



Someday's Meditations

June 2026

A journal of meditations for
tweens and teenagers

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of contempt

Psalm 123:4

“Contempt” is a big word. Not a long word, but a big, complicated word. The dictionary defines it as “believing that a person or a thing is not worth thinking about.” People may have contempt for the rules, which means that they ignore them and think that they are above them. Others have contempt for certain people, maybe someone famous or maybe their neighbor, because of the things that they do or say. Many people, unfortunately, have contempt for nature, which means that they think humans are better than plants and animals.

Certain people may have done bad things. We may not always agree with the rules. Human culture can sometimes seem more important than the natural world, especially when we’re trying to help or heal others. We should not, however, have “contempt” for anything. We should not look down on things or think that we are better than them. Even if we are smarter, stronger, older, or anything than people, nature, or things, we should treat those people, nature, and things with respect.

Why? Well, the easy reason is that God created everything, and we should have respect for God’s Creation. We are also not the only things living on this planet, and we are not the only things that have wisdom and knowledge. You can learn a lot from a tall oak tree, or how animals and plants live together in the harmony, or even from the spin of the stars above our heads at night. We Christians are called to live with open, not closed hearts.

Prayer

God, please keep my heart open. Forgive me for the times when my heart has been hard or when I have said harsh things. Help me be open to the wisdom found in others: in other people, in the forests and the mountains and the sky, and in the things in our lives. May we be a blessing to others. Thank you God. Amen.

Sunday, June 7, 2026

The Pharisees said to Jesus' disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

Matthew 9:11

What does the word "sin" mean? What does it mean to be a sinner? And why were the Pharisees so upset that Jesus was eating with them?

"To sin" means to consciously do something against God's teachings. Jesus taught us to love God and to love others as ourselves. When we gossip about other people and talk behind their backs, when we hurt someone on purpose, when we say awful things to ourselves and beat ourselves up, we are "sinning," we are going against Jesus' teaching of love, respect, and hope.

Now, sinning is pretty serious, and whenever we sin we should go to God, confess (sometimes with the help of a priest), and try to make amends in our lives. In other words, when we realize that we're sinning, we should apologize and change the way we act.

Some people, like the Pharisees, take this a step further. They think that, if a person sins, then that person is *bad*. They have done something wrong, they are guilty, and they therefore no longer deserve our respect. Don't associate with sinners, the Pharisees say, because then you'll grow to be like them. You'll be "polluted" like they are, and you won't be able to serve God.

Again, sinning is serious. It's a breach in our relationship with God. But Jesus wanted to show that, even if people make mistakes, no matter how bad, God will not leave those people alone. God is always with us. All we need to do is turn away from our mistakes, apologize to God and the people we hurt, and stop sinning. The point isn't that we're punished. The point is that we healed. Jesus is always finding new ways to heal and help us.

Prayer

Have you ever committed a sin? Talk with your parents, a family member, or a priest about something you've done wrong. Apologize to God and to anyone who was hurt and remember that God loves you, no matter what happens or what you do.

Wednesday, June 10, 2026

Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you; *
I have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord,
my good above all other."

Psalm 16:1

I remember the first time I taught a class. It was in Japan, and I was teaching 6th graders English. I was terrified. I had never been a teacher before, only a student. I didn't know how to introduce myself. I was worried that the students would act up and not listen to me. I felt like they would laugh at me.

You may be surprised to know this, but there are times when even adults are scared and worried. The world is just so big, and it's very easy to make mistakes. We have to do things that we're not comfortable with, that we're not prepared for, and that make us feel very, very small.

In these times, we look to God. Sometimes God will solve the problem for us. For me, God took all the emotions rumbling around inside my head and my stomach like stones in a blender, God grabbed it all, and he threw it away. Wow, amazing!

God doesn't always work that way, though. Sometimes we need to be present to our feelings so that we can understand them. Sometimes our fears are real, and we need to listen to them. But no matter what happens, God is with us, and we can take refuge in him. We can crawl inside of God's heart and ask God to help us, to calm us down, or to help us get through these tough times and find a calm place to catch our breath.

Remember though, no matter what, your parents, your family, your friends, your church family, and God especially are very proud of you. You can always hide in God - God is our refuge, after all! - whenever you need, but you can also look to all of us as images of God's tender love in your life.

Prayer

Here's a prayer to help you calm down when you're in a bad place: "God, I am your child, and I know you love me. Please let me hide in you. Protect me and keep me as your own. I love you. Amen."

Sunday, June 14, 2026

Spend your reflection time reading Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7). Read it over once, sit in silence for a little time (maybe count up to thirty slowly) and then read it again. Try to answer these questions:

- How do you think Sarah felt in this story?
- How do you think Abraham felt?
- Have you ever waited for something that you *really, really* wanted, and maybe you waited just a bit too long for it? What was it, and how did it make you feel to wait all that time?

Then, talk with your parents about these answers and think about the following questions:

- Why do you think God waits to answer some of our prayers?

This is a big question, so don't worry if you don't think of an answer very quickly, or even if you and your parent can't think of an answer. There are many questions in life that we can only answer by living through good times and bad times. The answers that we get aren't usually easy answers but are a general sense of what God hopes for and wishes for us as his beloved children. This kind of answer is called "wisdom."

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

Jesus said, “Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven...Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Matthew 6:1, 5-6

Jesus wants us to do good things, but he also wants us to think about *why* we do good things. Do we help the people around us because we want to help them from the goodness of our hearts? Or do we want to help them because they’ll thank us (and it’s very nice when people thank us)? Do we want to be seen as a good person more than we actually want to help? Do we care more about the opinions of others than the opinion of God?

These are some tough questions, let me tell you! Adults struggle with these questions just as much as kids do. It’s hard to know why we *really* do things. Many of us like pleasing people, especially our parents or our teachers, and it really *does* feel good when people show us their appreciation. It’s not all that bad, either, to want other people to see the good things that we do and to thank us for them. Those kinds of feelings aren’t bad at all.

Even so, God wants us to look into ourselves and look at our motivations. If we are doing good things only because we’ll get some kind of reward in the end, then we’re still only focused on ourselves. We’re not actually growing closer to others. The whole point of living a good, religious life is to love our neighbors and God more fully, and to do that, sometimes we need to forget about ourselves. We do good because it is good to do good, not because we get anything in return.

Prayer

God, cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, so that I might perfectly love you and glorify your holy name. Amen.

Sunday, June 21, 2026

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, *
and the firmament shows his handiwork.
- 2 One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.
- 3 Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,
- 4 Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.

Psalm 19:1-4

This is a really beautiful Psalm, isn't it? What do you think it means? The heavens declare the glory of God? Here, "heavens" doesn't refer to the place we go to after we die, where we'll be with God and all the holy departed for eternity. Instead, here "heavens" means simply "the sky."

Hmm, wait a moment. How can the sky declare the glory of God? The sky can't walk, can it? Have you ever had a conversation with the sky before? Well, if you haven't, then maybe you should try! Listen carefully to the sky and see what she has to say. Or, better yet, *look* up into the sky and *see* what she has to say.

In the Bible, we have two "testaments," the old and the new. One tells the story of our people before Jesus, and the other tells the story of Jesus and what happened after he ascended into heaven. "Testament" means revelation, or showing, or information, and the Bible is our testament about God. But there is a third testament, and it is the natural world. Nature reveals things about God, and just like we study the Bible to understand God more fully, so too should we study nature to understand God.

What kinds of things do we learn about God from nature? That God loves life, loves beauty, gives protection to the weak, and much, much more. We still haven't figured everything out about God (actually, we never will), but it sure is fun to learn!

Activity:

Spend some time in nature with a friend or family member. Talk about God and what you love about nature. Remember that God created the natural world to be loved and cared for. Thank God for the trees, animals, and sky.

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon* us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.’

Luke 1:76-79

Today is the feast of St. John the Baptist. He was one of Jesus’ cousins, and his job was to do something very, very important: to tell people who Jesus was. You may remember that St. John baptized Jesus, too. He was pretty hesitant to do so (“Why am I baptizing YOU when you’re the important one here!”), but Jesus insisted. He needed to be baptized in order to walk the same path as those around him. Jesus wasn’t here to lord it over others; Jesus came to be with all people, especially the lost, sick, and lonely.

The Scripture reading above is from a song that St. John’s father, Zechariah, sang just after St. John was born. It’s a beautiful song that I hope you’ll read more than just once. I love the joy in it, but I also love how close and personal God is in it. Zechariah sings about the “tender mercy” of God and the light from God that will help those who sit in darkness. God will guide those who are lost. God cares so much for everyone, no matter how small and insignificant we might feel.

Activity

Try to memorize this bit of Scripture. Go line-by-line, each day, until you’ve got it all by heart. Repeat it to yourself while you’re on the bus or out on a walk with your family. If you like music, then maybe try to make up a song for it.

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Then Jesus entered the temple* and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer”; but you are making it a den of robbers.’

Matthew 21:12-13

Sometimes even Jesus got mad. In this bit of Scripture from St. Matthew’s gospel, he was angry with people who were using the Temple to make money for themselves. Jesus was mad because people were using something that was supposed to be for prayer and for everyone for selfish reasons. For us today, though, the important thing to see is that Jesus got mad.

We all get mad. Being mad isn’t a bad thing, necessarily. It’s not a fun thing, nor is it something that we set out to do (we don’t start the morning saying, “Okay! Today I’m gonna get mad!”). Anger is something that happens to us. It’s natural.

There are certain times when anger is appropriate, but we always need to ask ourselves, “Was anyone hurt by my anger?” If we’ve hurt someone with our feelings, then we need to reconcile with them and maybe apologize. Often, angry feelings come from believing something very deeply, and the only way those beliefs can come out is through being mad. We also may need to explain to the person why we were so angry.

Remember that the goal of all things is to love our neighbors and God more fully. If we need to be mad about something in order to explain our feelings, then that’s okay. If we’re mad just to be mad, then maybe we need to find another way to express ourselves. Whatever we do, we seek to grow closer to those around us and to God, who is both inside and outside our hearts.

Prayer:

Try using this prayer next time you’re mad: “God, I am so angry right now. I feel my anger bubbling up inside me. Please help me know what to do with my anger. Help me express my feelings and my heart to those near me. Please bless me, O Lord most high.”

Somedays' Meditations

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