



Words of
ENCOURAGEMENT
FROM PASTORS IN THE SHREVEPORT AREA

2026 NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

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This devotional is presented in commemoration
of the 2026 National Day of Prayer and in memory
of the Eternal Eight:

Braylon

Jayla

Kayla

Khedarrion

Layla

Markaydon

Sariah

Shayla

Earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal.

Thomas Moore



THE PRAYER THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

R. TIMOTHY JONES

Pastor, Peaceful Rest Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

Keep me safe, my God, for in you I take refuge.

Psalm 16:1 NIV

One day a man decided to build a tavern in a small, “dry” town. The local church responded by calling an all-night prayer meeting. That night lightning struck the bar, burning it to the ground. The tavern owner sued the church, claiming their prayers were responsible for the fire.

The church, in turn, hired an attorney to argue that they were not to blame. This case terribly conflicted the judge, who said, “No matter how this case comes out, one thing is clear: The tavern owner believes in prayer, and the church does not.”

Psalm 16 may have been written by David during his flight from the wrath of Saul. Tired and feeble, David prayed that God would sustain him. The interesting thing is that this prayer was answered before it was prayed. Only God could have preserved David for so many years.

As we have experienced God's providence and His protection, we have also experienced God's preservation. The third verse of the hymn "Amazing Grace" says:

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,
We have already come.
'Twas grace that brought us safe thus far,
And grace will lead us home.*

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail. They are new every
morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22–23 NIV

The testimony of our heritage is "prayer changes things." However, there are times when God actually changes us. When this happens, we may begin to see obstacles as opportunities. The question is no longer "How can I get out of this?" but "What can I get out of this?"

A mother sent her terrible son to his room to pray about his horrendous conduct. When he returned, she asked if he had asked God to change his behavior. The bad boy replied, "NO! I asked God to help you to put up with me."

David could not change everything; but when his prayer changed, everything changed. His prayer in Psalm 16 begins with "Keep me safe" (v. 1) and concludes with the fullness of joy found in God's presence (v. 11).

The difference is trust. The focus of David's prayer shifted from his trouble to his trust. We have little or no control over what we face, but we can decide who we trust. In verse 8, David says, "I keep my eyes always on the Lord."

To trust God is to surrender to His will for our lives. When the sailor throws the anchor from the boat to the shore, he pulls the boat to the shore, not the shore to the boat. We pray to align ourselves with God's will. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, "Not what I will, but what you will" (Mark 14:36).

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5–6 NIV

PRAYER

Father, life happens and sometimes it hurts! At times, You have changed things; at times, You have changed us. Thank You for being trustworthy and for directing our paths. Amen.



HELD BY THE HAND THAT NEVER FAILS

JAMAAL K. STEPHENS

Pastor, Macedonia Baptist Church - Marshall, TX

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10 ESV

Imagine crossing a shaky bridge as a child. The boards tremble, the wind pushes, and every step feels uncertain. But then your father reaches down and takes your hand. The bridge is still shaky, but your fear fades because someone stronger is holding you. God doesn't remove every trembling moment, but He steadies you through them.

In this verse, God gives two commands: “Fear not” and “be not dismayed.” He knows fear and discouragement are natural responses to life’s uncertainties, yet He calls us to rise above them—not by pretending that we are stronger than we are, but by trusting that He is with us. His presence is the antidote to fear.

Then God adds, “I am your God.” This isn’t a distant title but a declaration of relationship, authority, and care. We belong to Him, and He takes responsibility for us.

But God doesn’t stop at comforting words. He promises action:

- “I will strengthen you”—when your strength runs out, His begins.
- “I will help you”—He steps into your needs with divine support.
- “I will uphold you”—His righteous right hand becomes your stability when everything else feels unstable.

God is not a silent companion. He is an active participant in our journey, working, guiding, lifting, and sustaining us every step of the way. We never walk alone, and we never walk unsupported.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for Your presence that drives out fear and Your promise that I never walk alone. You are my God, my strength, and my help. Uphold me with Your righteous hand today. Calm my worries, steady my steps, and remind me that You are actively working in every part of my life. Help me trust You fully. In the name of Jesus our Christ, I pray. Amen.

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TRUSTING GOD WITH EVERYTHING

BERYL I. COWTHRAN
Pastor, Grace Hills Church - Shreveport, LA

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5–6 KJV

I am obsessed with organizing. I am a fixer. I strongly believe that everything has a place and that everything should be in its proper place. It is not uncommon for me to realize that I'm distracted from my main purpose because I've somehow focused on something else out of order in a room or space.

In a world of chaos, we often lose focus on the main thing because we have allowed our hearts to drift from purpose only to find ourselves on a detour to procrastination. Self-awareness has revealed that these detours are the result of something much deeper.

The very things that I'm gifted to do—organizing, troubleshooting—are the very things that prevent me from trusting God fully. Those moments of pivoting toward distractions are the result of me not being able to control something associated with my purpose and my need to focus on what I can control.

We often meet dead ends on the way to destiny. Rather than pivoting to mediocrity, we must learn to be still and ask God for help. Think about the Energizer Bunny—he doesn't change his own batteries, and he needs a hand other than his own to pick him up and delicately supply him with what keeps him going. We, too, need a hand that picks us up and supplies our needs. Can you trust God with your life?

PRAYER

Father, please forgive us. Transform our hearts and let us exchange hatred for holy habits. Help us to turn hatred into the hospitality that welcomes the stranger rather than hinders him. Correct our vision that we may see the value in the things we view as hopeless. Grant us grace to use our gifts for greater good. And when our situation has evolved, may we have the courage to keep climbing and the character that keeps us rooted in You. Amen.

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A FAITH THAT PRAYS

ANTONIO T. DIXON SR.

Pastor, Steeple Chase Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise... Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.

James 5:13, 17 ESV

Susan was stricken by two brain aneurysms. For weeks she lingered on life support, growing weaker each day. Her children were called in to say their goodbyes. Then Susan suddenly snapped out of her coma.

As she came to, she looked over at her husband and asked, "Where is everybody else?" He explained, "They allow only one of us at a time in the ICU."

Susan argued, "No, I heard them. They were speaking at the same time, and there were hundreds of them. They were all around me. They were here!" Susan discovered a large prayer chain had been created to pray for her while she was in the hospital.

James teaches us God will answer people who have faith. But that impact can't happen unless the ones doing the praying believe their words carry weight.

Praise God – "Cheerful? Sing Praise."

True believers know how to praise God. Healthy Christians are Christians who know how to praise God! The happiest people I know are not shy about praising God. They don't care where they are, who is looking, or what they sound like. They just know they have so much praise locked up inside them that they have to let it out.

Your praise to God, whether it is by singing, speaking softly, or communicating to God silently, is a form of prayer. And it is a vital part of our relationship with God.

Petition God – “A Nature Like Ours”

James tells of the power of prayer by giving the example of Elijah. Elijah was not a god, an angel, or a supernatural being. He was flesh and blood. He had troubles like we do, he was a sinner like we are, and he “was a man with a nature like ours.”

The one thing Elijah possessed that made him different than many of us is he believed in the power of God working through prayer. First Kings 17:1 records Elijah declaring it would not rain, and God stopped the rain for three and a half years. In 1 Kings 18:41–46, Elijah prayed the rain would fall. And verse 46 (NIV) says, “The power of the Lord came upon Elijah.”

If a fire occurs in your home, the last thing you want to do is run around in the burning house, as is often seen on television. The only way to survive is on your hands and knees. Conditions in life can be devastating. In such times we best survive by going to our knees in an attitude of prayer, humility, and helplessness before the Lord. This may be the only way to survive the heat.

Has the power of the Lord come into your life today? If not, James says to petition God in prayer. Jesus said in Matthew 17:20 (ESV), “For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”

PRAYER

God, grant us the kind of faith that recognizes though You are silent, You are not absent. Help us to know Your presence doesn't prevent storms from coming, but we trust that if You allowed the storm to come, You have the power to control it. We are thankful that little faith is still faith, and we ask You to help us when we doubt. Amen!

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GOD IS NEAR IN OUR GRIEF

CHARLES EDWARD JOHNSON
Pastor, Faith City Church - Shreveport, LA

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those
who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:18 NIV

The pain of tragedy is never easy to bear, especially when innocent children are involved. In moments like these, our hearts ache, questions arise, and grief can feel overwhelming. Yet even in the middle of sorrow, we are reminded of the promise found in Scripture: “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” God does not abandon us in our pain. He draws near to those who are hurting, comforting us with His presence, His peace, and His unfailing love.

As a community, we mourn together. We grieve the loss of young lives taken too soon, and we lift up every family whose heart has been shattered by tragedy. No words can fully erase the pain of loss, but we trust that God is able to carry us through even our darkest moments. When tears fall and strength feels weak, He remains faithful. He is a refuge for the weary, a healer for the broken, and a source of hope for those struggling to move forward.

This is also a moment for us to come together with compassion, unity, and care for one another. In times of tragedy, we must be intentional about showing love, supporting grieving families, protecting our children, and strengthening the bonds within our neighborhoods and community. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. We are called to be instruments of healing, encouragement, and peace.

Let us continue to pray not only for the families directly affected, but also for our schools, leaders, first responders, churches, and every person carrying emotional pain from this heartbreaking situation. May we never grow numb to the suffering around us, but instead allow these moments to inspire greater kindness, awareness, and action.

PRAYER

Father, our hearts are heavy over the loss of innocent children in our city. We ask You to comfort every grieving family and surround them with Your peace and strength. Hold them close in moments of sorrow and remind them that they are not alone. Lord, heal what is broken within our community and restore hope where fear and pain now exist. Protect our children, guide our leaders, and help us to love and care for one another with compassion and unity. Even in tragedy, remind us that You are near to the brokenhearted and faithful through every storm. Strengthen us to stand together, uplift one another, and trust in Your grace. In Jesus's name, Amen.

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BEING THERE FOR ONE ANOTHER

ASRIEL GAMALIEL MCLAIN
Pastor, New Morning Glory Temple - Mansfield, LA

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Luke 10: 36–37 KJV

Your presence is the most precious gift you can give to another human being,” declared Marshall B. Rosenberg. The parable of the good Samaritan underscores what it means to turn a neighborhood into a brotherhood.

The Gospel of Luke is sometimes called “the gospel of compassion.” In Luke 10, Jesus tells how a man journeys from Jerusalem to Jericho. During the trip he is savagely and mercilessly beaten and robbed by thieves.

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan came along had pity on the half-dead man and provided the help he needed.

After sharing this parable, Jesus asked, “Which of the three was a neighbor to the wounded man?” The lawyer to whom the question was asked said, “The one who demonstrated mercy.” Jesus to him, “Go and do likewise!”

The Samaritan shared his resources. He showed empathy. He stepped out of his comfort zone. He was a neighbor! As this man demonstrated brotherhood, Jesus Christ was the ultimate expression of empathy.

At Calvary, he hung, bled, and died on Friday, but early Sunday morning, He got up with all power in His hand.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for always stepping in even when people step out on us. Teach us that Your love given to us in Christ is to be seen and expressed in our love for others, especially those who populate the ranks of the rejected. Teach us, as Your people, to be the merciful extension of Your incarnation, in the power of Him who is the Word made flesh. In adopting that lifestyle, we express the truth that Your friendship is indeed essential to our souls. Thus, may all within our churches and communities engage in the friendship with each other that is essential to our souls. Through Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, our Lord, Savior, and King, we pray, Amen.

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HEAR AND HONOR MY PRAYER

ALEJANDRO R. SMITH

Pastor, Light Hill Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

Lord, I cry out to You; Make haste to me!

Psalm 141:1 NKJV

David's prayer in Psalm 141 is two-fold: Hear me and honor me. David claimed God's attention through prayer_ "Lord, I cry out to You." Prayer melts the heart of God. He will not sit in Zion and hear his children's cries and turn a deaf ear. Our Father desires to hear from us constantly and continually. Man should always pray. Prayer is in order always; it humbles the soul of man and delights the ear of God. Prayer should be the first thing we do in the morning and the last thing we do at night. Prayer does not have to be long; as a matter of fact, it should be sincere, concise, and specific. Consider the words of this song:

*Let's have a little talk with Jesus,
let's tell Him all about our troubles,
He will hear our faintest cries and
He will answer by and by.*

Whenever God answers, heals, delivers, set free, and blesses, the believer demonstrates their thankfulness through praise! We are the benefactors of His promises. The formula for success is simple: Believers should pray and praise God as His power sustains them.

In 1885, a young Swedish pastor named Karl Gustav Boberg was walking home from church when he was caught in a severe thunderstorm and almost died. This situation made him reflect on God's mighty power and control over nature. He was inspired to write a poem about what he had witnessed. He named the poem "O Store Gud" ("O Mighty God") and submitted it to be published in the local newspaper--

*O Lord my God
When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the works
Thy hands have made.
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;
How great Thou art,
How great Thou art!
How great Thou art!*

PRAYER

Gracious God, our Heavenly Father, we bow in humble submission to Thy throne of Grace realizing You are the source of our strength. Please hear our prayers as we seek Your mercy and grace to meet our needs. Grant us our heart's desires accordingly to Your lovingkindness. We cry out to You again, hear us, help us, and hold us. We place our trust in Thee. In Jesus's name, Amen.

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HOPE FOR THE HOPELESS

MONTRELL D. WHITAKER
Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:
Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail. They are new every
morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:21–23 NIV

Have you ever been so tired that you felt you could not go any further? Sometimes things around you become so difficult to manage that you would prefer not to keep fighting. You've faced with so many questions with no quick answers, closed doors, and continued struggles that in your heart you have convinced yourself that it may never get better. I suggest that even when managing these difficulties, there is still hope in knowing Christ and that He has all control.

Let me say this: You are not the first person to find yourself feeling defeated. Life has a way of presenting us with some of the most difficult moments we would ever imagine: a newly diagnosed sickness, an unexpected strain on your finances, family breakdowns, divorce, or even the loss of a loved one. But it is in those times that we must learn that hope is still available.

Can you imagine a day when things that you knew and cherished are now destroyed, the people you love are lost, and those who survived are left in poverty and grief? That is what the people in Jerusalem experienced. Everything they had depended on was gone. Buildings and walls were destroyed and torn down. But the prophet Jeremiah still found hope in his hopelessness.

After enduring all of this, Jeremiah says in Lamentations 3:21 (KJV), "This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope." Rather than sitting in sorrow, he made a choice to focus on truth. The truth is, as bad as things are, you are still here and have a chance to see your situation turn around. What things have you burdened and weighed down right now? When you learn to trust God, He will make the path for you easier than before. In fact, through knowing and recognizing the power of Christ in your life, things do not have to stay where they are.

Know that we serve a compassionate God who sees us, cares for us and will never leave us alone. Lamentations 3:22–23 (KJV) says, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” Regardless of what you may be faced with, take courage in knowing that God is ever present; and every morning that He gives you, His mercy and faithfulness is already working for you. Yes, even now, there is hope for the hopeless.

PRAYER

Father, we come to You thanking You for Your tender mercies and loving kindness. We ask that You continue to cover us and guard us with Your power to overcome every aspect of our lives. In Jesus name. Amen!



HOW TO GET THROUGH WHAT WE'RE GOING THROUGH

PATRICK L. DENNIS

Pastor, Bright Star Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12 NIV

Our city, Shreveport, is grieving. The loss of eight innocent children has left hearts heavy, questions unanswered, and emotions overwhelming. This is the kind of pain you don't plan for, the kind that ambushes your soul and shakes your faith. And in moments like these, we wrestle with one question: How do we get through what we're going through?

Paul gives us a prescription in Romans 12:12: “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” First, be joyful in hope—not because this is easy, but because our hope is real. The word hope speaks of expectation. We don’t have all the answers, but we have a confident assurance that God is still present, still sovereign, and still able. We don’t grieve like those without hope. Even in tears, we are promised that joy will come again (Psalm 30:5). Hope doesn’t erase the pain, but it keeps us from being consumed by it.

Second, be patient in affliction. The word patient means to remain under the weight without giving up. Right now, the weight is heavy. The questions are many. But don’t rush the process or run ahead of God. Psalm 27:14 (KJV) says, “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage.” There will come a day, by and by, when His clarity will meet our confusion.

Third, stay faithful in prayer. Keep talking to God. When you don’t understand, pray. When you’re angry, pray. When words fail you, pray anyway. Prayer is not just a place, it’s a posture. It’s how we stay connected when everything around us feels disconnected.

I’m reminded of a young boy who climbed trees with his older brother. One day a branch broke under him, and as he slipped, his brother grabbed his hand and said, “If you’re going to survive this, don’t look down, and don’t let go.” That’s God’s word to us today: Don’t look down in despair. Don’t let go of your faith.

PRAYER

Lord, we come with broken hearts, grieving young, innocent lives lost too soon. Hold our city close and comfort every family affected. Strengthen us to hope, to endure, and to keep praying. When we feel weak, remind us not to let go. Wrap us in Your peace and carry us through this valley. In Jesus's name, Amen.

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HELP IN A TIME OF NEED

RYANT RICO CRAIG

Associate Pastor, Peaceful Rest Baptist Church - Shreveport, LA

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Psalm 46:1 KJV

There are seasons when life feels unstable, times when chaos is happening around us, our emotions are at an all-time high, and the ground beneath us seems uncertain. In those moments, we may find ourselves searching for something solid to hold on to. This verse reminds us that we are not left to face trouble alone, and that our God is never distant, nor is He ever delayed; He is always present. Even during those occasions when we struggle to see His hand at work or feel His presence near, He is right in our midst.

In his book *No Man Is an Island*, Thomas Merton said, "God, who is everywhere, never leaves us. Yet He seems sometimes to be present, sometimes to be absent. If we do not know Him well, we do not realize that He may be more present to us when He is absent than when He is present." This sentiment serves to reassure us, as believers, of God's unchanging nature during our times of doubt or spiritual dryness.

Psalm 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." A refuge is a place you run to and not away from. Strength is something you receive when yours runs out. And a very present help means that God is not merely aware of our situation, but He is actively near and readily available to come to our aid in times of need. As believers in Christ, we can celebrate the fact that we have a God who is not only available, but He is also accessible. God acts on our behalf as a safe fortress and provider of strength, rather than just a "means of help."

Psalm 46 is a "song of confidence" that was written by the sons of Korah during an immense, catastrophic crisis when nations were warring and the earth seemed to be collapsing around them (much like our times today). It serves as a hymn of trust, asserting that God is a refuge and protector—a "fortress" for His people, even amidst absolute chaos—and insisting that God's presence brings peace when nature and kingdoms fail.

Whatever you may be facing today, know that God never intended for you to carry it in your own strength. You have help, and He stands ready to answer your faintest cry. The hymnist said, "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!"

Never neglect the help that is available to you. Many have failed to get the help they needed simply because they never asked. So, what do we do while we are waiting for help to arrive? I am glad you asked! Psalm 46:10 says, "**Be still** and know that I am God!" God is still in control, and He is never uninformed of the things happening to and around us. Nothing catches Him by surprise. Trust His will, embrace His Presence and strive to always acknowledge the need for His help.

PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for being my refuge during the times when I feel overwhelmed and for being my strength when I feel weak. Help me to always remember that You are near, even in the middle of trouble. Teach me to trust You more and to rest in Your presence today. I admit that there are times when I do not understand what You are doing but teach me how to trust Your will. Amen.

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BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

ANTWAN BUTLER

Dream Big Leadership Church - Shreveport, LA

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

John 13:34-35 NIV

When we talk about building healthy relationships, most people immediately think about others: spouses, friends, family. But the truth is, no relationship will ever be healthier than the one you have with yourself. The way you think about yourself, speak to yourself, regulate your emotions, and meet your own needs becomes the blueprint for every other relationship in your life.

Let's start with how you think about yourself. The Bible tells us in Genesis 1:27 that we are created in the image of God. That means your value is not based on performance, approval, or comparison—it is established by God Himself. But Romans 12:3 also gives balance: We are not to think too highly or too lowly of ourselves, but with sober judgment. A healthy relationship with yourself begins when you see yourself accurately—neither through pride nor insecurity, but through truth.

Next is how you speak to yourself. Many people are more critical of themselves than anyone else could ever be. Yet Scripture says in Proverbs 18:21 that death and life are in the power of the tongue. That includes the words you speak internally. Second Corinthians 10:5 teaches us to take every thought captive. That means you don't allow negative, condemning thoughts to run unchecked. You challenge them. You replace them. You align your thinking with truth. If your internal voice is unhealthy, your emotional life will follow.

Then we must address how you regulate your emotions. Emotions are real, but they are not meant to lead. James 1:19 tells us to be slow to speak and slow to wrath. That implies pause, control, and intentionality. And Galatians 5:22–23 reminds us that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. Maturity is not the absence of emotion, it is the ability to manage emotion. If you cannot regulate yourself, you will react in ways that damage both yourself and others.

Finally, consider how you meet your own needs. Many unhealthy relationships are formed because people are looking for someone else to do what they have not learned to do for themselves. But Philippians 4:11 says, “I have learned to be content.” Contentment is learned, not given. And Psalm 42:5 (KJV) shows David speaking to his own soul, saying, “Hope thou in God.” In other words, he didn’t wait for someone else to stabilize him—he led himself back to truth.

When you don’t meet your own needs, you will place unrealistic demands on others. But when you are internally stable, you can engage in relationships from a place of wholeness instead of desperation.

So, if you want healthy relationships, start here:

- Think about yourself correctly.
- Speak to yourself wisely.
- Manage your emotions intentionally.
- Take responsibility for your needs.

When your internal relationship is healthy, your external relationships have a chance to be healthy too.

PRAYER

Lord, help me see myself through Your truth, speak life within, govern my emotions with Your Spirit, and meet my needs in You. Build stability within me so my relationships reflect Your love, wisdom, and peace. Amen.

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THE GOD WHO HOLDS THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

LARRY W. CAIN

Pastor, Saint John Baptist Church - Houghton, LA

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

Isaiah 46:10 NKJV

God can see what we cannot see. Isaiah reminds us that God is not guessing about our future; He already knows it. He stands outside of time, seeing the beginning and the end at once. While we walk through life step by step, God sees the entire path laid out clearly. This means nothing surprises Him, not the battles you face, not the delays, not the disappointments, not the detours.

When we feel uncertain, we should remember that we are walking through what God has already seen and prepared us for.

A second lesson for us is that God's purposes will stand. Not ours. Not the enemy's. God says, "My counsel shall stand." Not "might." Not "hopefully." Not "if everything goes right."

God's purposes are unstoppable. Even when life feels chaotic, God's plan is not shaken. Even when people fail us, His purpose remains. Even when we feel behind, He is still on schedule. This gives us permission to rest in Him. We don't have to force outcomes. We can trust the one who already knows the outcome. God will accomplish what pleases Him. The verse ends with a promise: "I will do all My pleasure." This means:

- God is not reluctant about blessing us.
- He is not hesitant about guiding us.
- He is not unsure about our destiny.

God delights in fulfilling His purposes in our lives. What He started, He will finish. What He promised, He will perform. What He spoke, He will bring to pass. Even when we do not understand, we can trust His wisdom. Yes, there will be seasons when God's plan feels hidden. There will be moments when His timing feels slow. There will be days when His path feels confusing. But Isaiah 46:10 calls us to trust this truth: God knows the end from the beginning.

PRAYER

Father, thank You that You see the end from the beginning. When I cannot see the way forward, remind me that You already know the outcome. Strengthen my trust in Your purpose. Help me rest in Your sovereignty and walk confidently in Your will. Fulfill Your good pleasure in my life and let Your counsel stand. Amen.



Words of **ENCOURAGEMENT** FROM PASTORS IN THE SHREVEPORT AREA

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

PSALM 34:18 NIV

Earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal.

THOMAS MOORE

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