyone!

I know my hope is in Him. As long as I keep my heart and mind and spirit letting Him lead, I walk in the peace He fills me with. When I let my flesh take control, even for a short time, I feel the turmoil that inflicts havoc on my insides. As I continue to grow in my faith and keep putting His Word in my heart and mind those times are less and less. I am so blessed and thankful God has allowed the Holy Spirit to stay inside me, encouraging me to make better choices, and helping me to live in the hope He has given me.

Keep your heart set on doing good for the Lord and He will strengthen you daily. Have a great day!

November 27 **There's Enough To Go Around**

Philemon 1:6 – I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ.

The above Scripture is found in a letter Paul and Timothy wrote to the church of fellow believers in Philemon. The good news is it is true for us as well. God planned to share every good thing with us through Christ.

I believe the closer we come to the Lord through His Word the more effective His goodness works through us. He wants to bless us all. If you are a parent, you can understand this. You want the best for your kids. Not all of us are in the position to be able to give the best all the time, so we do the best we can.

The great thing is God is always in a position to bless us in a huge way. The only thing that slows down some of our blessings or stops them from coming

altogether is us not staying closely connected to His Will for us.

Sometimes it's through wrong choices in life. Sometimes it's through someone else making the wrong choice. And even other times it's Satan sticking his nose in our life and trying to fill us with doubt and/or distrust for God.

Remember, he's like a roaring lion trying to destroy everything in his path. Yes, for sure, he cannot destroy your salvation, but he can keep you from bringing others to the Lord. He can keep you from living your life here on earth to the best God wants to give you.

BUT remember. Christ has already defeated him. When you stand strong with Christ you can defeat Satan as well.

Take hold of the good God wants to send your way. Open your arms and let it fall into your life.

Have a very blessed day!

November 28 **God Spoke An Oath**

Hebrews 7:20-22, 7:25-26 – And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, but He became a Priest with an oath when God said to Him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind: ‘You are a Priest forever.’” Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant. Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them. Such a High priest truly meets our need—One who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.

The law made nothing perfect, but a better hope was given to us through Jesus Christ. God spoke an oath over Jesus, making Him a Priest that would be a Priest forever. This gave those of us who believe a guarantee of our hope in eternity. We have the best yet to come. Those of our loved ones who have gone before us, those who believed in Jesus as their Savior, we rest in the hope knowing their spirits are in heaven waiting for the day we all get to join them...all of us with our renewed body, our eternal body. Not only will we get to see them again for eternity, but we get to be with our Savior and our God.

I'm glad God loved us enough to speak the oath over Jesus, making a new covenant for us to be able to live eternally in Heaven on the new earth. Thank You Lord for loving us that much.

Keep your hope in Him and He will not let you down.

Have a great day!

November 29 **Grace, Mercy And Peace Be With Us**

*2 John 1:3, 5-6 – Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that **you walk in love.***

First we must know, what is the Biblical meaning of grace and mercy? **Grace and mercy, both are the goodness and/or favor God shows us even though we don't deserve it.**

He shows a great example of this in Luke 15:11-31, the story of the lost son who parties away all the money he received in advance for his inheritance and yet when he came back home his father welcomed him with open arms. In Romans 5 the Word speaks of His grace being what God is giving us through Jesus...because Jesus took on all the pain and suffering for us on the cross, died and paid for our sins, and then rose again to a resurrected life. Jesus was sin free yet He paid for our sins—past, present, and future. He did this for us so that we don't have to. That is grace and mercy being poured out in abundance over us. Praise God!

How do we receive it? We do it by receiving His Truth, which is the Word, by believing it and asking Jesus into our hearts. Again, we aren't paying for any sin we've committed. He did that. We are only accepting that as truth and then asking Him into our hearts to lead and direct us on the path of love. When we come to Him and give Him all our troubles, all our burdens, He will take them on and give you rest (Matthew 11:28-30). Giving us rest is giving us peace. When we let Him take care of things we have peace.

Our peace is disturbed every time we think we need to help Him. If The Lord wants you to do something special He will let you know. While you are resting in Him, stay in His Word. Pray prayers of thanksgiving for what He is doing in your life. And try to help someone else – someone God puts in your life for you to be a blessing for. You show them the love of God and you will feel the abundance of peace surround you.

So what I'm trying to say is when you walk in the grace and mercy God gives you, His peace will surround you. You'll feel better, stronger, and feel at rest. Let the joy of the Lord be with you every day. Show love to others as He commands. Walk in love.

Have a peaceful day!

November 30 **Remember Always**

Colossians 4:2, 5-6 – Devote yourselves to prayer; being watchful and thankful. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

I believe most everyone reading this devotional is a Christian. What does that mean? That means you are Christ like.

The Scripture above teaches us how to be Christ like as we walk through our day.

First we are to devote ourselves to prayer. Does that mean get down on your knees several times a day or stay on them? No. You can, but you don't have to. You can pray while driving, walking, or sitting. Devoting ourselves to prayer means to talk to God throughout our day.

While you are talking to Him, make sure you are thankful for all the good things He sends your way...or to your family...or to a friend. Be thankful. Tell Him. Praise Him for it!!

The Scripture also tells us to be watchful. What do you think that means?

I believe we are to be watchful for ways to really show Christ's presence in us. As we walk through our day He will have our paths cross other people. Be

observant. Take time to listen to others when they talk to you. Be a blessing to them, but to do this you must really listen. Sometimes it is just someone needing to get a load off his or her chest. Sometimes they may need your prayers. And sometimes they may need your advice. (Unfortunately sometimes I give that too quickly and that was not what they were after. That's why it pays to listen closely first—before opening your mouth.) Listen and be willing to help in the way you can.

God knows what they need and what you can supply. Listen to them and then listen to God's direction to you in what to do.

Remember always; make the most of every opportunity that God sends your way. Let your words be edifying and up-lifting. Remember you are to be Christ like. Jesus always took time to be a blessing to those around Him. We need to do the same.

God bless you. Have a wonderful day!

December 1

A Good Habit Is Making God Your #1 Habit

Matthew 6:33 – *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Making reading God’s Word and talking to Him every day is the best habit you can make for yourself. If you take time to do what Matthew 6:33 tells you to do – seek His kingdom and His righteousness – you will find yourself so blessed.

I try to start my day with Him. It gives me such a peace, and I find I respond better to situations that arise in my day. When I first read this Scripture and I let it soak into my heart, it turned my life around. I started speaking it and took it to heart...literally.

It said seek first, so I told myself I needed to **start** my day with Him. I was fifty-three when this revelation came to me. I’d been saved since I was ten and I talked to God every day of my life through prayer or just talk. I only read the Word when I was at church on Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings, and Sunday nights. As I got older I started reading the Word the Saturday night before going to Sunday school the next morning. This was my life for forty-three years and it was a good life. Don’t get me wrong. Some days weren’t as good as others and some things were downright rotten in my opinion. Of course, I can see now it was because of poor choices and decisions I was making. But most of my life was blessed and more good things happened than bad.

When this Scripture spoke to me, my life was turned around. (Trouble still came at times as God’s Word clearly tells us it will, but He is with me through it all.) I read it, spoke it, prayed it over and over. I realized God was telling me to put Him first every day. Literally. At this time I was working a full time job as well as writing at night, so I didn’t start out big. I started by getting up ten minutes earlier so I could read the Word (a chapter in whatever book I had started – in the beginning of my new walk I started in Matthew). When I finished, I spoke with God asking Him to lead me. The more I did this, the more reading of the Word and different believers devotionals I read. Of course this ten minutes grew into thirty and now more. I saw and felt the difference in my life as I grew in my walk with Him. Most people who know me know that when I was in my forties I became very ‘me’ focused. That was the worst thing I could do. Don’t get me wrong, it’s good to take care of your physical

being, but that's not what I was doing. I just thought what about me? Too much!

As I returned my focus to God by putting Him first, He helped me begin to help others and put their needs before mine. And as He tells us, He supplied all my needs as I thought of others. All those things He has been giving me (as it says in the Scripture) have been physical, spiritual, and emotional needs and **desires**. God is so good. A God habit is the best! Have a great day!

December 2 **Want To Be Rewarded?**

Matthew 6:1 – *“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”*

This Scripture is not telling us to stop giving or doing to others because someone else is around. This world is so full of people that it is almost impossible to do every good deed in hiding. I believe it's telling us not to make a show of what we're doing for someone else. When we do that the focus is no longer on them but on our self. That type of giving is the type where you will not be rewarded from your Father in heaven. Your reward was other people seeing you and *maybe thinking*, awe look at her; she's so nice taking care of that person's need. Yea! You got your reward.

But those who give money or time to someone else who needs it because they want to bless others as God has led them and they don't make a big deal of it, they will be blessed in heaven and most likely here on Earth as well.

And don't you know just being in heaven after our time on earth is over is a great blessing to begin with? Can you imagine how much nicer or bigger the special blessings for us from our Father will be? I can't wait to find out. But in the meantime, I want to follow His lead here on earth and do as He tells me and/or leads me to do.

So don't be afraid to do good to others in front of other people—just don't make it about you. Keep it about them. If the church is taking a special collection, drop in your envelope without looking around thinking, see me guys, I'm giving too! Or if you know your neighbor needs help keeping up their lawn (just an example), go cut it. Sure others will see you, but if you aren't doing it for the good feeling you get when John or Mary sees you, but

you are doing it for **the glory of God to be a blessing to that person in need**, you will be blessed by your Father in heaven.

Go be a blessing, walk in His righteousness and do good for others today.
Have a great day!

December 3 **Think Right And Speak Right**

Proverbs 18:20-21, Romans 8:5 – *From the fruit of their mouth a person's stomach is filled; with the harvest of their lips they are satisfied. The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*

These Scriptures helped me to turn my thinking and speaking around. We don't realize it, but when we think the worst is going to happen...most likely it will. When we speak over and over about the horrible things that are going on in our lives or around us, things don't seem to get any better.

The Word tells us our tongues (that's what speaks the words after you've thought on them) have the power. So why don't we use our words wisely. Do we want bad things to happen? Of course not. We just have a problem of speaking what comes to mind without thinking first.

We need to take a second before saying things. Sad to say, this is something we have to work hard at. I've been living my life trying to guard my tongue for the past several years and **still** sometimes I let my thoughts spill out too quickly. I'm not saying our first reaction to what someone says to us is necessarily wrong, I'm just saying there could be a better way to respond that might avoid some negative recoil down the road.

Jesus went around doing good and speaking good. He brought good things to the people around Him. His mind stayed focused on what His Father would say or do. If we'd let the Holy Spirit in us guide our thoughts and words, we'd find our life more at peace, more enjoyable.

What we think on leads our mouth and our actions. So try thinking on good things, happy thoughts, positive actions, and you'd be amazed how much better your life will become. Joyce Meyer used to say, "Where your mind

goes, your body will follow.” So turn your mind toward positive happy thoughts. Don’t dwell on bad thoughts.

Have a blessed day!

December 4 **Make Right Choices**

Proverbs 2:6, 3:5-6 – For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. Trust in the LORD with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.

Every day we make choices. For the best life we can have, we need to make right choices. How do we do that? We do it by asking God for direction, listen and hear, then act on it.

Sometimes when we do this we think, was that God?

Guess what. If it’s not, He’ll let you know. Move the way you sense He is leading you. He’ll give you the wisdom and understanding you’ll need as long as you are focusing on Him, and if it’s the wrong direction, He’ll slam a door shut, or make things difficult, or fill you with an uneasiness so you’ll know it’s not Him. When it is the right direction, He’ll open one door after the other. You’ll be amazed how easy things become.

If you make a wrong choice and God slams a door, take a breath, step back, and try again in a different direction. The good thing is by going the wrong way first you discovered that wasn’t the way, and you stopped yourself quickly. It’s still best if we can make the right choice first, but the good thing is if we mess up, God gives us more chances.

Keep moving forward. Don’t stay stagnant. God has a plan for each and every one of us, and to fulfill it we must move forward. Keep Him in your thoughts and prayers letting Him lead you.

God bless you. Have a great day.

December 5 **Live From Faith To Faith**

Romans 1:17, 5:1-5 – *For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

All of us living in faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior are living in right standing. We are living in righteousness. We are living in God’s grace. And it tells us plainly that we, the righteous, will live by faith.

We receive God’s grace by **faith**, through our **faith** of trusting in Him. Our **faith** is in Him. His ways are higher than our ways. That is why we need to keep our **faith** in Him moment to moment, through everything, knowing He will see us through. And He will.

Live your life daily from faith to faith trusting Him. When you do, fear, worry, anxiety, and stress can’t get through...you’re trusting in Him. He’s carrying those fears; those worries; those anxieties; that stress for you (if you let Him).

Don’t worry about tomorrow. Know God has plans for you. He will get you where you need to be when you need to be there. His timing is perfect every time. Let the Holy Spirit lead you and He won’t let you down.

Have a great day!

December 6 **It’s That Time Of Year**

Romans 10:12-13 – *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

All holidays are hard on those who don’t have loved ones around them, but they don’t have to be.

Christmas is a cause for celebration. Without Jesus there would be nothing to

celebrate. Unfortunately a lot of people in this world have removed Christ from Christmas. But we who know Him personally need to keep that remembrance alive and well in those around us...especially those who are living through the holidays remembering the loss of their loved one...living lonely.

That was me for two Christmases in a row. The Christmas of 2014 was a very hard time to put a smile on my face for the sake of my grandkids and kids, but I know Christmas is the best reason of celebration for us all. Sad to say for me it only reminded me my husband was no longer here with me. I know for him it was great news for he was in Heaven with our Savior. So with the aid of the Holy Spirit I made it through this sad (yet happy) season. The following year my brother went on to be with the Lord. Again I couldn't bring myself such a reminder and feel in the mood to celebrate the holiday. I was still missing Scott so much. And then, I mean with Richard's passing I was the last Singletary standing (in my immediate family – mother, father, sister, brother...and then me). My husband was gone—now my immediate birth family was all gone. It was hard.

This was another Christmas I had to keep my focus on the reason for the season: Christ! (Which I should do anyway!) 😊

Of course every Christmas all believers should keep their focus on our Savior, but we get caught up in the glitz and joy watching through the eyes of the little ones. That is fun as long as we remember to share the truth with them.

I think what I'm feeling led to share here is be aware of the people around you at work, at the malls, at church, and at home. We as believers have true reason to celebrate Christmas and Christ will see us through, but non-believers only know the colored lights and the multitude of presents as the reason for the season. If they are alone at this time of year the sadness is harder for them to walk through. Be aware. Share the love of the Lord with them. Give them a reason for hope. Teach them the name of Christ and the reason for Christmas so they can call on Him for salvation and focus on the true meaning for celebration. They can come to know the Lord as their personal Savior and they too will find joy in the midst of their loss, giving them reason to keep moving forward.

Have a joyous Christmas season. God bless you through your shopping and parties. Be safe and enjoy. Thank God for the birth of Jesus!!

December 7

Time For The Gold

2 Timothy 2:20-21 – In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

How many of you have people you admire as they do the work God has called them to do? I'm thinking of people like Billy Graham; Beth Moore; Oral Roberts; Kenneth Hagin; Kenneth and Gloria Copeland; Pastor Larry Stockstill; Pastor Joseph Prince; Joyce Meyer; and Joel Osteen...to name a few. So many people are golden vessels in the kingdom of God. There are also many doing work for God but are happy to be a wooden or clay pot.

What makes the ones I mentioned golden or silver pots? Because they set themselves apart from the worldly goings on of this earth, removing corrupting influences from around them. (I'm not saying they are or were perfect, but they are striving or did strive to please God, staying in His Word, separating themselves from the ungodly things of this earth).

We can do this too and become a golden or silver vessel. God gives all of us the opportunity, but it's up to us to make the decision of walking away from things that you know are not useful to the Master. For example, the television series that is such a great show in general but it promotes things God's Word teaches us not to do; things like fornication, sex with same gender, or language that you know Jesus wouldn't be using. I know it sounds like I'm going a little over the top, but I'm not. Think about it. Pray about it. If there is a show you watch you know doesn't uplift your faith, or songs you listen to that say things you know you shouldn't be saying, ask God to help you remove your desire for them. He will help you, but you have to want to clean yourself up.

The good news is for all of us who are saved we can still do work for God as a wooden or clay pot, but wouldn't you rather be silver or golden? It's up to you. Make that quality decision to separate yourself from the ways of the world. God wants to use you in a glorious way too!

Keep your eyes on the prize...the LORD Himself...stay close to Him and

honor Him in all that you do.

Have a great day!

December 8

Teach Your Children Well

Isaiah 54:13 – All your children will be taught by the LORD, and great will be their peace.

Being a parent is one of the hardest things God has called us to be. I mean we all want to be the best parent we can be. We want our kids to love us and think kind thoughts of us, wanting them to think, ‘I’ve got the coolest parents in the world.’ The things that are facing kids each year get harder and harder to overcome. I mean the world only gets rougher as time passes. Think about it, did any kids bring guns to school when you were growing up? Not in my time as a child.

But now as my kids are raising their kids they are faced with this situation. Not only do kids bring guns to school, they use them. Tragedy has run amuck. So what is the answer? We can only do the best we can, but that means different things to different people. The Word tells us what to do. We are to teach our children about God, about His Son Jesus, about the truth of eternity. We do it by opening their minds to it through bringing them to a church that preaches God’s Word; sharing God’s love with them in the home; living our lives as an example; giving them the opportunity to be taught by the LORD.

When they open their hearts to Him, He is quick to come in and great will their peace be. Does that mean they will never have problems? No indeed. It means they will be able to walk through any situation that comes their way as they too lean on the LORD.

So what am I saying? I’m saying it’s great to be your child’s best friend, but it’s more important to teach them well. You’ll find as your child becomes an adult and as they have children of their own, you can be their best friend then. In the meantime, while your children are still young and under your influence share the love of the LORD with them helping them to make wiser choices.

And as you grow older continue to be a good influence for your children and then your grandchildren, and great grandchildren if you are so blessed. Teach them well so that they too will be in peace.

Have a blessed day!

December 9

The Word Of The LORD Is Your Final Authority

Malachi 3:6 – *“I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.*

Security gives you stability. So where do you look for your security? Do you have alarms on your home, at your work place, and in your car? If you do, that’s okay. It may make you feel secure, but people smash and grab out of cars when they see something worth stealing. Burglars still break into homes and places of business (even banks) because they learn how to disarm the alarms. So you or your things are still not truly secure because of the alarm system.

So where is your stability now? A little rocky, I do believe.

There is a way to be secure in and through all things. Put your trust in Him. The LORD never changes. His blessings, His promises, His gifts to you can’t be destroyed by a burglar or a thief. You can stand solid on The LORD when you let Him be your Rock.

An example that comes to mind is in our health. The Word has so many Scriptures letting us know God’s will for us is to have a healthy body. Unfortunately sometimes it’s the choices we make, like eating wrong or not moving about as much as we should, that cause our poor health. Sometimes it’s diseases that infiltrate our bodies that make us sick. And sometimes we are unhealthy due to an accident we were in. Different things cause the health issue but there is one true answer that will never change.

God’s will is for us to be healthy, but we have to be sound in our faith. We can’t be shaky, letting doubts rise up from within. You find the Word that tells you – You are healed by His stripes; and stand on it! His will is for all of us to be healed. So stand firm on it. His flesh was ripped and torn for you. He walked through the fire of hell for you as well. He paid the price...so you don’t have to.

I’m not saying lie to yourself or others when the pains you are going through are hurting your physical body. I’m saying at that time speak out loud saying,

“Satan you are a liar. Thank You Lord for taking this pain away. I am healed by Jesus’ stripes.” This goes for **anything** coming into your life that goes against His Word.

Let the LORD be your final authority on everything in your life. To do that, you need to keep reading and hearing His Word. Let The LORD be your stability, your security. Stay strong on His Word and let Him be your final authority on your life.

God bless you and have a wonderful day!

December 10

Live At Peace!

Romans 12:18 – *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

Is living at peace even possible in this day and age? It doesn’t seem so if you keep listening to or reading the news. The only thing they talk about is the bad going on all around the world—even in our own neck of the woods.

Guess what? If you are a believer you too can live at peace with **everyone**. It’s your choice.

How can I do this, Deborah? You don’t know the people I work with, or my family. They aren’t believers and they are so mean to me!

Guess what, sometimes even we believers do and say hurtful things to others.

You asked me how I could live in peace with everyone? I’m going to tell you. First let me say I try to practice what I say but sometimes I fail miserably too. I do know the more I try to walk in peace, the better I get at it. You will too.

To live in peace with everyone, you have to work on you! Remember, you can’t change anyone but yourself.

Of course, when you change the way you respond to someone, it may take the air out of their argument, but again it may not, so be prepared. Either way you have to deliberately try to stay in peace. Watch out how you respond to troublemakers. Don’t give them an opening to disrupt your peace. When they say or do something to hurt you turn your thoughts to the LORD. Let Him

lead you in your response so that you can keep hold of your peace. Smile and respond in a kind voice. In your mind lift that person up in prayer asking for blessings on them. You'd be amazed...and...you'd be blessing them. Talk about peace. Now you're letting your peace spill over on them. Who knows, you might have planted a seed. Praise God!

I'm not saying this will work every time as far as changing the person who is attacking you and your peace. They may never change, but remember you can't change them. You can only change your reaction to them. If you choose to hold on to your peace you'll say the right thing or nothing at all, however God leads you react. This will keep you in peace no matter what they say or do.

It's your choice. Choose living in peace with everyone. 😊

December 11

Don't Let Satan Rock Your Boat

Matthew 14:30-31 – But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” He said, “why did you doubt?”

Have you ever noticed when things are going so well for you something seems to always come along and rock the boat? (Pun intended). The Scripture above is talking about the time Peter climbed out of the boat when Jesus had walked on water over the rough sea. He was coming near the boat, and then He told Peter to come.

Well Peter was a fisherman. He knew first of all he was a man and he couldn't walk on water, especially the wavy waters that were rolling across the sea in this storm. But at the moment Jesus said, “Come,” Peter's mind focused on Jesus and obeyed. He knew the greatness of His teacher and didn't give it a second thought...until he looked around. Then his worldly sense or common sense took over. ‘I can't walk on water. I'm going to drown.’ Immediately he started sinking, but he knew enough to call on Jesus to save him. And of course, Jesus did.

Do you think it was Peter all on his own that made him look around at the situation?

I don't think so. I believe Satan started whispering in his mind, "Are you crazy? You can't walk on water." Satan is good at that, whispering doubts in our ears. Why does he do it? Satan does it because he doesn't want you trusting Jesus. If you do trust the LORD and you depend on Him more and more, think of the witness you will become. Satan doesn't want that. Sure, he's already lost you to Eternity in heaven and he can't take that away from you, but he doesn't want to lose more people to Christ.

So when you are going through rough times, be sure and reach out to Jesus. Trust Him to be there for you.

AND when things are going great for you know that it's because you trust God and His Word, Jesus and His love. Praise Him. Keep your faith in Him. Keep your eyes on His Word. Don't let the doubts creep in rocking your boat! Stand on the Word. Speak it out loud so Satan can hear whom you are trusting in, like Jesus did on the mountaintop. Remember, Satan cannot hear your thoughts.

Have a smooth sailing day! God bless you.

December 12

Follow His Lead

Hebrews 13:8, John 8:31-32, Colossians 1:21-23 – *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, "If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

I know I gave you a little more Scripture than normal, but take time to soak it all in. The Word tells us Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. If we could only follow His lead we'd find ourselves having more power to walk in our faith. We need to be consistent, just as He was and is and will be.

When we read the Word and it tells us something, stand on it; believe it, and

practice walking in the truth you have received. Don't let others cast doubt into your heart and mind. If the Word says it, it is truth. In John we as believers are told if we would **hold** to His teaching we would really be His disciples, doing things like Jesus did as He walked the earth. So what does hold mean? It means stay with it. Believe it as the truth. It will set you free. Make you stronger in your walk with The Lord.

Jesus Christ did all the work for us. All we need to do is stay in the Word so that we know it and can be consistent day after day living our lives as Jesus did. Before we knew Him we were apart from God. Once we accepted Him as our Savior the door was opened to us, and it's up to us to grow in our understanding, in our strength in Him. It's up to us to discipline our faith (like building your muscles). We do this by following His lead daily. Jesus stayed in communication with God. He did as God told Him to do. If we want to do what God wants us to do, we too have to stay in the Word and know it to walk in it.

Be powerful in your faith. Be consistent in your reading and learning and understanding. Be all you can be as someone who is Christ-like. Don't be an on again, off again Christian. Stand proud and share His love with others. Give them a chance to know the Lord as their Savior too.

Have a blessed day!

December 13 **Plans For Our Future**

Ephesians 2:6-7 – And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Isn't God just the best! He wants to give, give, give and bless, bless, bless. It's not about what we can do for Him; It's about what He wants to do for us.

So why did He save us? I was taught it was so we could praise Him for all eternity. Don't get me wrong. We will be praising Him and we shouldn't wait for eternity to do it. Praise Him now. He sent His Son to save us because He **loves us and wants to spend eternity pouring out His riches on us, showing us His riches, His grace, that He gives to us.** I said His riches, but it's even more than that. It's His exceeding riches of His grace that He wants to pour on

us. Eternity in Heaven will be more than we could ever hope or dream of. His Word tells us so.

The plans God has for our future are more than we could ever ask for.

The good news is we don't have to wait till we get to heaven to start enjoying His goodness. We can start now! We've already been seated with Him in the heavenly realms. We were made alive in Christ and dead to our sins when we accepted Jesus as our Savior.

If you find yourself giving more into your flesh than you lean on Jesus, ask God to help you to keep dying to your flesh; More of Him, less of you. The Holy Spirit is in you, but you still make that choice daily to live for Him or live for yourself. Make the right choice as you grow in your fellowship with Christ. The more you live for Him, the happier you'll find yourself being.

Don't misunderstand. You who have accepted Him into your life have been saved. Your salvation is secure. We're saved by faith, receiving the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. We can't work for our salvation. We accept the gift. Then we pray, 'more of the Spirit and less of me.'

Let the Holy Spirit lead you through this wonderful day! God bless you!

December 14 **Nourish On The Word**

Proverbs 4:20-22 – My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to My words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.

The answer to everything in life is found in the Word.

We need to feed on it. Learn it and from it. Read the needed Scriptures that pertain to your situation. Read it aloud. As you do this, you'll find your problems being overcome by God. He wants to help us through our lives, making our paths straighter, but we must lean on Him.

As we read the Word we fill our heart with it. At the time it's needed the Holy Spirit will remind us of the Scripture we have read.

Think it as you recall it and speak it. Speak the life and peace He gives to you

over your situations and rest in Him.

Again if the Bible is handy read it out loud. God's Word is stronger than any two-edged sword. Use it as your protection. It won't let you down and neither will He.

Have a great day.

December 15 **Persevere In Faith**

Hebrews 6:12 – *We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.*

This verse tells us to imitate those who stay in their faith in Christ, wait in patience as they know without a doubt the promises from God are true. These people are ones who hold unswervingly to their hope in Christ. They know God is faithful and keeps His promises to His people.

I believe that I am one of those believers that know God is faithful. I know the God whom I believe in will not let me down. He keeps His promises.

He put a dream in my heart many years ago that keeps me standing in faith, patiently waiting for the vision to become a reality. He has brought me closer to it day-by-day, year-by-year. And if I start to waiver in my belief, He sends a messenger my way, reminding me to keep strong in my faith in Him. He won't let me down.

Sometimes He gives us answers or promises right away, and sometimes we have to wait. Keep your faith strong in Him. Remember faith comes from hearing the Word of God. If you'll keep reading His Word daily, your faith will continue to build (like a muscle you workout daily).

Do not throw away your steadfastness in God, in the Word. You will be richly rewarded (see Hebrews 10:35). You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God (persevering, trusting and waiting on Him), you will receive what He has promised (see Hebrews 10:36).

Have a fulfilling day! Hallelujah!

December 16

God's Perfect Gift To Us

James 1:17 – *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, Who does not change like shifting shadows.*

God has a plan for each and every one of us.

According to Jeremiah 29:11 His plan for us is to prosper us and not to harm us. If we can keep His Word in our remembrance and trust Him to know what the good things are that we should have, we'd find more contentment in our life.

Sad to say we want a lot of things. The good thing is not all of them are bad for us. Sometimes we don't get what we are wanting at the time we want them because it isn't the right time. God knows everything, and He knows the perfect time for what you are wanting.

So trust in Him who has the perfect gifts lined up for you to give them to you at the right time...and if that gift never comes, it's because it wasn't meant for you. Again, He wants the best and most perfect for you and He knows what that is.

Wait on Him. Trust Him for it. He wants to bless you in amazing ways. Learn to be content where you are and with what you have, knowing He will move you or bless you at **just the right time**.

Stay safe in the holiday rush. God bless you!

December 17

Life Full of Blessings

Deuteronomy 30:14-16 – *No, the Word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to Him, and to keep His commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.*

We've been given free choice. God allows us to accept His Son, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior or not.

Praise God for those of us who have chosen eternal life in heaven. Pray for those who have chosen eternal death in hell, living a teeth gnashing, anger filled, horribly painful eternity.

Those who have chosen Jesus Christ as their Savior, be a great witness to the others by walking in the fullness of your choice, hoping to turn their hearts around.

How do we do that? Once you've chosen Jesus you're destined for eternity in heaven, but what about your life on earth? You still make choices every day, thousands of them. These choices will help determine how peaceful and joyful your life here on earth will be. Your choices will be seen by non-believers and when you make the right ones it can turn non-believers hearts to want to know more about your Savior.

If we become Christ-like minded and make the choices He would make by letting the Holy Spirit guide us, keeping Him, His Word first, your thoughts will line up with His Word and you'll find your life at peace...full of joy... looking forward to tomorrows. Your thoughts will line up your actions with the Word. And the Word tells us **the best is yet to come.**

Praise God! So live your life full of blessings by living how the Lord leads you; through His glorious riches He will strengthen you as Christ dwells in your heart through your faith in Him.

Be blessed! Have a glorious day!

December 18 **None Of Us Are Perfect**

1 Corinthians 4:3 – *I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself.*

In this world a lot of people try to be perfect at everything they do. I'm not saying don't try. I'm just trying to gently remind every one of us we are not perfect. Only Jesus was perfect.

We should still live each day doing the best we can, but when or if we fail at something, don't quit. Don't give up. And most of all don't beat yourself up for failing or missing the mark. When you find fault with yourself, you are

judging yourself. Know God is your judge. Not you. Not someone else.

God has found you perfect through the blood of Jesus.

Does that mean we should run amuck doing whatever our flesh wants to do. No! Not really. That falls back to yesterday's message on making right choices. **We continue to try to make the right choices.** The more we stay in the Word and in communication with the Lord, the better choices we will make. But know that even when we make the wrong one, God has already forgiven us for any sins. And if what we did wasn't really wrong, we just didn't succeed at it, know He loves you for trying. Keep it up.

So don't be your own judge. Know that you are a child of the Most High God and give yourself a break. Love yourself as God loves you. Remember under the New Covenant, He tells us to love the Lord your God above everything and everyone, and to love your neighbor as yourself. To do that second one you have to love yourself, so start practicing that. You'd be amazed at how much peace you'll feel when you let go and let God be your only judge.

That means not only do you not worry about what you think of you, but also you don't worry what others think of you. If you're trying to please God, that is all that matters. He sees your heart. Remember, you're not perfect, but God looks at you through the blood of Jesus. You are the righteousness of Christ!



Have a wonderful day!

December 19 Get Off The Rollercoaster

2 Corinthians 5:7 – *For we live by faith, not by sight.*

Many people in this world are not very nice, unfortunately. The thing to remember is, it's not you. Usually those people are not nice to most everyone in their lives. Even more importantly you can't let others determine your day.

You've been chosen to be blessed. Not because you are so good, but because God is so good. If you are a child of the Most High God then you should be walking by faith not by sight.

If you are walking by faith, when you see, hear, or feel a pain someone has

cast upon you, you have every right to take it upon yourself and let it get you down (living by sight), BUT you don't have to. Instead, you can choose to live by faith and believe what the Word tells you.

First, you are to love them through Christ (not love what they did or said, but them). When you remind yourself God's two most important commandments He shared with us through Jesus His Son, you'll remember you are to love them as you love yourself. And for those of you who don't love yourself, you need to work on that first. I suggest you list all the great things God says about you in His Word and remember He is stating truth and then you need to start loving yourself through God's eyes and love your enemies the same way.

Second, you are to forgive them immediately so you can keep your peace.

Thirdly, you are to pray for them...pray for blessings on them.

The Word tells us even more, but if you would choose to do those three things you would get off the rollercoaster of emotions and you'd ride steady on the peace God wants you to have. So live each day on your faith in the Word and follow His directions to you. His plans for you are to live peacefully, joyfully, lovingly, and abundantly, but to do this you must walk in faith in the Lord and in His Word.

Have a great day!

December 20 **I Have A Dream**

Genesis 37:5, Isaiah 43:19, John 21:6 - Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. ----- See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Have you ever dreamed something or saw something in your mind and heart and realized it was a dream for your future? Then you probably wondered was that from God or was it my wishful thinking? The Word tells us through dreams was one way how God spoke to people in the past, and it's the way He speaks to individuals in the present, and He will speak to folks in the future. I'm not saying all dreams are from God; for sure those that go against God's Word are not from God. You hear people say I had to kill them, God told me

to in a dream. THAT WASN'T GOD! I've picked out a few dreams He shared with people from the Word. Notice in all of the dreams good came from them. And realize the ones who listened and never gave up their dreams, they came to pass, maybe not the way they expected, but they came to be. Remember sometimes dreams come to us in our sleep, but sometimes they are a vision in our mind and heart while wide awake and connecting with God.

Joseph had a dream where he saw that one day his brothers would be bowing down to him. Of course his brothers who were already jealous hated the dream. The good news was God gave that dream to Joseph and although he had to endure and travel through some horrendous things in his life, one day his dream came true. When it did his whole family was blessed, even the brothers who treated him so poorly. Joseph didn't give up. He waited on God. And lived his days the way he believed God wanted him to.

Speaking to Israel – forgetting the past, God was doing new things for Israel, charting them a new course, filling them with dreams of a better life. They needed only to stay focused on Him and follow God's plans for them, believing the dreams He had put in their heart. Unfortunately, Israel went back and forth, believing than doubting. God allowed their children to enter the Promised Land, but not them.

Simon Peter dreamed of being a fisherman like his dad. One night he went out believing it would be a good catch only to come back with nothing. Jesus told him to do it again but cast his nets on the other side. When Simon Peter did this his net overflowed and started bursting at the seams. Then Simon Peter's dreams became bigger. Instead of fishing for fish, he began fishing for men, walking along the side of Jesus. Praise God!

So if your dream has not yet come to fruition, don't give up. Wait on God. Or if He leads you in a different direction know it too serves a purpose in turning your dreams into reality. Have a blessed day.

December 21

Believe!

Mark 9:23 – “*If you can?*” said Jesus. “*Everything is possible for one who believes.*”

Is this Scripture telling us if we believe strong enough we can have everything? It says: *Everything is possible for one who believes.* So you need

only to believe, there is no belief 'strong enough' ...you either do or don't.

You can strengthen your **faith**, making it stronger as you grow in believing everything the Word tells you. Unfortunately some believers only believe God sent His Son Jesus to die for us and rose again. This gives them the gift of Salvation, but God through His Word offers so much more. Some believers miss that Jesus paid the price for their sin. Some still believe God is making them pay over and over for their wrong actions. Double jeopardy. God doesn't do that. **MOVE ON!** Grow in the knowledge of His Word and grow your faith in the belief of how Jesus not only defeated death and sin but also diseases, finances, and so much more!

I believe if you truly believe **God and His goodness** you'll only be asking for things that are good, things that are in His Word. God does good things, not bad. The Bible tells us **all good things come from God.**

If bad is coming your way, it's either from the devil or a result of something you've chosen to do even though it went against God's Word. We do suffer consequences of our own actions...and sometimes other people's actions!

Now back to this statement. If you believe God and His Word and His teachings everything you ask is possible **through your faith in Him.** Remember, God's Word is truth, so this statement is truth.

God wants to bless us, answer our prayers, do good for us and in us. All you have to do is believe in Him. Believe His Word. Be obedient and ready to do anything He asks of you to do.

Don't get discouraged if you are trying to do something without Him. Instead, bring Him in on everything and let Him lead you. Maybe the way you chose to do something wasn't the best way. Trust Him to lead you. And remember—All things are possible with Him and through Him if you believe.

Have a wonderful day.

December 22 **In Faith Trust And Obey!**

Hebrews 11:6-8 – *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. By faith Noah, when warned about things not*

yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith. By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

Faith is the key to unlock the doors of blessings and triumphs in our lives.

We need not only to read the word and soak it in, but we must believe it. We must obey it. Most of all we must trust it is from God and know that through the Word, through dreams, through prayers, and through the Holy Spirit, He talks to us. Listen and obey. Trust His Word to be for your best.

Noah heard God tell him to build an ark large enough for two of every kind of animal. God told Noah He would bring down a rain that would destroy all living creatures on the earth except what Noah carries on his ark. First remember it had never rained. Second know everyone thought Noah was crazy. But third and most important know Noah obeyed God's command to him. He and his whole family were saved and the earth was replenished with all the animals...giving us another chance. God loves us and wants us all to be His children to live eternally in the new earth that is coming one day...as His Word tells us. Praise God!!

Abraham was told to get up and follow Him. God had great plans for him. Abraham did as God told him and he was blessed for it. We can be too if we only trust Him and obey Him. Terah, Abraham's father, stopped short of the destination God was leading the family too. He settled in Harran. He settled for good enough. But he could have had the best, just as Abraham received.

We, as believers who accepted Jesus as our Savior, can settle there knowing we will be a part of the Kingdom of God when our bodies die on earth. We can settle for good enough. Or we can keep listening, obeying, trusting, and keeping our faith in Him so we can start living our lives in abundance here on this earth...and then living eternally in heaven, in the Kingdom of God... Receive the best God has to give here on earth now and then into Eternity. Hallelujah!!

Don't settle for good enough. Go for the best God wants to give you!!

Have a miraculous day!

December 23

Let Him Be Your Stronghold

Psalm 31:1-2, 23-24 – *In You, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in Your righteousness. Turn Your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my Rock of Refuge, a Strong Fortress to save me. Love the LORD, all His faithful people! The LORD preserves those who are true to Him, but the proud He pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.*

Put your trust in Him every day. Seek Him to direct you, helping you make the right choices. We have so many choices every day; let Him help you make the right ones. Put your faith in Him. Let Him protect you. He will lift you up as you keep your faith in Him letting Him be your strength.

Love Him. He already loves you and wants the best for you. If you put your trust in Him every day He will see you through everything that comes your way.

Also if you are listening to Him as He directs your steps, He will use you to be a blessing to others. As you listen and obey, He strengthens you who are faithful. He keeps you safe as you lean on Him; trust Him and His Word.

He reminded this to me just last night. After a horrific storm that blew in just a few short months ago and did so much damage, the television interrupted a show telling viewers to take heed. Another bad storm was coming our way, with strong winds and rain and tornados touching down. With the last one I started quoting Psalm 91, thanking God for His protection of my tent. (That's my body and my home He has blessed me with). This time I reminded Him of the time He was in a boat sleeping and the storm rose rocking the ship as He slept through it. The disciples woke Him and asked if He even cared. He commanded the wind to settle down. It obeyed immediately. While I was reminding Him, I was hearing the wind whip around outside whistling in the air, blowing my heavy patio furniture across my deck. I stayed calm and kept my trust in Him and asked Him to command the winds to die down and for Him to keep my home and me safe. As soon as I'd spoken this to Him, He reminded me I had the Holy Spirit in me so I have the same power He had. I immediately spoke aloud, demanding the wind to die down and for peace to settle around my home. Instantly the whistling stopped and my wind chimes quit slashing about. I thanked Him and ignored the warnings that kept flashing. God was protecting me and I knew it. He is my stronghold. Let Him

be yours!!

Have a safe day trusting Him!

December 24 **Let His Power Reign In You**

Psalm 23:1-6 – The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His Name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 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.

This is a passage in the Bible that most people read on a card given them at a funeral. It's a reminder to those left behind that their loved one who had given their life to the LORD, they were saved and are now living spiritually in Eternity in heaven waiting on their renewed body.

The good news is this Scripture tells us so much more. Take time to read it more carefully.

When we ask the LORD to be our Savior, our Shepherd, His blessings will start pouring out on us.

I can remember many, many times since my Salvation at ten years old saying, "Thank You Lord for always blessing me so much." Don't get me wrong. Not everything in my life had been perfect, but everything good I knew came from Him and any bad that came my way when I rested on Him, putting my trust in Him to get me through, He did and I came out better afterward. The peace I live in daily is from Him.

Through His word, by His grace, He refreshes and replenishes my mind and soul. God leads me everyday, even when I forget to pray not my will but Thy will be done. Why? Because He knows my heart. He sees me and hears me seeking Him every day. He is with me all day long through the good and the bad. And when I turned my back on Him (just like David had or Jonah had), He didn't leave me just like He didn't leave David or Jonah. Finally I asked forgiveness and asked Him to get me back on track with His will for me. And

He did. He is faithful to the end.

Let Him be your comforter. Let Him reign through you. Be filled with His power and use it to be a blessing while He pours out His favor on you. Walk expectantly. When you start your new days that you are blessed with, expect God to show you His goodness, to show you His grace, His mercy, blessing you throughout the day. God is good and He wants to be good to you. But you need to believe and receive. Have a good day! 😊

December 25 **The Greatest Gift Of All**

Luke 2:11, John 3:16 – Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord. For God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Merry Christmas! I hope you and your family have a wonderful day today. We celebrate His birth by giving others special gifts as God gave us. Of course our gift is not as great, but through giving the gifts to others we are showing our love for God as He showed His love for us.

God sent His Son to be born on this earth through a virgin woman. She had Him and they named Him Jesus as they were told. Praise God for the birth of Jesus.

We need also to praise God that Jesus was obedient. Remember He was born through a human. That part of Him could have led Him astray which would have been our demise. He was tempted just as we are, but He never sinned. Praise the LORD He was faithful through and through.

Now we get to celebrate His birth knowing that His death and resurrection were all part of God's plan to save us.

So go enjoy your family and have a very special Christmas. If any of your family members don't know Him as their Savior but celebrate the holiday for the wrong reasons, just keep loving them and being a witness to them, so they too will one day give their life to the LORD. Then they too will start celebrating Christmas as the celebration of the birth of Christ!

Merry Christmas!!

December 26

A Pure Heart

Hebrews 10:16-17 – *“This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.” Then He adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.”*

Too bad the Christian world is not as forgetful or as forgiving as God is. But guess what? It doesn't matter what the people around you say or think about you if you are living for the Lord. He loves you. He's paid for all your sins: past, present, and future. When you come to Him, He remembers them no more. Sad to say we still keep sinning. Most of the time we are not a willing participant. Our bodies lead us and we let them. I guess that's willing to an extent, but those who love the Lord and want to please Him know they don't want to sin. Didn't Paul say, “I do what I shouldn't, and I don't do what I should?” (Paraphrased by me.)

The main thing to remember, even though you are already forgiven and God's not remembering the sin you just committed, the moment you realize you sinned you need to ask God to forgive you or thank Him for His forgiveness, another words acknowledge that you sinned and that He forgave you.

I know. He already has forgiven you, but until you acknowledge your sin to Him your heart will grow heavy. You'll start diminishing the free reign of the Holy Spirit in you. He doesn't push Himself around inside you. You have to let Him lead. But once you've allowed flesh to take a little control, it will want more. It's up to you to remember to give the Holy Spirit full reign of your body, mind, and spirit.

Remember what He said above, He writes His laws on our hearts. His laws are about love. When we do things that are sinful, we are stepping outside the love God gave us to share and our hearts know it. The Holy Spirit will prick you, letting you know you've stepped out of God's plan for you, so if you want to walk in His perfect will for you, listen and ask forgiveness immediately. We all will sin, but we don't have to stay in it. If we want the life of blessings and abundance we need to stay faithful to God's Word. Don't dwell on your sins once you've acknowledged them. He forgave you. Move on. Move forward.

Keep your heart pure in Him, in His Word, letting Him lead you!

Have a great day!!

December 27

Great Success

1 Samuel 18:14 – *In everything he did he had great success, because the LORD was with him.*

Great success can be yours as it was for David. Why was David so successful in everything he did? He was successful because the LORD was with him.

We know by the Word that God will never leave us nor forsake us. How do we know this? Because the Word tells us so. (See Deuteronomy 3:16.)

If that's the case why aren't we having great success now?

The LORD won't leave you, just like He didn't leave David, but are you in daily communication with God? I don't mean, do you say your prayers at night while you are drifting off to sleep? David communicated with God throughout his day. He asked God for direction and followed it. When he stepped out of line (which he did) he eventually saw the error of his ways and asked God to forgive him. David didn't have the Holy Spirit living on the inside pricking him when he stepped out of line. We do though. So are we listening to the Holy Spirit?

When we mess up (we all do) know God has already forgiven us, but we still need to acknowledge our sin and turn from it.

Remember less of you and more of the Holy Spirit in you, leading you.

Every day get up ready to walk in the path God has planned for you, praising Him and thanking Him. You'll be amazed at the difference in your life when you let His Word be written in your heart and mind, over and over, and you let the Holy Spirit guide you throughout your day. Know you have the right to speak directly to God anytime of the day. Through Jesus, the curtain was torn. There is no wall between you and God.

Have great success today and every day following God's will for you,

growing your daily relationship with the LORD.

Enjoy!

December 28
Jesus Paid It ALL!

1 Corinthians 7:23 – *You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings.*

Joel Osteen shared a story of a man who went on a cruise ship, but every time meal times came around, he'd find a quiet spot on the ship and eat his cheese and crackers, for he had spent all of his money on the ticket for the cruise. However, on the last day of the cruise one of the passengers suggested he join the rest of them in the dining room. A little embarrassed the man admitted he only had enough money for the cruise and wasn't able to buy the fancy dinners. The fellow passenger said when you paid for the cruise all the food you can eat came with it. There are no additional charges. Boy did this guy miss out. Have you ever seen the spread on those cruise ships? Anything and everything you could think of was available all day long.

Sorry to say that's how a lot of Christians act when it comes time for expecting blessings from God. They feel they don't deserve it because of all the things they've done in the past...or believe they have to suffer for their past sins even though Jesus paid for their sins and God has forgiven them as well as forgotten the sin.

The great news is, JESUS PAID IT ALL!! We as believers need to accept that, thank Jesus for following through in God's plan, and thank God for loving us so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son to save us. Now look at all the children God has now. When we all get together in heaven, WOW! The thought of that takes my breath away.

We as believers are in the family of God. We are His children just like Jesus! And Jesus paid the price for each of us. What a Brother!

Take a breath and enjoy the blessings God has for you each and every day. Stay close to Him as He stays close to you. Be a reflection of Jesus as you walk through your day.

God bless you this glorious day!!!

December 29

Never Give Up

Hebrews 12:1-3 – *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

Have you ever heard someone say, “Sorry I couldn’t make it. . .or I couldn’t do it. . .life got in the way.” I not only have heard that excuse for someone not doing something but I’ve used it. Life can always get in the way. We can always let the worries and troubles of our lives stop us from moving forward and fulfilling God’s plan for us. We could let life get in the way of doing something we’ve told someone else we would do for him or her. It’s an easy out, but an unfulfilling finish.

I suggest you take these Scriptures to heart. Throw those worries and troubles of your life onto the LORD. He tells us here and in other Scriptures to give them to Him, so why don’t you? He has the best answer to help you overcome or get through these worries. But once you give them to Him you need to leave them with Him. AND you go on and do whatever He’s told you to do.

In my early thirties God showed me a vision of the plans He has for me. The thing is the vision didn’t come to fruition overnight. It was twenty years before I saw my first book published, but I had a lot to learn along the way. (I’m still learning today!) As I stay with Him in His Word and in my walk He gives me wisdom and understanding, helping me to grow in Him and in my writing. Today (at the time of the writing of this devotional) I’ve had nine books published and three more to be released sometime during 2017.

One is this daily devotional that God started me writing almost two years after Scott’s passing. He wanted me to share how He helped me through my mourning as well as through the trials and troubles that came my way. God is faithful. I needed only to persevere. Trust Him. Lean on Him.

Perseverance is the key of accomplishing the plans God has for you. Stay faithful to Him and don’t give up. He is there for you. Never give up.

God bless you. Have a great day!

December 30

Sounds Simple

Luke 6:37-38 – “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

These Scriptures sound simple enough. Truth be told, they are. We just make them difficult because we tend to let our physical heart and body respond. Remember our flesh still wants to react in our worldly way. We have to keep our hearts and minds spiritually thinking so we don't react.

You may be thinking, ‘Deborah, I don't judge people. I know better.’ Of course you do. So do I. How many of you have ever been in the shortest line at the grocery store or one of the big stores that carry everything, yet it seems to move the slowest. Your automatic response is, ‘what is wrong with that clerk? Maybe if they would concentrate on their job they could take better care of the customers like they are being paid to do.’

That's just one example of things we do judging others without thinking about it. There are many more.

Here are two more quick ones that come to mind. Let me share them. How many of you have ever heard your pastor preach and then wonder what got into him? Maybe the sermon hit the nail on the head for you and you didn't want to hear it (in this case you should be thanking God for your pastor's words of wisdom), or maybe he had something personal going on in his life that he was trying to work through. Either way talking to a fellow member about him or his sermon in a negative way is your way of judging him. So don't do it. Another example: Say you are at work and one of your co-workers (or your boss) says or does something that you don't like or you think is wrong so you start talking to another co-worker about them. You are judging their actions by telling others what you think. Maybe they just needed your prayers. They could be having a bad day or something may be going on in their own lives that have them a little off kilter. Think before you speak. Even better, pray before you speak. Yes God has given us wisdom so we can discern

when others are doing wrong so we don't join in, but pray for them. Don't talk about them.

God is our judge and Jesus has already paid the price for us...so walk in faith and keep your eyes and hearts on Him.

Forgive those who hurt you, and your blessings will be so much more...pressed down, shaken together, and pouring over. Praise God! And don't forget to take in that last line, *'for the measure you use, it will be measured to you.'* So whether it's the clerk, the pastor, the co-worker, whoever, don't judge. Instead forgive with a willing and happy heart. You'll be blessed beyond measure.

Have a blessed day!

December 31 **Stir The Flame**

2 Timothy 1:6-7 – For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

This has been a great year for me as God has led me through writing this devotional, sharing His goodness to me and making it available to you. (His goodness. His mercy. His grace. His blessings.) I thank God for His goodness every day, and I pray powerful blessings on each and every one of you who have read the words He gave me to share with you. I suggest you stay in the Word, read other devotionals by people who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and know that God's Word is truth. If their devotional comes through the Holy Word, then God will bless you through the reading of it helping you to grow stronger in and through Him.

The last words I want to share with you is stir up the flame of the Holy Spirit in you. The more you share His love with others by walking the earth as Jesus did, the more Satan will try to take you down so you wont encourage others. Remember, he can't take your victory from you, but Satan can stop you from sharing Jesus with others and helping them become victorious through Him. Don't let Satan. Jesus defeated Him and gave you the same power. Stand up to Satan. Stand up for Jesus!

When Satan shakes up your life, trying to bring you down, don't run away or

hide. Stand up and stir the flame. Speak to your mountain with the authority God gave you— in His Son's Name, Jesus Christ—and see the situation destroyed, healed, fixed, and/or made right (depending on your mountain).

Remember, when you are living your life for the Lord and you are blessing others, Satan gets worried. Not that you're saved. He can't do a thing about that, but he doesn't want you bringing others with you to the family of God. He's desperate to shut down your joy. So stand up and stir the flame inside you. Let others know you are a child of the Most High God. Through Jesus Christ you can do anything!

So get the Word deep inside you so you can face your daily battles and always come out the victor. Remember Jesus already took Satan down. He won the battle. You only need to stand on Jesus and His Word to help you through anything Satan tries to throw at you. You are more than a conqueror. You are a victor, not a victim. God wants to pour out His blessings on you. Open your heart, mind, and arms and receive them all!

Remember less of the flesh and more of the Spirit. Stay spiritually minded and you will win every time!

Praise God! Have a blessed life while you keep that flame stirred up inside of you.

About This Book

Guidance from The Light is a 365-day devotional God poured into my heart to share with you.

After 43 years of marriage, my husband went on to be with the Lord. Moving forward in my life was harder than I ever thought possible. Losing Scott left me devastated. I spent my days delving into God's Holy Word and He comforted me. He still does. God led me to share with others in this book what He gave me.

If you are going through a hard time, whether it is a loss of a loved one or problems life brings your way, I believe these encouraging words will speak to you in an uplifting way.

God bless you!

Deborah Lynne

Books by Deborah Lynne

Guidance from The Light – 1/2017

Hidden Secrets – 6/2016

All in God's Time – revised 3/2016

Bayou Secrets (a collection) – 5/2015

After You're Gone – 2/2014

Crime in The Big Easy – 2012

The Truth Revealed – BK3 SCMS 2013

Testimony of Innocence – BK2 SCMS 2012

Be Not Afraid – BK1 SCMS 2010 & 2012

Redone in Hardback, Large Print – found in your local libraries

 Crime in The Big Easy – 7/2015

 Be Not Afraid – 8/2015

 Testimony of Innocence – 9/2015

Coming March 2017 – Against Her Will - BK4 Samantha Cain Mystery Series

Coming September 2017 - Chasing the Light - BK1 of Cooper Parks Series

A Special Thanks

I'd like to say a special thanks to my long-time dear friend, Emy White, who has gone through this devotional with a fine-toothed comb and caught my many errors. If there are things written not as clear as it should be, or misspelled, or miss-said, it is entirely my fault. Emy has done, as usual, a great job making my words clearer. Thanks Em! You know I love you!

I'd like to thank Molly Moore and Elaine Grant for my book cover. Didn't they do a great job? I love you both. Thanks.

Again a special thanks for every believer God has put in my life to help me grow in His will for me.

Thank You, Lord!

