

Sunday, April 12

Introduction

A crisis can serve to point us in the right direction. It also can be a catalyst that places our focus on what truly matters most. These past several weeks have made me more sensitive to the needs of my family. Because we are living together more closely than ever, I find myself more aware of what my kids say, feel, and experience. We are more in tune with each other.

I also have been reminded how much I need the Lord to provide me with wisdom, insight, discernment, and peace. My prayers are different today than they were a few weeks ago. I find myself praying more desperate prayers, as well as grateful prayers. While sitting in this weird and crazy time, I am discovering a deeper wonder of the ways the Lord provides me with a sense of confidence that He is doing a new work. My prayers have become more practical, meaningful, and much more frequent.

We are told in Scripture to “be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (Romans 12:12), and to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). This simply means to pray reoccurring prayers.

So, how’s your prayer life going? Do you find yourself praying more often? Do you find yourself praying what I call “in-this-moment prayers”? Are your times with God focused more on desperate prayers? Are you praying more for peace, perspective, patience, or provision? I do hope we all are more real, raw, honest, and honoring in our times with the Father. He cares. He wants to hear from us. He wants to hear from you.

I appreciate what Richard Foster writes: “Do you know why the mighty God of the universe chooses to answer prayer? It is because his children ask. God delights in our asking. He is pleased at our asking. His heart is warmed by our asking.”

I will be prioritizing prayer over the next 30 days, and I invite you to do the same. We have a wonderful team of people throughout Pathway who have contributed to the thoughtful posts that will show up here every day. I hope you’ll meet us here, and more importantly, that you’ll meet the Father in prayer regularly over the coming month.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I pray we would learn from each other through this journey. May we become people who humble ourselves and pray for your mighty and good work to be done in our nation, our world, our church and our homes. Create in us a deeper love for you, a greater passion for prayer, and strengthen our church body as we care and pray for each other. May we learn how to run to our Heavenly Father who longs to hear from us and meet us in our everyday challenges, as well as our moments of deep celebration and joy. In your powerful name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Monday, April 13

God... The Ultimate Physician

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear.

Psalm 46:1-2

As a physician on the front lines of the battle with COVID-19 it is easy to become overwhelmed, mentally exhausted and fall victim to fear and anxiety that I will not be able to help my ill patient or that I will contract this illness and take it home to my family. For many of us, it has become too easy to allow fear and anxiety to grip us and cause us to forget who is actually in control. Remember that God is in control and He is the Ultimate Physician and is ever-present in every hospital room across this nation. If we listen, He is reminding us to “take courage and do not be afraid”. God in His wisdom will help decide how to best help those who are ill. Maybe He will choose to heal us, or maybe He will bring us home to be with Him. But whatever His will, we know that it is the best for us. We shall not fear!

Prayer:

Lord God, be our strength and our healer. Remind the medical workers to trust in you, to never give in to fear and to stay healthy. Amen.

For Reflection:

- “Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmoon
- Listen to the song [I Will Fear No More](#) by The Afters
- When fear and anxiety come upon you, ask yourself this question... Who is in control?

Tuesday, April 14

Emergencies Don't Take a Break

If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 4:11

The world may be sheltering in place, but First Responders are continuing to engage in daily situations that require compassion, rescue and resuscitation. Training and expertise prepare them for what they will see and how they will act, and they must trust that this equipping will guide them through unknown and surprising circumstances.

In a similar way, we can train ourselves to go to God's Word and trust that He will use it to equip and guide us through periods of uncertainty and temptation to fear. In Scripture we find verse after verse reassuring us that the Lord will "go before us and follow us, to place His hand of blessing on our head." Psalm 139:5. He "is a shield for all who take refuge in Him...and it is God who arms us with strength and makes our way perfect." Psalm 18:30,32. "He will watch over our coming and going both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:8. He is "able to make all grace abound to us, so that in all things at all times, having all that we need, we will abound in every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8

As we pray these Scriptures over our First Responders and the situations they face today, let us allow the Lord to be the expert in our lives and His Word the expertise that we trust to guide us through our new and unpredictable circumstances.

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, we thank you for our First Responders and the calling You've given them in our communities. We thank you for the sacrifices they make and the selflessness they demonstrate. Today, we ask for Your covering on their lives and work. We pray for recall and focus as they rely on their training. We pray for Your wisdom and discernment as they make quick and vital decisions. We pray for their protection and safety as they face crisis and for courage and compassion as they meet the needs of others. Above all, Lord, we pray that as they serve with this balance of Your tenderness and strength, that You would be recognized and given glory. In Your precious and Holy Name, Amen.

For Reflection:

Our expertise often comes through our experience. Let's recall and remember God's work in our lives as our equipping for today.

- How have you seen God go before you?
- How have you sensed Him being your refuge?
- How have you perceived Him responding to your needs or the needs of those around you?

Rely on the Truth of these experiences to trust Him today.

By Megan Uecker

Wednesday, April 15

Doubt

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

Being in the area of mental health produces challenges. As we try to care for others, we have the challenge of trying to care for ourselves. We teach others about self-care that we are not practicing. We are human. We worry. We have doubt in our abilities. Our strategies fall short in preparing us for heartbreak. We face life’s questions and doubt creeps in about whether we have the ability to help. Our hearts hurt. The evil one wants us to believe all of our deeds are without purpose because we cannot “fix” anything.

So, we use the resources we have and remind ourselves that God has put us in these positions to redirect, accept, and encourage. Not “fix.” God is in charge. Not us. It is okay to struggle.

For those of you in the mental health field, remember that we are servants of God. We can be scared; however, we have to trust that God will hear our prayers. Because He does. He will give us the courage to know that He supports us. He will give us strength and knowledge. He has purpose for us as His servants. We are doing good, one small deed at a time.

Prayer:

Lord, please help us to realize that everything we do for YOU today is because YOU put us here. Please help all mental health workers who are trying to help those that are underprivileged. Please help the families we serve find peace in YOU. Grant us clarity and the ability to make good decisions for them and for ourselves. Thank you for the opportunity to serve YOU. Amen.

For Reflection:

- Take time to make a list of affirmations. Instead of focusing on what you think you cannot do, focus on what you can do, or what you are getting better at doing.
- Listen to [Disappear](#) by Bebo Norman

By Holly Lichtsinn, MSW, LCSW

Thursday, April 16

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Psalm 16:8 (Written by King David)

The other night my 12-year-old daughter sat next to me for a few minutes before heading to bed. We try to end each day with a hug, a prayer, and an “I love you”.

On this particular night I asked her, “How are you doing? How are you feeling today?” Unsurprisingly, I got a few complaints about this season of social distancing and staying at home. I believe the phrases “I’m bored” and “this is getting old” were said. I paused for a few seconds and my reply to her was simple: “Even on your hardest day, try to see the positive in it. In so much of life, what we focus on determines what we experience.”

One thing I admire about King David is that, in his every circumstance, he turned his focus to God. He knew that no matter what life brought his way, if God was with him, he could stand firm.

Let’s ask ourselves a simple question: “Where is my focus right now?” What might it look like for us to “keep our eyes always on the Lord” today? When we fix our eyes on Jesus, I’m confident we’ll find a Savior who wants to be near to us, who wants to speak to us, and who, in the midst of it all, says “I love you...you’re going to be ok!”

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, would you help me to fix my eyes on you today? Please work in me to turn my attention toward you in all things. I put my hope and my confidence in you right now. Thank you for your faithfulness to me. God, I think of the many people who are so essential to meeting the needs of others in my community. Those who are working at grocery stores, making food, delivering things and all the cleaning crews; Lord please be near to them. Bless them, protect them, and encourage them today!

For Reflection:

- Here are some other passages that encourage us to “keep our eyes on the Lord.” Matthew 14:22-31; Philippians 4:11-13; Hebrews 12:1-3.
- In 1867 Hannah Whithall Smith wrote these words of advice which ring true for us today: “Whether in temptation or in service, if we cease from our own plan and our own activities, leaving the care and ordering of our work to Him, He will plan for us, work through us, and use us as His instruments to accomplish His own purposes of love and mercy. The responsibility will be His; we need only be obedient.”
- Song to listen to today: [Out of Hiding](#) by Steffany Gretzinger

By Brad Bullock

Friday, April 17

Space and Grace

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9

We had been quarantined for about two weeks when our family had a much-needed dinnertime conversation. Each of us at some point had experienced times when emotions were raw and more tears were being shed than usual. As we talked, we were able to identify why we were feeling the way we were. The kids were learning how to do school remotely while missing their friends and teachers, and Joe and I were trying to figure out how to work from home while helping our kids stay on track with their school work. As a teacher myself, I felt the burden to connect with my own students in a way that was completely new to me.

For parents and teachers, adjusting to our new norms is a hard task. As Joe and I sat discussing things, the words “space” and “grace” came to mind. I reminded the kids that during these unusual times we may need to give one another space. We are together far more than we usually are. But perhaps more importantly we need to give one another, and ourselves, grace.

Teachers, parents and kids are all missing the comforts of our old routines during these challenging times. The good news is that God’s grace is sufficient for us and He is able to use the struggles we are going through today to make His work in us more evident!

Prayer:

Father, help teachers, parents, and kids to recognize our need for space and grace. May we be gracious to others and to ourselves as we navigate through new norms and lots of emotions, and may we identify ways to make space for you to speak Truth into our lives. Please give us all strength to persevere, knowing that you are doing a good work in and through us.

For Reflection:

“Working, parenting, and teaching are three different jobs that cannot be done at the same time. It’s not hard because you are doing it wrong. It’s hard because it’s too much. Do the best you can.” Emily W. King, Ph.D

By Jen Wright

Saturday, April 18

In the Midst of our Work

*The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
Genesis 2:15*

At the beginning of creation, God placed mankind in a garden and gave them work – to tend to, cultivate and care for his creation. Ever since that time, God has been divinely placing individuals in work roles and responsibilities that help care for his world. His people work in breadmaking, insurance, construction, retail, restaurants, manufacturing, skilled trades, web design and so many more. And whenever their work is done with a worshipful spirit - with excellence and care for the customers they serve - God looks upon them and says, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Remember that no matter what type of business you are in or what type of challenges the businesses in our community are facing right now, God has placed you there for a purpose and he will not abandon his work in and through you.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I ask your protection, guidance and favor over the businesses and business leaders operating in our community right now. For those who continue to bring people into work, give them wisdom for how to best care for their employees, customers and vendors.

For those businesses who have had to close, I pray that you meet the needs of everyone impacted - the customers who no longer can get the goods and services they need, the vendors who may be losing income from no longer having an outlet, and the employees who may have now lost their income.

In all of this, please provide these individuals with peace, comfort and confidence to know that you are always in control of all things - including their businesses - and that you are still in this moment working good for those who love you and who have been called according to your purpose.

For Reflection:

Calm your heart for several minutes and ask God:

- Heavenly Father, how do you see me? Who am I to you?
- Lord, how do you view my daily work? Why have you placed me in the business, organization or situation that I am in right now?
- Father, what would you have me do today in the midst of my work? How can I best represent your truth and grace to others in my business, organization or environment today?

By Jeff Ostermann

Sunday, April 19

Local Leaders

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:42-45

In an 1887 letter, historian and politician Lord Acton wrote to the Bishop Creighton, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." His observation aligns well with the axiom which Jesus shares in the scripture above. Without God, it is impossible for anyone to lead in a truly sacrificial way.

Leadership is at its best when those in authority serve the communities in which they live and work with a focus on those in need, rather than serving their own needs. While that is true any day, it is even more so now in a time of crisis. Jesus' challenge to His disciples is just as true for our leaders today as it was then.

Let us pray that our local leaders follow Christ's lead and make wise decisions for us all that will lead us through these challenging times.

Prayer:

Lord, give those in authority the wisdom to follow Your example. Help them to use their position to serve selflessly and govern effectively. We pray that you will lead them with Your Spirit and that You will guard them by planting a hedge of protection around them. We ask this in Jesus Name. Amen!

For Reflection:

- Who are the local leaders you will pray for today?
- What has God placed on your heart to pray over these leaders?
- Will you share this with these leaders as an encouragement for some and challenge for others?

By Ben Miles

Monday, April 20

When Trouble Comes

I have told you these things, so that in me you will have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 16:33 NIV

I can still remember the day in fourth grade. It was a beautiful spring day when I ran off the school bus into my house to find my dad at home. This was odd. Normally he wouldn't be home this early. He was not wearing his usual suit and tie, he looked troubled sitting in his chair. I cannot remember all the details of this day, other than that this was the day my dad was laid off. The company where he worked for twenty plus years shut down, it was a devastating loss.

It grieves my heart when I think of all people in our world right now who have lost a job or had a sudden loss of income. Maybe you who are one of them. I honestly had not thought of that day in years, but over the past several days I have found myself thinking of that day often, and how life was different after that. I have also been reminded of how God always provided for my family back then. My dad eventually got a new job and my family pulled through those challenging times.

Now I know what was the 1980's and we weren't dealing with a pandemic like we are now. However, I know God is reminding me of that day so that I will remember his faithfulness. I still worry that the same thing will happen to my own family right now. When I pause and read the truth that scripture tells, I am reminded of this peace that only He can bring. I remember to not let the difficult troubles of this life consume me. God is our provider, we do not have to fear, and we can take heart.

Prayer:

Father God - I ask that you come near to those who have recently lost a job or who are experiencing a loss of income right now. Lord, we know that you love them. I ask that you provide for all their needs and provide them with your perfect peace. I pray that others will come around them who can love and support them during this crisis. Amen

For Reflection:

- Reflect on Jesus' words "Peace I leave 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." John 14:27
- How often have you been led to believe that your career or financial security will give you peace? What are some of the ways God has been faithful to provide for you in the past? What are some ways God is giving you His peace during this trial?

By Jill Raypole

Tuesday, April 21

Move In Closer

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

This verse is just magical. Jesus Christ, residing in perfect comfort and luxury, saw our pain and poverty and was compelled to move in closer. As humans, our instinct is to run away from distress, weakness, and decay. We crave comfort, safety, and strength. But when Jesus came to Earth, he literally wrapped himself in the vulnerable, decaying flesh of the population he loved so dearly. He saw our mess, and he pressed into it.

Ephesians 4:22-24 tells us as believers to “put off” our old selves – the selves that crave comfort. We are told to “put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” We are to look around and see the vulnerable: the ones who cannot speak up for themselves, who have not been given our privilege and advantage. Then move in closer and serve.

We can put on blinders to the vulnerable people around us - widows, orphans, those in foster care type situations and the homeless - allowing comfort to reign. Or, we can choose to live as Jesus did – turning toward, not away. It’s never simple, often painful, and eternally worth it.

Prayer:

Jesus, you love me so well, so completely. Thank you for seeing my darkness and running into it – not away. Help me to remember your sacrifice. Help me to remember why it is good and holy to press into the mess. Help me to serve those others might overlook simply because the pain appears too great. Draw near to the vulnerable.

For Reflection:

Where do you see vulnerability in your community? Your country? The world? Whose neighborhood do you need to ‘move into’?

By Sarah Norris

Wednesday, April 22

Storm Before the Calm

One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

Luke 8:22-25

I love this story in moments like this, because it reminds us that even though Jesus may not always cause the storms we face, he can always use them for our good. He can use them to help us see that we don't have as much control over things as we think we do. He can use them to help us see our desperate need for him. He can use them to help us see him for who he is – as we read about with the disciples who were in awe at his power over the wind and waves. And he can use them to lead us to cry out to him for rescue.

That's one of my prayers for people in this unique situation that we're faced with right now. I'm praying that Jesus will use this to shake our sense of independence and self-sufficiency, that he'll open our eyes to see him as the powerful rescuing God that he is, and that many people will be led in this time to cry out to Jesus for help. Would you join me in praying for that too?

Prayer:

Jesus, we come before you today, and we acknowledge that we need you. We know that every person in this world needs you. So while we don't believe you've caused all that we're facing right now, we believe you can use it to draw people to you. Open up eyes to see you and hearts to respond to you. We pray this in your name. Amen.

For Reflection:

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world." – C.S. Lewis

By Tyler Ward

Thursday, April 23

Pathway Ministries

Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in the ministry of Christ Jesus. In fact, they once risked their lives for me. I am thankful to them, and so are all the Gentile churches. Also give my greetings to the church that meets in their home.

Romans 16:3-5a

When you read through Paul's letters in the New Testament you will notice that he thanks men and women who have served him and the local church receiving his letter. To us, these are random names, but there are still gems of truth found in them. In Romans 16, Paul thanks Priscilla and Aquila and sends greetings to the church that meets in their home.

Priscilla and Aquila are famous 1st Century Christians - they show up all over the New Testament. This couple is fully surrendered to the Gospel, living out their faith through their lives, careers, and family.

More striking to me, however, is the mention of the Church that meets in their home. Christian Churches did not construct buildings until 100+ years after Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila. In these early days, Churches concentrated their finances to feed the poor in their cities and raised money to fund payments to free slaves from their owners.

As this health crisis becomes an economic crisis for Pathway families and our neighbors, Pathway leaders are restructuring ministries and allocating finances to serve, give, and help people overcome the burdens from this season.

Today I ask you to be in prayer for all our Pathway ministries, that our leaders focus and concentrate all resources where it will create the most good and shine the brightest light of God's love, grace, and peace into the dark and dreary world.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I know You are a redeeming God whose love is deep enough that a thousand generations could not exhaust it all. I ask that Your love would move our Pathway leaders to discover the wisest and best ways to be a blessing and transforming force in our city, county, and wherever else Jesus leads us.

For Reflection:

C.S. Lewis once wrote, "I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare."

By Brian Beall

Friday, April 24

Praying for Our Church Leaders

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:5,13

In his book *Radical*, David Platt shares a story of persecuted church leaders who travel for miles to meet in secret to pray. Kneeling together in a circle, bowed prostrate, they cry out for hours, only to arise to puddles of tears on the dirt floor.

What is it that causes men and women to commit their lives to Jesus in such a way?

I've heard it said it is our passions that get us up in the morning and our burdens that keep us awake at night. No wonder Jesus often arose early to pray (Mark 1:35) and stayed up late to serve (John 3:1-21).

COVID-19 has impacted more than our physical health. There have been dramatic increases in 211 calls related to suicide and mental health. It has pushed our society into a state of disorientation and this certainly includes churches. Church leaders across the world have been on their knees, crying out in desperation for the Holy Spirit to move, heal, and lead.

Those who lead us at Pathway Community Church certainly need our prayers. Desperate for God's power, these women and men have shouldered this weight of disorientation, and they are fully trusting the Spirit's guidance - literally one moment at a time - as they lead us into an unknown future.

Prayer:

Father, despite the disorientation, you are fully in control. Remind our leaders that your Kingdom has come. An awakening is happening! A movement is here! Lord, continue to grow in our leaders a desperation for your power alone. May your Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

For Reflection:

What in my life can I commit to Jesus?

By Aaron Frey

Saturday, April 25

Burn Out

We live in such a way that no one will stumble because of us, and no one will find fault with our ministry. In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food. We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love. We faithfully preach the truth. God's power is working in us. We use the weapons of righteousness in the right hand for attack and the left hand for defense.

2 Corinthians 6:3-7

How amazing is it that we live in an era where we can literally be connected to anyone, anywhere, anytime, digitally? We can FaceTime, Facebook, Zoom...the list goes on. Kids are learning online, people relocating their jobs to work from home, and our churches are having to learn what it looks like to reach people near and far from Jesus without being physically present. For some of us the constant creating and trying and failing at ways to replace what we had can burn us out. We can feel like it's all for nothing. That nothing can replace a live sermon, or laying hands on someone to pray for them, or being able to worship with fellow believers. We feel alone in our homes.

But the Church is not a building! Ministry isn't restricted! Jesus doesn't call us to get it perfect every time; He calls us to stay faithful and never give up! We have a huge opportunity to reach more people than could ever fit inside of Pathway's walls. Don't stop creating. Don't stop reaching out to people online. Don't stop praying for those in need. People need us to show them love now more than ever.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, I ask that you give strength to those learning how to serve your people online. That you give them wisdom, guidance, and comfort knowing that You are right by their side, supporting them and holding onto them every step of the way. Let us be a light to those online and help us be servants to Your will. Amen.

For Reflection:

- Listen and reflect on the words of Cody Carne's song, [Nothing Else](#).
- When all is stripped back, when life's distractions are removed, when we can't meet inside a building together, is Jesus enough?
- What in life has made it hard to let Jesus be enough for us?

By Ethan Dize

Sunday, April 26

Rooted

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.

Jeremiah 17:7-8

We have a tree in our backyard that an arborist told us was in danger of falling over. “Why?” we asked. “Because it has a very shallow root system” was the answer.

Uncertain times cause us to be fearful and ask questions that outwardly mirror our inner trust and faith. The kinds of questions we ask reveal our root system and what we depend on for stability. The prophet Jeremiah reminds us that as long as our trust is in the Lord, He will provide and He will allow us to be a source of blessing. Jeremiah also tells us that we will have ‘years of heat’ and ‘years of drought’.

We are in the middle of a ‘year of heat’, where our trust is being tested. I have been often reminded that trials are tests that teach us to trust. This gives us a great opportunity to evaluate and ask if we are learning to trust. If our confidence is in anything other than the Lord, now is good opportunity to transplant our trust to the Lord. Because we have a good Father, we know that our confidence in Him is never misplaced. Because we have a loving Father, we know He will always be true to His word.

Prayer:

Father – this is an uncertain time for us because we don’t have answers. Thank you that you hold all things in the palm of your hand. Remind us that you are trustworthy. Help us to root deeply into your word and your love.

For Reflection:

Psalm 1:1-3 “Blessed is the one...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.”

By Lori Allen

Monday, April 27

Unity of the Pathway Body

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call - one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Ephesians 4:1-15

When we talk about unity in the church, I always think back upon this one experience. I was in Turkey for a Christian conference, and in the congregation, we had Israeli and Palestinian Christians worshipping together. It was during this time that a man from the Church in Baku Azerbaijan came over - with a huge smile on his face - loudly crying out "Sister, praise God". Being Armenian, the last time I had heard Azeri loudly yell something, it had been "death to all Armenians." But here we were, all kinds of natural enemies, united in Christ and in worship.

It's a beautiful thing when what unites us is so much more than what separates us. It makes all of our divisions and fractions seem a little silly. Yes, Church would be easier if it consisted only of people exactly like yourself, but God designed the church for a purpose - a purpose that requires all of us. By uniting together as the Pathway body, we can all experience growth into the types of little Christs that can reach all of Fort Wayne.

Prayer:

Dear Father, teach me to long for unity in your church - help me to set aside my own preferences and always look for ways to demonstrate true love towards others. I especially ask for unity within our Pathway family during this troubling time. Let us grow closer together despite the physical distance we are forced to maintain.

For Reflection:

"What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together because they have all been loved by Jesus himself."
D.A. Carson

By Olga Petrosyan

Tuesday, April 28

City of Churches

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.

John 17:20-21

About two years ago, leaders from across the city of Fort Wayne began meeting together. The agenda was simple: gather and pray for our city. An understanding of common identity took root during these times spent together. A realization grew out of that root - that we could run much farther and accomplish much more together.

The night that Jesus was betrayed, everything changed for the disciples. Fear crept in, anxiety was high, and the disciples shut themselves in a room, unsure of what to do next. Jesus knew what was coming, and he knew that unity among the disciples was crucial for the future of the Church. He brought his prayer before God, that the disciples would believe, unite, and lead future generations to his love.

The great news is that Jesus included us in his prayer. He knew what was coming for the disciples, and he is not surprised at where we are now. Unity among his followers continues to be as important as ever for our city of churches, shining God's light in this time of darkness for both fellow and future believers.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for being with us in this time. Thank you for your living and active Word that continues to provide hope, guidance, and life to us. Please help us continue, as representatives of the Church specifically here in Fort Wayne, to shine as one bright light. May our words unite, not divide, pointing our community to you. Give our leaders humility and help them lead with confidence where you direct them. Please give us wisdom in how each of us can continue to reach those who don't know you. Amen.

For Reflection:

- Listen to [Make Us One](#) by Chris Quilala
- "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools." Martin Luther King Jr.

By Isaac Norris

Wednesday, April 29

Holding Me

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?

Psalm 27:1 (see also Isaiah 40:4-5, 10-11, and Ephesians 3:20)

Being a nurse (and admittedly, an enneagram type one) I have the desire to “fix it”. Some problems are easy to correct: High blood pressure? Prescribe medication and promote healthy life choices. Trouble breathing? Administer oxygen and get a chest x-ray. At home, as a parent, I find myself also wanting the “magic potion” or the immediate solution to change my children’s behavior, disobedience, etc.

While at times in life we find those simple solutions, often we are left at the other end of the spectrum. We cannot see what or how we will change our situation, our tension, our anxiety, or, in this present time, our global pandemic of COVID-19. So, what happens when we don’t have the answers? Our focus needs to be on the One who knows all and who is always near. The artwork here summarizes how I can go to work, not “fix” my patient and feel a sense of peace. The One who does hold all the answers is holding me. Jesus is able to hold you too in the midst of your own personal storm.



In our current circumstance, there are more questions than answers - may we go confidently to Jesus in times of uncertainty and feel his power in us! Our prayer focus today is for a cure and vaccine to stop COVID-19. This is a big prayer, but we serve an even bigger God.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we come to you with awe and wonder. We know you are greater than any battle we face, including the current war against COVID-19. We pray today that a vaccine and a cure for COVID-19 will be developed. We pray for those who are working towards the cure - may they feel your power and may they be encouraged by others who know you. We praise you for the ways in which you are working. Your ways are truly higher than our ways.

For Reflection:

- Do I find myself trying to “fix” problems on my own before coming to the Lord?
- How can I lay down my striving and begin seeking Him more?
- Listen to [Another In The Fire](#) by Hillsong United. When reflecting on your own life, think of ways in which you saw or felt Jesus with you during a difficult situation. Write them down and thank him for being with you!

By Melanie Gall

Thursday, April 30

. . . To Save the World

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:17

Nearly every Christ-follower knows John 3:16: “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”. The passage that immediately follows this core truth isn’t as well known, but it’s equally encouraging.

Christ’s purpose in coming to earth was not to condemn the world, but to bring salvation to those who believe in Him. This was true at the time of Christ’s resurrection, and it’s equally true today. Those who serve as leaders, particularly government leaders, can influence how the Gospel is proclaimed.

National and local leaders may help to actively spread the Good News by partnering with missionaries or local believers. Or the Gospel may be advanced when leaders are neutral – doing nothing to hinder the Good News from being shared. In some cases, the Gospel might even be spread amid persecution. In all cases, those in leadership can influence the manner in which the Gospel is advanced.

So let’s pray that influential leaders around the world will be used in such a way that the promise of John 3:17 will be fulfilled: Saving the world, one person at a time, through Christ.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Christ, the Light of the World, to save the world. May I be truly attuned to Your plan and purpose for the world, and I pray that leaders around the world will be used by You to help accomplish Your divine purpose.

For Reflection:

If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. ~C.S. Lewis

By Michael Allison

Friday, May 1

Trusting God in Economic Uncertainty

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.”

Romans 12:12-13

What is your most pressing financial concern today? How is the global health pandemic affecting your sense of financial security – your job, bills, food, 401(k), and plans for the future? How are you thinking about its effect on your neighbors, our city, our state, our nation, and our world?

As our worldwide economy experiences turbulence and instability due to the coronavirus, we may be inclined to fear and despair amidst the uncertainty. But as Christ-followers, we are to trust in and depend on God. He is our Provider, our source of all provision and help. In the midst of tribulation, as Romans 12 reminds us, we are to:

Be joyful in hope,
Persevere patiently,
Pray all the more,
Practice generosity, and
Be inventive in hospitality.

This passage reminds us to focus our dependence on God as we seek to practically serve the needs of others. Our world will look different as we emerge from this global pandemic. But our trust is in God Almighty who never changes. Will we respond with generous hearts and a deep and abiding dependence on our faithful and loving Father?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we praise you for your sovereignty, provision, and love in the midst of worldwide uncertainty. We ask that you would meet each of us at our point of need, Father, and provide for the needs of those who are out of work or anxious about the economy. We affirm our trust in you, Lord, and pray for your mercy and restoration for those suffering financially, emotionally, mentally, physically, or spiritually. Use us to show your love and goodness to our neighbors in need. Amen

For Reflection:

- Reflect on ways in which God is faithfully sustaining you and providing for your needs. Thank Him for His provision.
- Ask God to show you how you can help and care for someone else who is in need today. Then act on that prompting.
- Listen to [Trust in You](#) by Lauren Daigle

By Ken and Tammy Sipe

Saturday, May 2

Absolutely Able

When he got there, he called out in anguish, 'Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?'

Daniel 6:20

Have you ever wondered why our loving God allowed Daniel to be thrown into a pit of ravenous lions? Can you imagine the fear he felt? When he hit bottom, a huge stone was placed over the mouth of the pit extinguishing light and hope.

Many of us find ourselves alone in a pit of some kind. Surrounded by anxious thoughts, a potentially deadly virus, and an uncertain world, we face our fears alone. Through financial, spiritual or relational despair we wait for light and hope. Alone.

Why does God leave us trembling and vulnerable in a pit that he could lift us out of? Humanly, we will never know. But I have learned two important truths. When God lets us experience a difficult situation, we learn to trust him through it. God then uses the outcome to prove himself to others who witness it.

The king needed to see with his own eyes that God had protected Daniel. This moved him to deep personal trust in God. When the stone is removed from the pit we find ourselves in, we will emerge with a deeper faith, and others will see that God was able to sustain us too.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, no matter how alone we find ourselves, or what pit we may be in, our eyes are on you for you are able to sustain us. We may be isolated from others, but no pit can keep us from your presence. Be very close to all who need to feel your presence right now, to all who are awaiting your deliverance. Amen.

Reflection:

- God allowed his own son to endure the agony of crucifixion completely alone. But three days later the stone was rolled away from his tomb - not so Jesus could emerge, but so people could see that he had already risen!
- Have you considered that God may be doing a work in you as a testimony to others?
- Commit to trust him through it all. Draw close to the one who is able!

By Becky Patton (a friend in the pit)

Sunday, May 3

Burdens

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

His yoke fits perfectly. I must remember this truth, that the Lord knows me more than I know myself. Another truth, God knows that I am more comfortable with my pride than in putting my trust in him. Even the very words that I have to express my worry and insecurities to God can feel inadequate to me and the pride of not being enough can hold me back from talking to him. The humility of the Lord is my example.

On the days that I am willing to mimic a fraction of his humility and ask God to expose the hidden and dark places within me, the depth of my unbelief and brokenness - the light, the life of Jesus comes in. To these very places his word teaches me that he doesn't leave me alone in my weariness. In fact, not only is he present in my time of trouble, but Jesus himself is interceding for me and rejoices in the very fact that I recognized, even for a moment, where my true source of life can be found. His gentleness brings not condemnation but freedom from my many self-inflicted burdens and rest for my soul because my soul was one that he died for.

Prayer:

Father, thank you that you already know how weary I am from struggling with the burdens I have today. Help me to lay this "heavy yoke" of my pride at your feet and to replace it with your perfectly fit yoke instead. Teach me what it means to find rest for my weary soul and help me to accept your word as my source of truth rather than my own understanding. Thank you that I do not need to fear for you are with me, you are my peace, hope and everlasting joy.

For Reflection:

What holds you back from bringing your burdens to Jesus? Do you wrestle with your pride and make the excuse that it's not that bad? Or, like me, do you wrestle with the fear of how He will answer if you are vulnerable to ask? I am learning that our fears and insecurities are normal human responses that simply show us our need for Jesus. I am beyond thankful for the truth of Psalm 145:8. The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich (constant) in love. You and I will never regret bringing our burdens to our compassionate God who will lighten our load and bring us rest.

By Regina Knapp

Monday, May 4

Stand United

“...there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”

Revelation 7:9

For many of us, a typical day might start with popping out of bed, making ourselves presentable for work, a quick breakfast, getting kids to school with all supplies needed for the day. Our minds are focused on the day. However, current days are certainly not typical or routine. COVID-19 has changed how we see ourselves and the world around us.

The Bible reminds us that the world God created and loves is larger than just our corner. Revelation 7:9 speaks of a day when people from every nation, tribe and language will stand united before the throne worshipping God, as one. In God's great love for the whole world, John 3:16 reminds us that He sent his one and only Son to save. Not just one but every nation and people.

As we pray for healing, let's pray for more than our small corner of the world. Let's pray for the healing of every nation, tribe and people around the world. Today, we may be separated by land and ocean but one day we'll stand together to worship God...united, as one, worshipping our true and worthy God.

Prayer:

Father, Today I pray for healing in our land and of our people. Not only our land and our people, Lord, but for every nation, tribe and person across the globe. Today, I cry out for physical and spiritual healing as one of many separated by land and ocean, knowing, with full assurance and hope, that one day we'll stand united and together to fully worship You.

For Reflection:

“God loves human beings. God loves the world. Not an ideal human, but human beings as they are; not an ideal world, but the real world. What we find repulsive in their opposition to God, what we shrink back from with pain and hostility, namely, real human beings, the real world, this is for God the ground of unfathomable love.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

By Becky Johnson

Tuesday, May 5

Is My Hope in the Lord?

“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.”

Lamentations 3:25-26

During one of the darkest times in Israel’s history, the prophet Jeremiah wrote these words. He wasn’t sugar-coating the calamity that was taking place or trying to diminish the crisis that was coming. He was giving hope; hope in the person of God Himself.

God is the Creator who cares for His people. He is the Promise Keeper who is always faithful. This does not mean that difficult things will not take place in our lives. As a matter of fact, the entire nation of Israel experienced judgment, but God ultimately delivered them.

For those of us who are trusting the Lord Jesus as our Savior, we know that no matter what happens in this life, our future is secure in Him. His death on the cross paid the penalty for our sins and His gift of eternal life gives us security in our eternal salvation beyond all of the struggles of this life.

A revealing question is: “If everything else is taken away from you, is Jesus enough?”, because it makes us realize that we have many things that draw our hearts away from Him. As the COVID-19 crisis continues, let’s pray for deliverance and put our ultimate hope in the salvation Jesus has given us.

Prayer:

Lord, please remind me today that my ultimate hope is in you. I pray that you will deliver us from this virus in order that we may serve your people and always tell people about your Son. Please help us not to take any of the days of our lives for granted, or place people or things before you. Help us to glorify you in all we say and do.”

For Reflection:

My life is in You, Lord, my strength is in You, Lord
My hope is in You, Lord, in You, it’s in You
I will praise You with all of my life
I will praise You with all of my strength
With all of my life, and all of my strength
All of my hope is in You. -Daniel Gardner

By Pastor Brent Allen

Wednesday, May 6

So Much Family Time!

Do everything without grumbling and 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 the stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.

Philippians 2:14-16b

My kids were asked how they felt about not going back to school and being home, and all three answered differently. For my daughter, this abundant home and family time is hard. She misses her teachers, friends, church, and freedom. For my youngest son, it's awesome. He loves being home with his siblings, playing and wearing PJs all day long. As I observe them, one has to fight harder to speak kindly, to encourage, and to have patience than the other. She's fighting to resist grumbling and arguing, and that is GOOD! God is in the growth; He is in this learning process.

As a family who has ample "together time," it's inevitable we will be tempted to grumble and argue with each other. My husband and I are tempted to "vent" to one another. This too is sin. We can ask God for help with our words so that we aren't tearing each other down. We can trust that God is our help. And there is such a wonderful purpose for it - so that we will shine like stars in the sky! We don't shine to be great ourselves; we shine so that God is glorified and people are drawn to His Light. Learning to do everything without grumbling and arguing in our families can be used to show others Christ's love.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for always being our help when we come to you. We ask you to use this time to refine and strengthen us as a family, so that we would be a light and witness of your saving grace to people in our lives. Help us, God, to speak words that build each other up, and to not grumble and argue. All for Your glory, Lord, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen

For Reflection:

- Has it been harder, lately, to do everything without grumbling or arguing? Why do you think that is?
- How could God be using this time to help us work on our words?
- What's the purpose for being "blameless" with our words?

By Molly McClish

Thursday, May 7

A Chalkboard Reminder

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10

Zoom, FaceTime, Marco Polo, texting - basically anything tech sprinkled with socially distant conversation, instead of connecting face to face - welcome to our new and bizarre reality! Admittedly, when social distancing began and invitations for connecting through video chats started coming in, I became frustrated. I was selfishly enjoying the lack of scheduled plans and preferred connecting with people at my convenience, through text.

Thankfully, one day, my eyes were opened to Romans 12:10, words penned by Paul that have been written on a chalkboard in my house: *“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”*

When this verse penetrated my heart, I was convicted that being *devoted to* something meant committing to one thing at the cost of losing something of lesser value. In this case, being devoted to my friends meant using a medium to connect that was out of my comfort zone and cost me my time. Honoring our friends often requires sacrifice and intention.

Jesus made it clear that the two critical things in life are to love God and love people. Pandemic, or no pandemic, that is our purpose.

Understandably, the specifics of how you challenge and devote yourself to honoring your friends may be quite different from my realization. However, we can all choose to fix our eyes on Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us on how best to lavishly love our friends during these troubling days.

Prayer:

Father God, thank you that you are in control and you give us purpose, even in the midst of this pandemic. We know our friends are struggling because we all are, so please prompt us to be devoted to honoring our friends in meaningful ways. Protect our friends and help them abide in you, so they might bear fruit in any season. We love you Jesus and pray these things in your strong and mighty name. Amen

For Reflection:

- “God never intended for us to simply be the objects of His love. We are also called to be the instruments of that love in the lives of others.” - Paul David Tripp.
- Ask God what you might need to give up, in order to be devoted to your friends this season.
- Listen to [Upper Room](#) by Hillsong Worship

By Adrienne Rohrs

Friday, May 8

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood

Unlike Mr. Rogers, Jake from State Farm, and The Good Samaritan, I'm not always a good neighbor. I truly care about our neighbors and people in general, but sometimes I just want our home to be a fortress of solitude and privacy.

During this COVID-19 quarantine time, it's easy to avoid people because of the virus and fear. But we, as a family of believers, must have an awareness of the needs of our neighbors around us. Just as in the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, we must not just walk past people and pity them, but we must engage with them in some way to truly show the love God has for them.

Here are some simple meaningful ways this has been done in our neighborhood:

- Making and delivering cookies and/or cards
- 7pm porch greetings
- Walks (6 feet apart)
- Getting groceries for the elderly
- Raking leaves
- Simply waving

When we invest our time in our neighbors, they know they are valued and that we care about them. This is especially important for those who are completely isolated during this time.

Give yourself grace, but also make sure to extend a hand of grace to your neighbors. Jesus taught us that we must love others through our actions. By doing these things we are being the person of Jesus to them and bringing God's love right in to the neighborhood.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, you are a God who gives us opportunities to show love to our neighbors. Give us eyes and ears to see and hear their needs, and help us to recognize your goodness and grace in our lives so we can extend it forward. We pray specifically for our neighbors' safety and health, and ask that they may seek and draw nearer to you.

For Reflection:

- Do I know my neighbor's names? You can start caring for your neighbor simply by getting to know their name and then praying for them.
- What can I do to bless a neighbor today?
- Do I have a right spirit towards all of my neighbors?
- Listen to [Give Me Your Eyes](#) by Brandon Heath

Sending a big neighborly wave, Joe Wright

Saturday, May 9

Sit, Please. No, Seriously.

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said: "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?"

2 Samuel 7:18

Do you ever sit before God? Truly slow down to
enjoy Him,
thank Him,
repent of your sins, and
listen to Him?

Our world is moving at a frenetic pace, and so are we.

We are constantly in transition - graduations, jobs, moves, weddings, births, funerals... Moments to celebrate and mountains to climb – all slip into our rearview mirrors as life flies by. How do we handle all these transitions?

Pray. Sit before your Creator, your God, your King – the only One who lived and died for you so that you could spend eternity with Him - your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (John 3:16).

To this day, I (Parker) recall a question that I missed on my Lutheran confirmation test: "What is the right way to pray?" I fell for the "close your eyes and fold your hands" answer.

There is no perfect way to pray. Different seasons prompt different approaches. Thank you, Jesus, that we can approach God at all (John 14:6, Hebrews 4:16). Sit before Him for 15 minutes... an hour... a day. Seek Him with all your heart and you will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). Acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:6).

Prayer:

Jesus, As the hills and valleys of life come and go, let us slow down and seek what is important (You) over what is urgent (the world). Please guide and be near to those who are in the midst of life stage transitions. Let us enjoy You, thank You, repent of our sins, and truly listen to You. Let us do so now.

For Reflection:

- As you think back over the last 5-10 years, listen to [Hills and Valleys](#) by Tauren Wells (we prefer the acoustic version). Who were you then compared to now? How did God carry you through the changes? Thank Him for it now.
- When can you daily sit before God? You won't regret it. He promises (Matthew 6:33).

By Parker and Natalie Crosby

Sunday, May 10

Learning to Walk Again

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

Have you watched a baby take their first step? They usually look unstable. They often pause to think about how it's done before they take the step. But as they practice over and over, it becomes easier. And the result...they learn to walk!

Sometimes I feel like that unstable toddler in my faith. I find myself taking a step and falling down, allowing my sinful nature to get in the way of walking by faith. Galatians 5:24-25 says, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

As followers of Jesus we are to walk, or keep in step, with the Spirit of God. How do we know if we are? We see the fruit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. This fruit is the result of step by step crucifying our sinful desires and aligning our thoughts and desires to Christ's.

How peaceful and joyful are you today? Are you feeling a little unstable? There's good news! You can learn to walk again and have the amazing blessing of the fruit by allowing God's Spirit to work in your life.

Steps to learning to walk in the Spirit:

1. Ask yourself, "What's controlling my thoughts?"
2. Ask yourself, "Does that thought agree with what God says?"
3. If it doesn't, nail it to the cross.
4. Replace the thought with truth from God's Word.
5. WALK!

At first you might feel unstable, but the more you do it, the easier it is and the more fruit you will see in your life!

Prayer:

God, I want to live the full life I can have through You. I want to walk step by step with Your Spirit. Help me, God, as I learn to nail my desires to the cross and walk with You. Amen.

For Reflection:

Instead of using "I'm human" as an excuse to walk in the flesh, let us use "I'm saved" as a reason to walk in the Spirit.

By Susie Schumacher

Monday, May 11

Being the Light

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

This past summer we took our boys on a cave tour in Missouri. As our tour began, we observed that one of the families in our group was deaf. We also noticed that they had a hearing daughter who would interpret the guides' instructions as we moved through the cave.

About halfway through the cave, we came to a room where the guide turned out all the lights in order to show us how dark the cave really was. As you can imagine, it would have been impossible for the girl using sign-language to communicate with her family in the dark. So, the guide brought the young girl up by him and lit a candle. The glow of the candle was just enough for her family to see her hands and receive the tour guides' message.

There is no doubt that this season we are in has left many people feeling like they are lost in the dark. As Jesus followers it's our job to both be IN the light and BE the light so that others can see and know His message of hope.

Prayer:

Father, please help me to stay connected to you so that I can be a clear reflection of your character. Help me to light up the darkness around me with your hope, joy and presence. In Jesus name.

For Reflection:

- What is one practical way you can be a light in your home?
- What is one way that God is calling you to light up the darkness around you?
- Check out the song [Wake Up](#) by All Sons and Daughters
- If you have little ones at home [This Little Light of Mine](#) would be a very appropriate song to sing together after discussing this verse.

By Dan and Kim Litwiller

Tuesday, May 12

Superior Camping

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:23

If you've ever been tent camping, you probably have a memorable story about it. The romanticism of "roughing it" in God's beautiful creation is usually juxtaposed by some sort of miserable adversity you can laugh about now – but at the time wasn't so funny.

To celebrate an anniversary, we once went camping in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in June. Thinking it was officially summer, we prepared for it to be a bit colder, but nothing out of the ordinary. Pitching our tent close enough to hear Lake Superior, our eager hearts were ready for a relaxing trip in the great outdoors.

That first night, the temperature dipped into the low 30's. As we lay there wide awake, shivering in our pitch black, "Superior" camping experience, our minds were fixated on the hope and anticipation of a warming sunrise...and a hot cup of coffee.

Darkness, or even the fear of darkness, can send a cold shiver down our spines. Oftentimes this comes from circumstances beyond our control and feels like more than we can handle. But in these times, the author of Hebrews reminds us to cling to our hope in Jesus. He has been, is, and will be faithful in providing the peace of His presence.

Despite a failed attempt at a morning campfire, God provided peace on our trip – even if it came in the form of heated car seats and a nearby coffee shop.

Prayer:

Lord, we humble ourselves before you and ask that your Holy Spirit will produce in us the hope you profess. That we would cling to your promises and your truth, even when our circumstances seem grim. Let us choose faith over fear.

For Reflection:

When you feel stressed, discouraged, worried, or fearful today, remember that God is faithful in providing us the peace of His presence.

By Adam and Rachel Widener