ENOUGH GRACE ALREADY

RESTING DAILY IN HIS FINISHED WORK



TIM CHALAS

31 DEVOTIONALS ON GRACE

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TIM CHALAS

GRACE LIFE FELLOWSHIP

FOREWORD

In John's Gospel we read these incredible words: *"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace"* (John 1:16). Think about that for a moment. Of His fullness. Not some of His fullness. Not a little now and more later. Not after you have prayed enough, obeyed enough, served enough, or grown enough. Already.

Religion constantly tells us we're lacking. It tells us to be better, try harder, and do more so that God will finally be pleased with us. It's exhausting! Maybe you've been there? Worn out from trying to be a better Christian. Worn out from feeling like God is disappointed with you. Worn out from managing your sin, measuring your progress, comparing your spiritual life to someone else's, and wondering when any of this is ever going to lead to freedom.

Jesus spoke directly to worn-out people when He said, *"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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"* (Matthew 11:28–30). "Come to Me." The answer to our weariness isn't another spiritual discipline to master, another standard to reach, or another burden to carry. The answer is a Person. Jesus.

He doesn't give you a little grace to help you do better. He gives you Himself… and of His fullness you receive grace upon grace.

That's why I love the title of this devotional. **Enough Grace Already.** It isn't saying we've had enough of grace. It's saying grace is enough. Because Jesus is enough.

When you placed your faith in Him, you received His Life. He made His home in you. You were forgiven completely, made righteous forever, united with Christ, and made a new creation. You didn't receive some of Jesus. You received all of Him. He doesn't visit you once in a while or just on special occasions. He lives in you. And because you have Him, you have everything you need for whatever this life brings.

That changes everything. The gospel isn't about having to try harder, do more, or somehow become enough. It is about trusting Jesus and enjoying what He has already accomplished for you. These devotionals are simply an invitation to slow down long enough to remember and rest in the assurance that you are already accepted, already forgiven, already complete in Christ. It's freedom to stop living from emptiness and start living from the fullness that is already yours in Him. It's freedom to lay down the exhausting burden of trying to stay right with God and discover that Jesus has already made you right with Him forever.

My prayer is that as you read these pages, the noise of religion grows quieter and the voice of grace grows louder. May you grow in the confidence that your identity is settled, your relationship with God is secure, and His love for you is steady and faithful, even when you are not.

You don't have to spend your life trying to become enough. Because of Jesus, you already have all you need. As Paul reminds us, *"... and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority"* (Colossians 2:10).

So, welcome to the journey of learning to trust, enjoy, and rest in what is already yours in Jesus.

Enough. Grace. Already.

Tim



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№ 1 ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CROSS

David is one of the heroes of faith in the Old Testament. He was appointed and chosen by God as king and described as a "man after God's own heart." It would be easy to assume, with these credentials, that David would have an impeccable service record. But he didn't, not even close! I won't recall all his transgressions, but like many of us, he probably did. Sin stains. It leaves the marks of shame and guilt and haunts our memory with regret and our conscience with angst. Later in life, David prays and asks the Lord not to remember his sins, but according to God's goodness, to remember him. No telling how many animals David sacrificed to try and rid his conscience of sin, only to find a temporary reprieve until the next time. The book of Hebrews tells us that those offerings never removed sin but only reminded of it.

But we have it so much better! It's not about our offering to God, but His offering for us! See, what David was after... we have! Because of the finished work of Christ, we are not just after God's own heart, we have it. We don't have to wonder if God remembers our sins. He doesn't. But He does look at our heart. What a beautiful picture of the goodness of God, that He won't remember your sins ever again but He will always remember you! You are loved, dear child, by a faithful Father!

REFLECT

№ 1 — On the Other Side of the Cross

1. David asked the Lord not to remember his sins but, according to His goodness, to remember him. What happens inside you when you let it settle down deep that God will never remember your sins again?

2. If you truly believe you already possess God's heart rather than having to chase after it, how does that change the way you look at Him right now?

3. What does it look like for you to simply rest today in the quiet confidence that you are completely loved by a faithful Father?

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Your lovingkindness remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

— Psalm 25:7

№ 2 GRACE THAT EMPOWERS

Grace is a game changer and often misunderstood! Many people think of grace as God's response to our shortcomings and sins, amounting to no more than mercy at best and some sort of divine cover-up at worst. This leads to the false belief that grace must be balanced with law. We need law to know and do what is right and we need grace for when we mess it up. But the Bible speaks of law and grace in contrasting ways, not compatible ways!

"For sin shall not be master over you, for you are ***not under law*** but ***under grace***" (Romans 6:14).

God told Paul that "My grace is sufficient for you." We don't need law to balance grace, because grace is much more than just mercy... not getting what you deserve, and it is certainly not a divine "cover-up." Whereas the law expects, grace empowers! The law ministers condemnation and death no matter how good you think you are but grace ministers life no matter how bad you think you are. The law is a sin revealer but grace is a Savior revealer. The law calls for servants and doers but grace calls us sons and daughters. The law leaves us frustrated while grace leaves us free!

Just to be clear, all of this is what the law is designed to do! It is designed to show us our need of Jesus, Who is grace. Once done, we thrive in grace alone and we see that grace is more than just mercy, not getting what we deserve, but giving us what we could never deserve... union with Jesus! May you enjoy Him as you ***realize*** by grace, His life in you!

REFLECT

№ 2 — Grace That Empowers

1. Where have you fallen into the trap of thinking grace is just mercy or a divine cover-up for your sins, rather than His Life in you, living through you?

2. The law shows our need, but grace meets it. Are there areas in your life where you feel you don't measure up?

3. What does it look like for you to slow down enough today to simply enjoy Jesus and discover what it means that His life is in you?

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

— John 1:17



№ 3 THE PREREQUISITE FOR CONTENTMENT

Paul writes these well-known words in Philippians 4, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." ALL THINGS! It is amazing how the truth of this verse was tested during COVID. With many of our taken-for-granted conveniences and comforts compromised, we found ourselves stretched, challenged, tired, and asking, "Is that declaration really true?" Paul was in prison when he wrote it and his circumstances would not have included much comfort or convenience. Maybe he wasn't dealing with a virus and all its subsequent issues (insert your personal situation here) but my guess is that being chained and in prison waiting to be executed was no picnic!

In fact, it is not just that Paul says he can do this because of Jesus but two verses earlier he writes that he is content in doing it! Paul "learned" how to be content, not based on what was happening around him or to him, not based on how he felt. He learned the incredible truth that the prerequisite for contentment is not convenience or comfort, but Christ alone!

REFLECT

№ 3 — The Prerequisite for Contentment

1. When your routine gets disrupted or life becomes inconvenient, how do you typically react?

2. Paul learned contentment while in prison. In what ways do you look to convenience or comfort rather than to Christ for contentment?

3. How can you rest today in the quiet confidence that Christ in you is more than enough for whatever comes your way?

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

— Philippians 4:11



№ 4 THIRSTY FOR APPROVAL

We live in a world that is addicted to seeking approval. Whether it's as seemingly superficial as how many "likes" you received on your latest post or as seemingly critical as what others may think about you, one thing is for certain... we thirst for approval. Jesus invited all who are thirsty to come to Him. But why? Can God really quench our thirst for approval? Isn't God's standard for approval perfection? Religion "promises" God's approval but it is based on what we do. That is as unsure as the click of the next emoji! But Jesus did not invite us to a religion but to a relationship where God's approval is guaranteed, not by what you do but by what He has done!

Dear child of God, this is such good news... God approves of you! He is pleased with you. Not because of what you do but because of what Jesus did. Who Jesus is and what He did is God's gift to us and for us. This is grace... God's unearned favor in and through Jesus Christ. We are set free from the fleeting and false approval of this world, and we now live by faith in being approved of by the One, the only One who could quench our thirst! Enjoy today knowing God's smile is upon you!

REFLECT

№ 4 — Thirsty for Approval

1. In what areas of your life do you find yourself anxiously craving or chasing the approval of others?
2. What does it mean to you that God already approves of you?
3. What changes in your thinking when you pause and recognize that God's smile is already upon you right now?

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."

— John 7:37




GOD'S SMILE IS
ALREADY UPON
YOU.



№ 5 NOT AN ACCOUNTING CLASS

I took an accounting class in college, and it was a struggle. Debits, credits, accrual, assets, depreciation... okay, enough! It just wasn't for me, and needless to say, I am so thankful God has gifted others for the art of accounting. For many of us, we can think of our relationship with God much like I did that accounting class. A struggle! A struggle to keep our accounts short and reconciled with God and to make sure that, at the end of the day, our credits are greater than our debits.

Sin management is such a burden for the child of God who believes it is their job to stay right with God. Jesus said that He came so that we might live life to the fullest, and it just so happens that doing so includes believing your account with God is completely reconciled because of Jesus. All your debts have been paid, and you have been gifted with all the riches of Christ Himself! God is not offering an accounting class but a loving relationship where we can relax, rest, and rejoice in all He has done, and that is good news!

REFLECT

№ 5 — Not an Accounting Class

1. Jesus came to give you life to the full, not to keep an account of your sins. What does it mean for you to know that your sin account has been reconciled?

2. Consider the time and energy that is spent focusing on sin and how that would change by fixing our eyes on Jesus.

3. Since all your debt is paid by Christ, how does that help you to rejoice today?

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

— Colossians 2:13–14



№ 6 A TASTE THAT STAYS WITH YOU

Delaware Punch reminds me of my grandfather. We would visit him at his farm and it seemed like he always had one for me. To this day, if I drink a Delaware Punch, that sweet taste takes me back to those wonderful times with Paw-Paw. Some tastes are supposed to stay with us! Psalm 34:8 tells us, "O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!" As His children, the goodness of God is to be like that Delaware Punch... a taste that stays with us.

We live in a world that can leave a bitter taste with all the suffering, storms, loss, and fear. Many people even attribute these kinds of things to God but the Bible is clear... God is good! He is not the author of suffering. He is not the cause of everything we taste in this world BUT He is the cause of making good from anything that happens in this world! We often look at the world around us and question His goodness. But what if we believed Him and trusted, tasted that He is good? Then maybe we would see the circumstances of this world very differently and rather than ***obstacles*** to His goodness, we would see them as ***opportunities*** to taste how good He is. You are loved by a good God and there is nothing sweeter than that!

REFLECT

№ 6 — A Taste That Stays With You

1. What is a sweet memory or moment in your life that always reminds you of God's goodness?

2. When life leaves a bitter taste, how hard is it for you to believe that God is not the author of your suffering?

3. How does your view of hard times change when you look at them as opportunities to experience His sweetness rather than obstacles to His goodness?

O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

— Psalm 34:8



№ 7 THE UNHOLY TRINITY

Guilt, shame, and condemnation are the unholy trinity that can wreak havoc and shipwreck our souls. Guilt is associated with things we do, while shame is the idea that we are wrong. Condemnation is what is deserved because of both. They bombard us with messages that keep us focused on things we've done wrong or wrongs done to us, which leaves us to either try and justify ourselves or blame others, all the while causing us to have a mind set on sin rather than a mind set on our Savior.

No amount of our doing can overcome this onslaught, but by God's doing, we are already victorious. The gospel does not tell us that we never do or did wrong, but that we are totally forgiven of it, once and for all. The gospel does not tell us that we never were wrong, but that we have been made new and are totally righteous, called saints. The gospel does not tell us that we did not deserve condemnation, but that in Christ, there is no condemnation! That unholy trinity is no match for the Holy Trinity, who by grace has given us a redemption of our past, a victory in our present, and the hope of assurance for our future! Dear child of God, know today that your soul is anchored in Jesus and rest in all He has secured for you!

REFLECT

№ 7 — The Unholy Trinity

1. Where do you feel the unholy trinity of guilt, shame, and condemnation trying to wreak havoc on your soul right now?

2. Since Jesus completely removed all judgment, what does it mean for your identity that God permanently calls you a righteous saint?

3. How does it feel to know that your soul is completely anchored in the finished work of Jesus, regardless of your mistakes?

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

— Hebrews 6:19



№ 8 THE WAY, NOT A WAY

Proverbs 14:12 reads, "There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death." Religion offers "a way." A way to live. A way to please God and get right with Him. A way to joy and contentment. As Proverbs says, it appeals to our sensibilities and "seems" right, but it is a beaten path that never delivers on its promise and leaves the traveler weary, disillusioned, and defeated. It bids you do your best, keep trying, and you will eventually arrive... but you never do, because it's the wrong way!

In stark contrast, Jesus offered Himself as "the way," not a way, to live, please God, and find purpose and meaning. His offer allows us to place our confidence in all He has done rather than in what we are doing... this is grace! Because the wrong way of religion "seems" right, the true way of grace can often appear counterintuitive since it goes against the grain. Jesus has shown us that His way, which is truth, is where death leads to life (Galatians 2:20), serving is leading (Matthew 20:28), sacrifice is fulfillment (Luke 9:24), and weakness is strength (2 Corinthians 12:9). This is the truth of the way that is life! This is the path the child of God is on, the one paved with His love, not our labor, and it brings joy and delight as we take a U-turn on the road of religion and travel the freeway of grace! Enjoy the ride!

REFLECT

№ 8 — The Way, Not a Way

1. In what ways have you found yourself weary or defeated from trying to travel the beaten path of religious performance?

2. The way of grace can feel counterintuitive to our instincts. Which of Jesus' pathways, like finding strength in your weakness, is hardest for you to embrace today?

3. What does it look like for you to take a U-turn on the road of religion and simply enjoy traveling the freeway of grace?

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

— John 14:6

№ 9 AGREEING WITH GOD

We have all heard the saying, "Confession is good for the soul." And it is! Admitting our shortcomings, struggles, and sins with one another brings those hidden and shameful things into the light where there can be healing, forgiveness, acceptance, restoration, and redemption between us. Confession is the breeding ground for honesty, vulnerability, and intimacy, which helps us build and cultivate healthy relationships with others. No wonder James 5:16 encourages us to "confess our sins to one another."

But when it comes to confession with God, it is much more than just admitting our sins and failures... He knows those anyway. When we confess to God, we are not bringing anything into the light for Him because nothing is hidden from Him... confession is for us! Confession in the Bible literally means "to say the same word" or "agree with" God. So, let's confess, agree with God about our shortcomings and sins! They are forgiven forever. Let's agree with God about our relationship with Him where because of the finished work of Christ, we are already in right standing because of His healing, forgiveness, acceptance, restoration, and redemption... a healthy relationship. Confession does not make this so but when we agree with God, we are reminded that it is so. In short, confession is so much more than just admitting what we have done wrong; it is acknowledging all that God has done right. Let's agree with God about who He made us to be and who He is to us... a loving Father! Now that is good for your soul!

REFLECT

№ 9 — Agreeing With God

1. How does your understanding of confession change when you view it as agreeing with what God has done right instead of just admitting what you have done wrong?

2. When you look at your life today, what does it look like to agree with God that you are already fully forgiven, righteous, and accepted?

3. How can you rest your soul today in the simple truth that you are speaking the exact same word as your loving Father?

He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

— Psalm 23:3



№ 10 WHAT SAMUEL MISSED

Proverbs 23:7 says that the way we think about ourselves will determine how we live (my paraphrase). How you see yourself shapes your view not just of yourself, but of others, the world around you, and even God. Our behaviors, physical appearance, circumstances, and the opinions of others all jockey for position in trying to influence how we think about ourselves, but only God has that right! God sees beyond what we can see... He sees the heart.

God told the prophet Samuel that He had chosen the next king from among Jesse's sons, but there was a problem... there were eight of them. Samuel didn't know which one was the appointed king, so he did what came naturally: he started to choose the one who "looked" like a king. Isn't this exactly what we all do? We make our evaluation of ourselves or others based only on what we see rather than what God sees. Finally, David, the youngest son, who tended the sheep, was brought before Samuel and God confirmed that he was the one. While others saw a pesky little brother or a simple shepherd boy, God saw royalty! ***This is how God sees you! As a child of the King of all kings, you are royalty!*** Will you dare to see yourself as God does? After all, what He sees is truth and that truth will set you free!

REFLECT

№ 10 — What Samuel Missed

1. We naturally evaluate ourselves and others based only on what we can see. Where are you currently judging your own worth by your visible flaws or limitations?

2. While everyone else saw a simple shepherd boy, God saw royalty in David. How does it change your day to realize that, as a child of the King of all kings, God looks at you and sees royalty?

3. What is one false thought about yourself that you are ready to drop today in order to dare to see yourself the way He does?

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

— 1 Samuel 16:7



№ 11 THE HUMILITY THAT LIFTS YOU

God loves humility. Just look at Jesus and how He made His appearance on planet Earth... in the humblest of ways. Philippians 2 tells us that we are to have the same attitude that Jesus had, one that regards others, is not conceited, and is not selfish. Both the Old and New Testaments are replete with passages about being humble instead of prideful. After all, pride is how we got in this mess in the first place!

But contrary to much popular Christian teaching, while God loves humility, He does not put humbling you on His daily agenda. Being humble is a responsibility that He entrusts to you and it is just that, a response to His ability and a recognition of all He has done for you. You see, in Christ, God exalts you and lifts you up! He made you a new creation, holy and righteous, and He is pleased with you. He gave His Son for you and to you... the greatest gift imaginable! Humility is not thinking poorly of yourself but properly of yourself and the proper view is the one that God has... and it is awesome! So, humility is the fruit of reception and in Christ we have received His very Life! Now that will humble you.

REFLECT

№ 11 — The Humility That Lifts You

1. If humility is not thinking poorly of yourself but thinking properly of yourself, how does God's awesome view of you actually humble you?

2. Where have you mistakenly believed that God makes it His daily mission to push you down or humble you, rather than lift you up?

3. How does it feel to receive the staggering truth that God didn't just give His Son for you, but actually gave His Son to you?

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

— James 4:10

№ 12 PERMANENTLY COMFORTED

The world can be a tough place sometimes... okay, a lot of times. But that really should be no surprise by now! Jesus never told us we would get anything more from this world than trouble, but He did remind us that we can take it to heart that He has overcome the world. As believers, we walk by faith in a sight world... that can be uncomfortable. To trust the God we cannot see while we live in a world we can see is a challenge that stretches our faith and oftentimes goes against how we feel. Describing that as comfortable would not compute. But just because walking by faith isn't necessarily comfortable, make no mistake about it: God wants you comforted!

Just before His crucifixion, knowing He would go away, Jesus told the disciples that they would not be left alone, but that the Holy Spirit would come. The Comforter. The Spirit of God is named the Comforter... think about that. And this Spirit would not just come upon us or show up sometimes, but live in us all the time, forever! We find comfort in knowing we are loved, secure, forgiven, accepted, made new, and free. No wonder the Bible tells us that He is the God of all comfort, Who comforts us in all our trouble so that we can comfort others in any trouble. Because He lives in us, we are always being comforted! And because He lives through us, we can offer comfort to others.

REFLECT

№ 12 — Permanently Comforted

1. Walking by faith in a world run by sight can feel incredibly uncomfortable. Where is your faith being stretched or pulled against your emotions right now?

2. The Holy Spirit is permanently named the Comforter. How does His constant presence inside you bring relief to your current troubles?

3. Knowing you are fully loved, secure, and free, how can you extend that same comfort to someone in your world who is hurting today?

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

— 2 Corinthians 1:3–4



№ 13 DONE KEEPING SCORE

If you ask most Christians how their walk with God is going, you will likely hear what they need to be doing more or less of. "I need more patience, more strength, to pray more, read more, give more, trust more, go to church more." "I need to drink less, gossip less, cuss less, doubt less, get angry less." But taking the temperature of our walk with God really does not start with what we should or shouldn't be doing, but with what He has already done. God offered His Son so that we could be rightly related to Him, not do everything right to be related to Him. Grace means that our relationship with God is secured by His doing and, by faith, expressed through our doing.

Knowing you are unconditionally loved, completely accepted, totally forgiven, a brand-new creation, never alone, adored, pleasing, a child of God, and a holy one is the foundation for living that way. (And that is some incredible list, by the way!) Then we can begin to see our walk, not as a measurement of what we need more or less of but what we have been given all of... by grace! Colossians 2:10 says we are complete in Him, so we can stop measuring what we do or don't do, and we can rest in what He has done, which is immeasurable!

REFLECT

№ 13 — Done Keeping Score

1. What does your personal scorecard usually look like when you measure whether you are doing more or less of something for God?

2. Since Colossians says you are already completely whole and complete in Him, how can you stop meticulously measuring your performance today?

3. What changes in your relationship with God when you treat your daily life as a celebration of a gift rather than a list of requirements?

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

— Ephesians 3:20–21



№ 14 AS CLOSE AS CLOSENESS GETS

One of the most deceptive tactics of the enemy is to promote a perceived distance between you and God. It's a lie! But if we buy it, and plenty of believers do, we become susceptible to all the false messages about getting closer to God, like "You need to pray more, fast more, give more, memorize more, commit more," ad infinitum. If we think God is far off, then there is no end to what we will try and do to get closer to Him. We live under the delusion of what we "should" be doing to get closer to God instead of in the freedom of what He has already done to be close to us.

Romans 7 tells us that we died to the law (the system of needing to do more) so that we could be joined to Jesus. ***Joined to Jesus!*** In Christ, you and God are as close as you can be. That doesn't mean you always feel it or even act like it, but how you feel and what you do cannot change the fact that you are in Him and He is in you! Believing this truth is a game changer as we learn to live and grow in the atmosphere of grace, where our doing is an expression of how close we are, not an attempt to get closer. That is amazing grace!

REFLECT

№ 14 — As Close As Closeness Gets

1. When you buy into the lie that God is far away, what spiritual hoops or religious habits do you find yourself trying to jump through to close the gap?

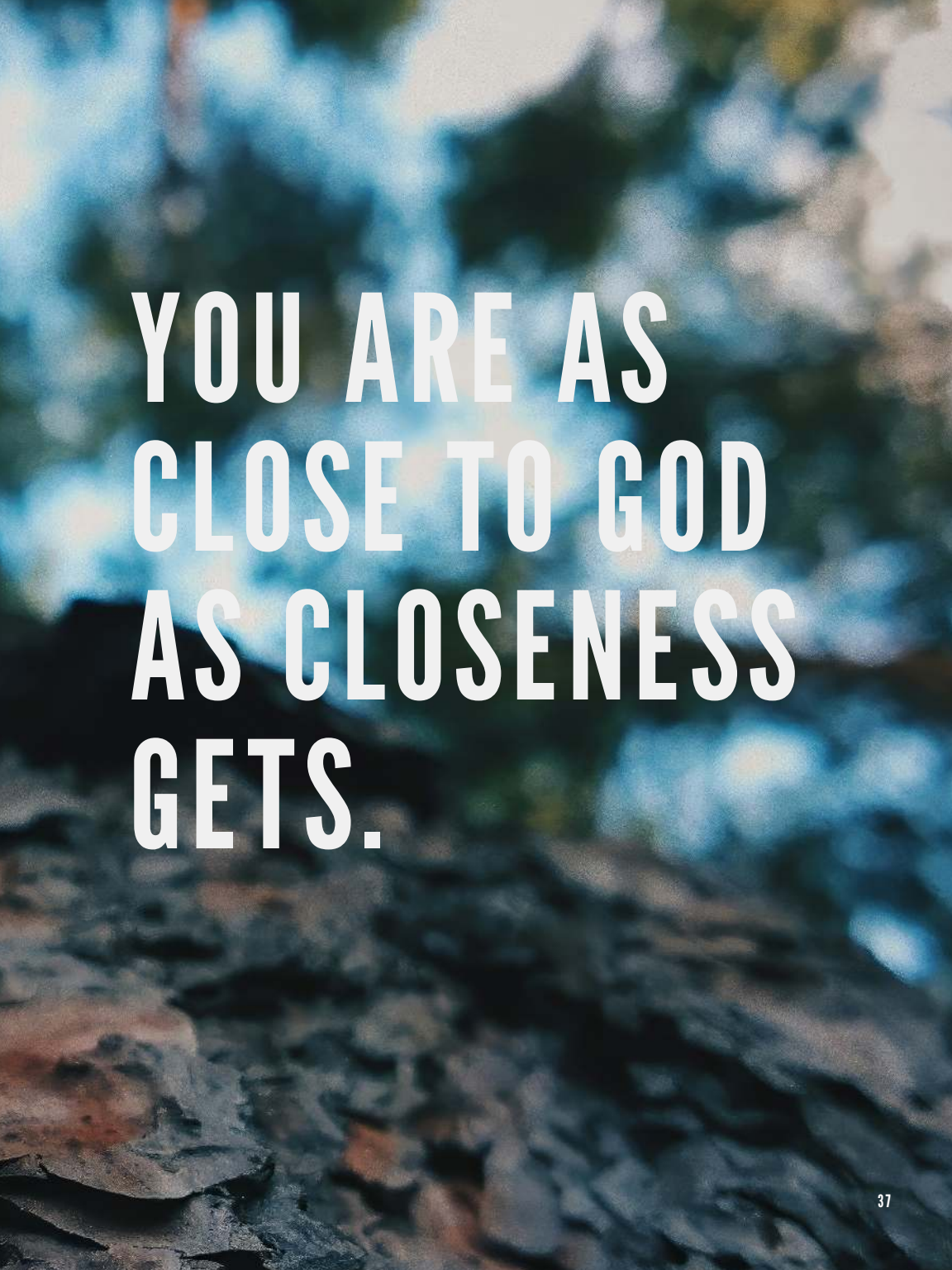
2. You are as close to God as closeness gets because you are permanently joined to Jesus. How does that truth bring rest to your striving?

3. How can your actions today shift from trying to reach God to simply overflowing from the closeness you already have?

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

— Romans 7:4




YOU ARE AS
CLOSE TO GOD
AS CLOSENESS
GETS.

№ 15 ACCEPTED, NOT APPROVED

Acceptance is a big deal. We crave it and are wired for it. It's how God made us. Unfortunately, religion trains us to think that God does not accept us unless we do the right thing, causing us to buy into the lie that we shouldn't accept ourselves until we "get it right." Perfectionism is the trophy of pride. Many believers think that they are the problem and an obstacle to God and what He wants to accomplish. We think of ourselves as God's opponents and enemies and even when we do the right thing, we are, at best, just His servants. But the truth is radically different from these false or incomplete identities founded on the deception that we are not accepted.

Romans tells us to "accept one another just as Christ has accepted us." JUST AS! God accepts you because of Jesus! That is the basis for accepting yourself and others. You are not God's opponent. You are His masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10), His work of art! You are far from His obstacle. You are His instrument (Romans 6), and you are much more than just a servant. You are His child! God completely and unashamedly accepts you and it has nothing to do with how you feel, how you act, or how you think but knowing it can transform all of that. Let's reject what religion has taught us and embrace what Jesus has done for us. Acceptance is not earned; it is gifted because it is all of grace and believing Him changes everything!

REFLECT

№ 15 — Accepted, Not Approved

1. Where has perfectionism, the trophy of pride, sneaked into your life, convincing you that you must meet a certain standard to be accepted?

2. Instead of viewing yourself as God's problem or obstacle, what changes when you accept the reality that you are His treasured masterpiece?

3. Since God fully, joyfully, and unashamedly accepts you right now, how can you stop withholding acceptance from yourself today?

Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.

— Romans 15:7

№ 16 A LESSON FROM PAW-PAW

My grandfather, Paw-Paw, is one of my heroes. He was a treasure chest of stories from riding down Main Street in Houston in a horse and buggy to living through two world wars, the Great Depression and just about everything you could imagine. I loved listening to him and there always seemed to be a lesson for me. He lived alone on his farm and I asked him how he could live by himself. His response was one I will never forget. **"Son, if you can't live with yourself, you can't live with anybody."**

Many of us seem to be in an epic struggle with ourselves. We give in to the religious rubbish of thinking that we are our own worst enemy, that God is fed up with us, and that self is a dirty four-letter word. To top it off, religion actually considers a poor self-image as humility! To think poorly of yourself is not humility but it is humiliating. God does not want you to have a poor view of yourself any more than He wants you to have a prideful view of yourself. True humility is having a proper view of yourself. At salvation, the old self was crucified and you were made a brand-new creation, acceptable and pleasing to God. Why would He make you any less than what He wants? You are not your own worst enemy, and you certainly aren't God's. Jesus calls you friend! He is never fed up with you but always fond of you. When you see yourself the way God does, which is the truth, the religious wounds of self-rejection fade away and you begin to embrace what God does... the new you! Thank you, Jesus, and thank you, Paw-Paw... lesson learned.

REFLECT

№ 16 — A Lesson From Paw-Paw

1. Paw-Paw shared the timeless wisdom that if you cannot live with yourself, you cannot live with anybody. How at peace are you with the person you are?

2. Where have you bought into the religious rubbish that thinking poorly of yourself is pleasing to God?

3. Jesus calls you friend and is deeply fond of you. What religious wounds of self-rejection can you allow Him to heal today?



No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

— John 15:15



№ 17 FROM WORTHLESS TO PRICELESS

Determining what something is worth needs a standard and the most accurate one is whatever someone will pay for it. For vehicles we have the Kelley Blue Book, Zillow for houses, but what about you? God alone is the determiner of what you are worth. Not your failures or successes, not the opinions of others, not your possessions, not your feelings, God alone.

One of the great lies in this world is that we are *only* worth all those other things but the gospel changes all that. ***You were bought at a price and it is Jesus. God gave Jesus for you! Read that again!*** You are worth to God what Jesus is worth to Him. That truth is mind-boggling and heartwarming. Believing this means you no longer "shortchange" yourself in the transactions of life. You are worth more than the offenses committed by you or against you. You are worth more than the achievements or disappointments you have and will experience. You are worth more than the fleeting pleasures and comforts that the immediate promises. Your value is eternally determined according to the price paid for you by the only One who knows all things and always tells the truth. You are priceless because the worthy One gave Himself for you! Now that is freedom (pun intended).

REFLECT

№ 17 — From Worthless to Priceless

1. The world tells us our value is fragile and negotiable. What standards, such as achievements, possessions, or opinions, are you tempted to use to measure your worth?

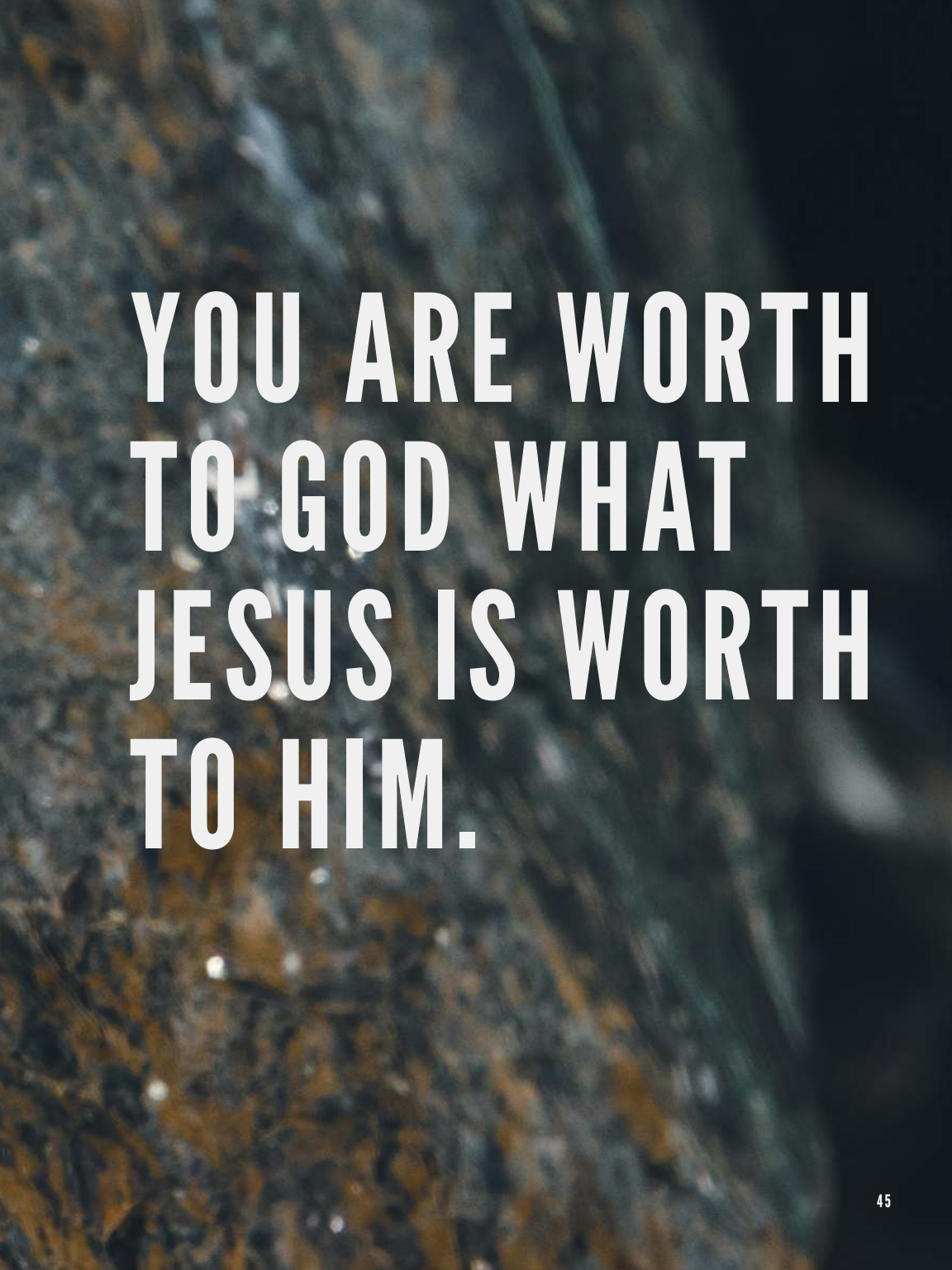
2. You are worth to God exactly what Jesus is worth to Him. How does that mind-boggling price tag change the way you value yourself?

3. In what daily transaction or relationship do you need to stop shortchanging yourself and start living as someone who is absolutely priceless?

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

— 1 Corinthians 6:19–20




YOU ARE WORTH
TO GOD WHAT
JESUS IS WORTH
TO HIM.

№ 18 YOU ARE HIS DREAM HOME

Anticipation is a wonderful thing… mostly. A few years ago, my wife and I were building a house and could not wait to make it our home! But with our excitement came the harsh reality of the cost. Every time we got the thrill of choosing just what we wanted, from cabinets and counters to appliances, we were confronted with the price. And it was not cheap! I don't tell you this for pity, because at the end of the day, the excitement of our "dream home" far outweighed the fret over the cost. In short, it was worth it!

Hebrews tells us that Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him. The cross meant there was a price to pay for the redemption of people. The people that God so loves. But the cross was far worse than an upcharge on appliances; it meant death, a brutal death. And Jesus, being not only God but fully human, with real emotions, considered this road of redemption and asked His Father if there was another way. The cost was beyond comprehension… the very life of Jesus. But for the joy set before Him, He endured it. That joy was you! To our God, you are worth the immeasurable cost of what happened at the cross. Jesus was willing to pay whatever it took to set you free from sin, death, shame, guilt, and condemnation. It is His joy to make you a new creation, joined to Him and growing in grace. You are His "dream home," and you are not cheap! Weigh that against whatever happens and however you may feel today, fixing your eyes on Him and remembering how valuable you are!

REFLECT

№ 18 — You Are His Dream Home

1. When you consider the brutal, excruciating cost of the cross, how does it feel to realize that the joy set before Jesus was actually you?

2. God views you as His ultimate dream home and refuses to build you on the cheap. How does this truth steady you when you feel inadequate?

3. What pressure or fear are you facing today that needs to be outweighed by the immense value God has placed on your life?

... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

— Hebrews 12:2



№ 19 KEPT, NOT EARNED

Security is a big deal! Whether you are locking a door, setting an alarm, buckling a seatbelt, or entering a passcode on your phone, one thing is for sure: we are wired to know that we are safe and secure. This is also true in our relationship with God. Sadly, religion creates insecurity in us with its demands on our performance as the source of our security. It is a frustrating cycle of defeat to hope that our performance is good enough to make God okay with us.

Hear this good news: God wants you to know that you are secure and He knows what it takes to actually make you secure. It's not about what you do, but what He has done. 1 Peter 1:5 says you are kept by His power and Hebrews 7:24–25 tells us that because Jesus lives forever, He is able to save us completely. This means that security is not based on the ups and downs of your doing, but on the forever-finished fact of His doing. You are eternally secure and that cannot change or it wasn't eternal in the first place! What religion will never affirm, God has confirmed: you are secure! When you know this, your relationship with God will be more about the wonder of how good He is to you, not wondering if you are good enough for Him. You are safe in His goodness and love!

REFLECT

№ 19 — Kept, Not Earned

1. Where are you currently experiencing the exhausting, frustrating cycle of tying your spiritual security to your daily performance?

2. Your safety is kept entirely by God's power, not your own. What does it look like for you to drop your guard and feel completely safe in His love?

3. How does your relationship with God shift when you stop wondering if you are good enough for Him and start marveling at how good He is to you?

O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

— Psalm 34:8

№ 20 LOVED INDEED, LOVE IN DEED

God loves you! Have you ever considered what that really means? Love is more than gushy feelings, passion, and sentiment. Love does more than move the emotions; it motivates the will. For God so loved the world that He gave His Son! He gave Jesus because He loves you! His love compelled Him to *do something, not just feel something.* True love always finds expression in doing something sacrificial for someone else.

Some question whether God could love them after what they've done. Others look at their circumstances and figure that if God loved them, things would be better. Most of us struggle with a combination of both! But Romans 5:8 says that "God *demonstrates* His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Notice that *demonstrates* is in the present tense, which means right now, with all you have done and all that is happening around you, the present proof of God's love is that He gave Jesus for you! It is unchangeable and done and you are loved with "His own love." Even when feelings cause you to question, there is no doubt that the gospel truth is you are loved indeed! Only then does it make sense that we are called to love one another. Again, not just a feeling but an action that gives what has been received. You are loved indeed so that you can love in deed!

REFLECT

№ 20 — Loved Indeed, Love in Deed

1. Real love moves the will and expresses itself in action. How has God presently demonstrated His love to you, even in the middle of your messy circumstances?

2. When feelings cause you to question His affection, what unchangeable proof of the cross can you fix your eyes on today?

3. Knowing you are loved with God's own unstoppable love, how can you naturally express that love through action to someone else today?

Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

— 1 John 3:18

№ 21 WHY FRIDAY IS GOOD

Easter is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus! But where there is resurrection, there must first be death. Good Friday is the harsh reminder that sin has a cost, and the price of redemption is greater than our effort or repentance; it would cost Jesus His very life. Friday is good because the cross of Christ is the divine declaration that no price is too great for our redemption and no sin is too great for His forgiveness. The Father gave His Son for you!

In the darkest hour of all human history, something unfathomable happened: Jesus would do more than *bear* our sins on the cross; He would *become* sin. While this cannot be fully comprehended, one thing is for sure... we do ourselves a devastating disservice to presume that God abandoned Jesus at this moment. The prophetic fulfillment of Psalm 22, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" was not a proclamation of what God did, but of what Jesus, in His humanity, felt. Later, in that same Psalm, it states, "He has not hidden His face from him; but when he cried to Him for help, He heard." God is not in the habit of abandoning people because of sin. He didn't with Adam; He didn't with Jesus; and He didn't with you. The nature of the Savior is to rescue, not forsake. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. The cross is the Father's love on display through the Son, and ***if you want to know what God the Father is like, look at Jesus!*** Even, and maybe especially, in the darkest hour, the Father's love shone through to show you that nothing, absolutely nothing, can stop His love for you.

REFLECT

№ 21 — Why Friday Is Good

1. In your darkest hours or moments of failure, how tempted are you to believe the lie that God has hidden His face or abandoned you?

2. The very nature of the Savior is always to rescue and never to forsake. How does looking at Jesus on the cross clear up your view of what the Father is really like?

3. What area of your past or present feels too dark for His grace, and how can you let His unstoppable love shine into it today?

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— Romans 8:38–39




NOTHING CAN
STOP HIS LOVE
FOR YOU.

№ 22 NOT THE END OF THE STORY

Jesus said that this world brings trouble. There will be hard times, rocky roads, broken dreams, and pain. In this world it cannot be avoided. But the world's promise of trouble is met head-on and overcome by God's promise to us in the midst of it. Troubles, trials, and suffering can cause us to think that God is angry at us, has abandoned us, doesn't care about us, or is just powerless to do anything about it. While we may not fully understand how our suffering fits with God's goodness, purpose, and power, we can be confident that it does. On this side of eternity, we would love for every difficult circumstance to be redeemed, problem to be removed, and broken relationship to be restored, but God never promised that. The enemies of sin, flesh, death, and the devil are all defeated, but not all vanquished yet, but that day is coming!

Until that day, God's grace is able to weave our trouble and suffering, the effects caused by those enemies, into the fabric of our faith, where we see His promises fulfilled. So suffering is just part of the story but not the end of it. God is not causing your pain but He is your Comforter in it. God is not mad at you but pleased with you. God is not absent but living inside you. God is not apathetic but He is for you and as 1 Peter 5:7 says, He cares about you. God is not powerless, as He has unleashed His greatest power of love into a world of unlove, and the greatest proof is the giving of His Son for you and to you. To be sure, this world is not our home, but God is at home in you and with you in this world. Whatever you may find yourself going through today, rest in the truth that it does not and cannot stop God's goodness toward you, but will actually be used in showing it more fully.

REFLECT

№ 22 — Not the End of the Story

1. Suffering can easily cloud our vision and make us feel like God is angry, absent, or powerless. Which of these lies is most tempting for you to believe when life hurts?

2. While the enemies of this world are not fully vanquished yet, how does it comfort you to know that God is weaving your current trials into the fabric of your faith?

3. This world is not our home, but God is completely at home in you. How does His permanent presence change the way you walk through your pain today?

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

— Romans 8:28



№ 23 RELIGION EXHAUSTS, JESUS EXALTS

Jesus did not come to give you a better religion or even the best religion. He came to offer the way out of religion.

Religion demands from you and leaves you worn out and defeated. Jesus invites you to rest and victory.
Religion is about what you need to change. Jesus changes you.
Religion preaches that obedience makes the relationship secure. Jesus secures the relationship, resulting in obedience.
Religion tells you to do your best, and it still isn't good enough. Jesus gives you His best, and it is more than enough.
Religion demands perfection. Jesus offers it.
Religion requires you to go to church. Jesus declares you are the church.
Religion exhausts you. Jesus exalts you.
Religion tells you to be good. Jesus makes you good.
Religion says to deny yourself. Jesus makes you a brand-new self.
Religion tells you to pursue God. Jesus is proof that God pursues you.
Religion's goal is conformity. Jesus brings unity.
Religion tells you how to get God to love you. Jesus is proof He already does!

REFLECT

№ 23 — Religion Exhausts, Jesus Exalts

1. Religion exhausts us, but Jesus exalts us. In what areas of your life are you still giving your best only to feel like it is never enough?

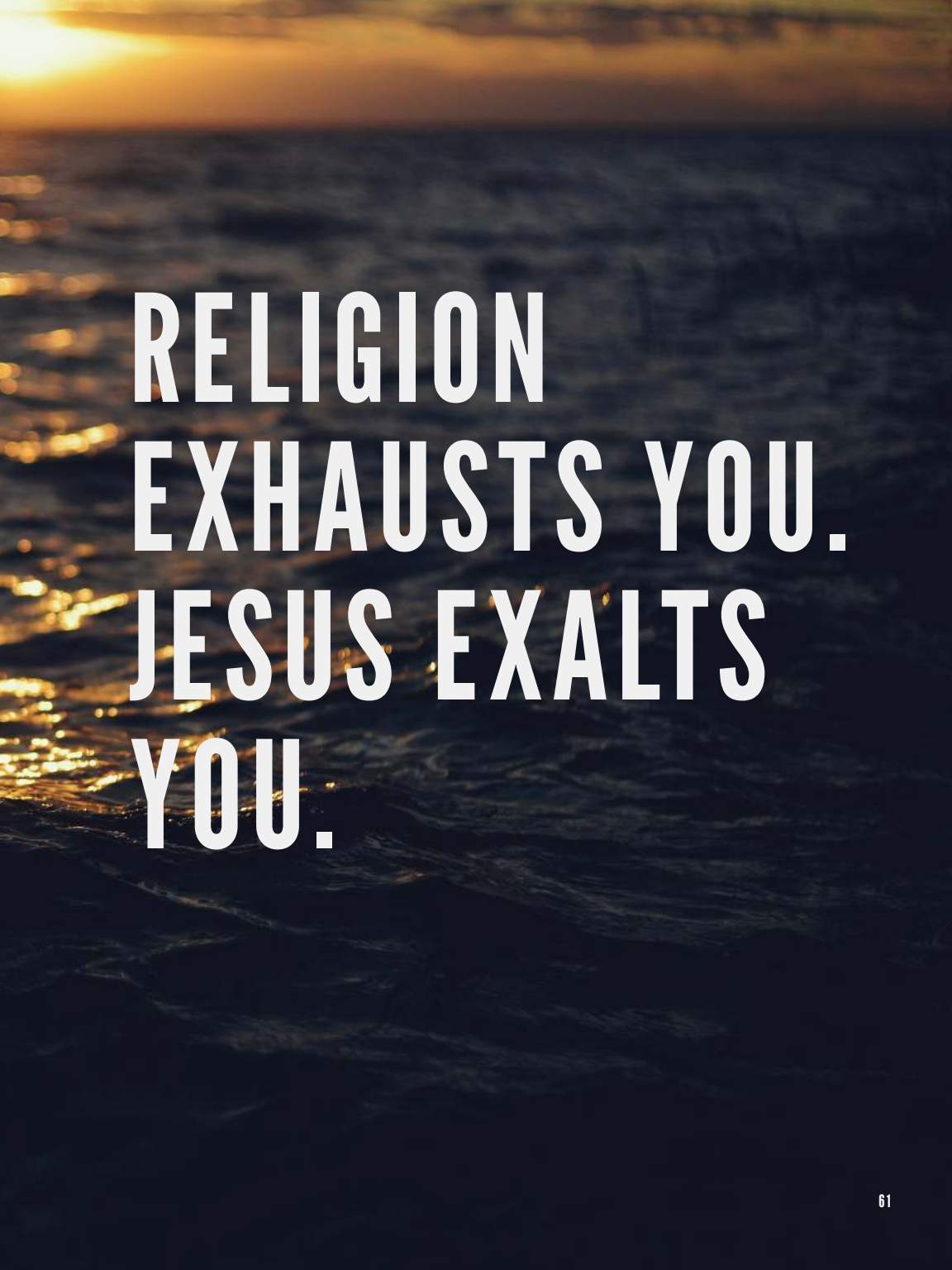
2. How does it feel to step off the treadmill of self-effort and recognize that Jesus secures your relationship first, allowing obedience to naturally flow from that safety?

3. Which contrast from today's reading hits closest to home for you, and how can you rest in Jesus' version of that truth today?

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

— Matthew 11:28




RELIGION
EXHAUSTS YOU.
JESUS EXALTS
YOU.

№ 24 CLOTHED FOR THE SLOPE

The first time I went skiing, I had a lot to learn. I didn't know that slopes were rated green (easy), blue (intermediate), black (hard), and even double black diamond (experts only!). I also had a lot to pack! Imagine trying to ski without being dressed for it. Boots, skis, coats, gloves, wool socks, helmet, ski bib, thermals, goggles. It's silly enough to hurl yourself down a snow-covered rock at a high rate of speed (at least for others), but how foolish would it be to do so without being properly equipped for the ride?

In the book of Galatians, we are told that we have been clothed with Christ. The moment you placed your faith in Him, He clothed you and equipped you with everything you need for this adventure called life. All the twists, turns, and moguls that this world can throw at you are just part of the experience that helps prove that in Christ, you have what it takes to endure and to enjoy whatever mountain is in front of you. Sometimes life is the leisurely joy of skiing a green slope and taking it all in. Other times feel like speeding down a double black diamond, wondering if you're even going to survive it. And unlike the ski resort, there are no signs posted to let you know what's coming. But you are ready. You are clothed with Christ. What slope are you on today? What do you need for it? Patience, joy, peace, love, forgiveness, strength? You are equipped! You have it because you have Jesus.

REFLECT

№ 24 — Clothed for the Slope

1. What kind of slope does your life feel like right now: a slow, peaceful green trail, or a wild, unexpected double black diamond?

2. Since you are already fully clothed with Christ, what specific gift, like patience, peace, or strength, do you need to realize you already possess for today's mountain?

3. How does it change your perspective to know that you are perfectly equipped for every twist, turn, and mogul life throws at you?

... seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

— 2 Peter 1:3

№ 25 THE ANTIBIOTIC FOR SHAME

Guilt and shame are some of the driving fleshly forces that motivate people's behavior. Guilt is the indictment on what you do, while shame is the accusation against who you are. Neither is fitting for the child of God. Carry them long enough, and eventually you become an expert in denial and blame to "protect" yourself against the haunting feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness. It is harmful enough when the world heaps this on you, but even more devastating when you think it comes from God.

God doesn't motivate your behavior by reminding you of all you've done wrong or by telling you how bad you are. Guilt and shame are weapons, not instruments. God motivates you, inspires you, directs you, corrects you, and leads you by love, not guilt and shame. It's because He loves you that He forgave you through the blood of Jesus. All that you have ever done and will ever do wrong is removed by Him, not remembered by Him. His once-and-for-all forgiveness is the antidote for the poison of guilt and it gets even better! Because He loves you, He changed who you are and made you a new creation, a righteous and holy child of God, a saint. Through His resurrection power, He made you alive together with Him, and so all the shame that was due the old sinner is gone. That is why Jude 24 says that you stand before Him "blameless with great joy"! His life in you is the antibiotic against the infection of shame. With guilt and shame removed (even if still felt at times), you find that you are compelled by the true source of motivation... His love. Now that is freedom!

REFLECT

№ 25 — The Antibiotic for Shame

1. Guilt and shame are weapons used by the flesh, not instruments used by grace. Where have you mistaken these heavy weights as corrections coming from God?

2. Because of Jesus' resurrection life, you stand before God completely blameless with great joy. What shame from your old self are you ready to leave behind for good?

3. How does your daily motivation transform when you allow yourself to be entirely compelled by His love rather than driven by inadequacy?

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

— 2 Corinthians 5:14–15



№ 26 POSSESSED, NOT PURSUING

The Christian life is not about trying hard to do the right thing or acting good. It is not about praying more, reading your Bible more, going to church all the time, loving enough, or giving enough. It is not about trying to love more, feel more joy, or have enough patience, peace, and kindness. The Christian life is not about pursuing God. It is about possessing God and being possessed by God. While there is obviously nothing wrong with any of those things, believing we have to achieve them is exhausting.

When Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits," He wasn't saying that your behavior ***determines*** who you are, but that your behavior ***displays*** Whose you are. As a child of God, you have the Spirit of God inside you, and His Spirit produces the fruit that you have the privilege and responsibility (response to His ability) to express. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control are not experiences to pursue; they are possessions to express. This frees us from the burden and frustration of trying to live the Christian life as we realize the incredible reality that we have the Christian life and His name is Jesus. This is grace!

REFLECT

№ 26 — Possessed, Not Pursuing

1. The Christian life was never meant to be a grind or a chase. Where have you turned beautiful spiritual practices into draining checklist requirements?

2. Your behavior does not determine who you are; it simply displays Whose you are. How does that shift the pressure off your daily performance?

3. What changes when you realize you do not have to manufacture love, joy, or patience because you already possess the very life of Christ within you?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

— Galatians 5:22–23

№ 27 HIS JOB TO HOLD YOU

Get a grip. Hold on. Hang tight. This is the best the world can offer when it comes to the twists and turns of life. But sometimes it seems no matter how sure we think our grip is, life has a way of proving that the only thing we are really holding onto is uncertainty. While we would love for life in this world to come with a guarantee, it just doesn't! We were made to be secure but not according to how well we can hold on or hold things together. That's a false sense that leads to defeat and exhaustion.

Security is written in God's job description, not ours, and does not come from our ability to *hold on* but from God's ability to *hold us*. Colossians 1:17 tells us that "in Him all things hold together"... that includes you! Now this is not the old, passive mindset of "just let go and let God," but rather the active attitude of trusting that He tells the truth and is able to carry you through, no matter what. Not only is it His job to hold you through any twist of life, it is His heart to use it for your good. The very situation that makes you feel as though you're done is exactly what God can use to show you all He has done and will do. You are actually growing in maturity as you learn to loosen your grip and recognize that He will never loosen His. The truth is that whatever situation you find yourself in today, God has got it and He has got you because you have got Him! He loves you and is always for you!

REFLECT

№ 27 — His Job to Hold You

1. The world tells us to get a grip and hold tight to things we cannot control. Where are you currently exhausting yourself trying to hold your life together?

2. Real security means recognizing that holding things together is God's job description, not ours. What would it look like to loosen your anxious grip today?

3. How can a situation that feels completely unmanageable actually become an opportunity to watch God show you what He can handle?

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

— Romans 8:31–32

№ 28 THE WITNESS WITHIN

Salvation is initiated by, belongs to, and is secured by God alone. It is His prerogative to offer it to whom He sees fit, and that's everyone! In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." That means anybody living in this world is on His invite list. This invitation is not to perfect circumstances or perfect emotions, but to Him. We are invited to His love, redemption, forgiveness, mercy, truth, and presence. Once received, there is no need to "invite Him in," "call Him down," or ask Him "to be with us."

Romans 8 tells us that the Holy Spirit "testifies" with our spirit that we are His children. It's a legal term, meaning there is a constant witness inside of every believer that confirms His presence in us and affirms His possession of us as His children. This confirmation and affirmation are not about how you feel or what happens around you... that is all circumstantial evidence, and it will never hold up. This witness is by His grace and through your faith. Do you believe that God tells the truth? Do you believe that He keeps His promise? Then His presence in you is not left up to the court of public opinion or emotions, for it is as sure as His word! No wonder the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter! It is comforting to know that no matter what accusation or situation comes your way, you have the Comforter testifying inside of you that He has got it and He has got you. You don't have to invite Him into this because you already RSVP'd to His invitation into you!

REFLECT

№ 28 — The Witness Within

1. When you feel overwhelmed or tired, how does it feel to receive an open invitation to simply come to Jesus exactly as you are?

2. The Holy Spirit acts as a constant, reliable witness on the stand inside your soul. What is He testifying to you right now when your emotions feel shaky?

3. Why is it deeply comforting to know that you never have to beg God to come close to your problems because He has already made His home inside you?

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

— Romans 8:16–17

№ 29 HANDCRAFTED IN THE ROCKIES

As I write this today, I am in Estes Park, Colorado, at the foot of Rocky Mountain National Park. The view is breathtaking... literally, this high up! In the distance, there are ranges covered in green pines leading up to white, snow-covered peaks with crisp blue lakes tucked in the valleys. I've seen waterfalls, wildlife, and running brooks of crystal-clear water. It is spectacular and awe-inspiring. God is a master artist and His creative handiwork is something to behold. To think that He created all of this simply by speaking. What imagination! What power! By His word, the mountains and all their majestic glory, shooting thousands of feet into the sky, came into being. By His word, the earth was filled with creatures of every kind and the seas with unfathomable depths were formed. By His word, the planets and stars were placed into the heavens and the earth was set into motion. All of this simply by saying "Let there be..." and there was. God's word is powerful!

But when it came to you, He did more than just speak you into existence, for in Genesis and Psalms, it says that you were formed, fashioned, and knitted by His own hand. God was more intimately involved in creating you because ***nothing in all creation can do what you were designed to do... display the personhood of God, not just His power.*** You are included in God's gallery of glory and the canvas that holds His most precious work is you, authenticated by His own signature, the indwelling Holy Spirit. So, the next time you feel as though you have no value, no purpose, or you don't belong, remember who you are... the handcrafted masterpiece of God and remember that His glory in you is greater than all His glory in the universe!

REFLECT

№ 29 — Handcrafted in the Rockies

1. God spoke the massive mountains into existence, but He intimately touched, formed, and knitted you with His own hands. How does that distinction speak to your personal worth?

2. You were designed to display the personhood of God, not just His power. How can you carry yourself today as a handcrafted masterpiece signed by the Holy Spirit?

3. The next time you feel like you do not belong or do not matter, what specific truth from your creation will you choose to remember?



For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.

— Psalm 139:13–14



№ 30 TRUTH'S GREATEST DISPLAY

We live in a world searching for truth, rejecting truth, and seeking to redefine truth all at the same time. As the church, we have an incredible responsibility to live out and proclaim the truth. It can be very difficult, hurtful, and frustrating to be truth tellers in a world full of lies. We are also called to love one another... not just those in the church but outside as well.

The fleshly thinking of the world is that truth and love cannot always be compatible. The faulty thinking is that, rather than disagreeing with someone or risking their rejection because of the truth, we should simply love them and withhold or even compromise the truth. True love, the unconditional, agape love of God, never compromises truth; it upholds it! The love of this world that is void of truth to protect feelings and lies at any cost is no love at all. Truth is not sacrificed at love's altar but neither is love to be forfeited in the truth. That's why Ephesians tells us to speak the truth in love... they go hand in hand. The truth is God loves you! The truth is He loves the world! His love is the greatest defense of truth because His love is the greatest display of truth!

REFLECT

№ 30 — Truth's Greatest Display

1. The world often tells us to water down the truth to protect people's feelings. Where have you been tempted to choose a hollow version of love over real, grace-filled truth?

2. Truth without love can become a weapon, and love without truth can become empty. Which side of that coin do you tend to lean toward when dealing with others?

3. How does knowing that God's love is the ultimate display of truth empower you to speak honestly and lovingly in your relationships today?

Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

— 1 John 3:18



№ 31 MORE THAN A PRIORITY

Love your neighbor, be a cheerful giver, pray without ceasing, tell the truth, be holy! Are these God's cruel ways of piling on to an already unending list of life's responsibilities like pay your taxes, take out the trash, fold the clothes, change the oil in the car, and most importantly, what's for dinner? Of course not! In an attempt to reconcile God's commands with life's demands, some say, "Put God first." But the list never ends and if God is first, how close should second be? When the trash piles up, it needs to go out immediately!

What if in the new covenant way of grace, life is not lived by prioritized lists but by God's preeminent love? That doesn't mean that making "to-do lists" is wrong, sinful, or less godly. It just means that God cannot be prioritized into your life because, through the finished work of Christ, He is your life. He loves you and lives in you and is involved in every "to-do" you have from the most mundane to the most miraculous things in life. His commands have been fulfilled by what Jesus did and gifted to you by faith. Now life takes on a different outlook as you begin to realize all that He has called you to is His doing in and through you in all your "to-dos"! You are dearly loved, cared for, and provided for by the One who is your life so that you can enjoy, rest, work, endure, and relax in all of life's demands!

REFLECT

№ 31 — More Than a Priority

1. We often try to squeeze God into a ranking system by telling ourselves to "put God first." Why is that kind of priority list actually exhausting to maintain?

2. Through the finished work of Christ, He is not just a priority: He is your actual life. How does that change the way you approach mundane tasks like chores or errands?

3. Knowing you are thoroughly cared for and provided for by the One who walks into every single to-do with you, how can you simply relax and enjoy your day?

When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

— Colossians 3:4

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ENOUGH GRACE ALREADY

Resting Daily in His Finished Work
31 Devotionals on Grace

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