

The Gate of Autumn

Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven,
Your faithfulness endures to all generations ...

Psalm 25:4-5



Iconic Scriptures
Revisiting Favorite Verses



Strive to enter through
the narrow gate ...

Luke 13:24

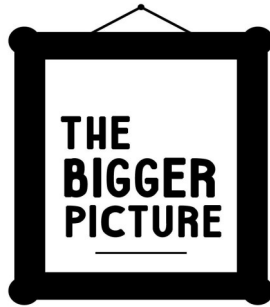
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Greetings ...

*It is our desire to share a mutual path with you
as we open 21 gates of Iconic Scriptures.
These 21 devotions offer ponderings from Biblical stories
and personal testimonies related to scriptures we love and quote often.*

*In God's Word, there is always a bigger picture than we may personally grasp.
It is truly deep and wide, rivers to swim in!*



*Our hope is this journey into 21 Iconic Scriptures
will highlight to you your personal love of God's Word
and will ignite a desire to dig deeper, look longer, and tarry with Holy Spirit.*

*King David said,
"Your testimonies also are my delight
and my counselors." Psalm 119:24*

May this be yours and ours experience! Amen



Now Let's Begin!



**Welcome to 21 “Gates” on the Topic,
Iconic Scriptures
*Revisiting Favorite Verses***

Included

**Topic Title ♦ Iconic Scripture ♦ Teaching Consideration
Prayer ♦ Study Scriptures ♦ Scripture Declaration
Worship Song (search on You Tube)
Application-God’s Word Transforms ♦ Journal Page**

How to use the Gate of Autumn

- ✦ Utilize this devotion as it fits your needs.
Some folks do one devotion each day.
Others spread the devotions over two days.
- ✦ Most important is that you glean from the Lord and His Word that which He is trying to teach you, so linger if you need to.
- ✦ For continuity sake, read through the entire daily devotion in one sitting to gain the big picture.

Speak God’s Word

- ✦ Speak your declarations of God’s Living Word out loud.
The Bible teaches that ***“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”*** Romans 10:17 Your spoken words enter your own hearing and will build your faith.
- ✦ By speaking God’s Word aloud privately, you will increase your confidence to speak God’s Word aloud publicly.

So Much More!

There was so much more that could have been said and written on this topic. We trust you will explore some of your favorite Iconic Scriptures and learn broader and deeper truths

A Prayer for You ... Psalm 119

***May you love God’s law and make it your meditation all the day.
May the Lord be your portion and may you keep His Word.
May you seek the Lord with your whole heart and
never wander from His commandments.
May the Lord deal bountifully with you and open your eyes
that you may see wondrous things from His law.
May God’s testimonies be your delight and your counselors.***



Sidebar Notes...

Resources

- ♦ These 21 **Iconic Scriptures** can benefit women, men, and teenagers.
- ♦ This devotional is available in a pdf format on our Open Book Ministries website under the “Resources” page. Links to the suggested worship music is also available under “Open Book Favorites—YouTube Playlist.” **www.openbookministries.net**
- ♦ Permission is granted to you to print the pdf for personal use from our OBMin Resources page, or you can contact us to purchase printed copies of The Gate of Autumn. On the website, click “Gate of Autumn, 2025, Iconic Scriptures” or send a message from the website to purchase. If you would be so kind, please notify us if you print the pdf and if you share it.
- ♦ If you benefit from journaling, consider purchasing a notebook or journal to record your insights, questions, and thoughts. Daily journal pages are offered.
 - ♦ Additional Encouragement
 - Connect with others and discuss what you are learning and living from “**Iconic Scriptures**”
 - Participate in acts of service.
 - Study in depth additional Iconic Scriptures that speak to you.



Spiritual Disciplines

Fresh Fruit and Bread

Spiritual Disciplines have been written about and encouraged. Why? Because life is busy but our busyness does not always yield fruit or bread. God has a place of fruitfulness, both spiritual and practical, that He knows we will be blessed by and be a blessing to others. But a great meal is never prepared in a rush. It begins in the quiet, intentional preparation at the kitchen counter.

In the “kitchen” of our lives we must do the same.
Belly up to the counter, open the refrigerator,
organize the supplies, combine and cook!

Spiritual Disciplines are similar.

Meals are created often more than one time each day. Morning and evening and even midday. We are blessed to have an open invitation into our Father-God’s presence where we can swing wide the refrigerator door with Him. What is He cooking up today for your life? What does He want you to discover about His love, His will, His plan. Or maybe He just wants to sit at the table and chat with you.

A good kitchen is a relationship builder.
It is a place to share what we know and
a place to learn what we don’t know.
It is a place of nourishment, fellowship, love, fun, truth.

Each day as you spend time with the Lord
in these devotionals,
may you and Jesus break bread together...
may you delight one another...
may you enjoy the fruit of His garden...
may you taste and see that the Lord is good!
Let’s begin our “meal” with prayer ...



Breath Prayer ♦ Psalm 71

(Breathe in)
In You, O Lord, I put my trust;
(Breathe out)
let me never be put to shame.
(Breathe in)
...incline your ear to me, and save me.
(Breathe out)
For You are my hope, O Lord God;
(Breathe in)
You are my trust from my youth.
(Breathe out)
Let my mouth be filled with Your praise
(Breathe in)
and with Your glory all the day. Amen.





Trail Ridge Road
Colorado
September 2023



Index

Gates 1-7

Iconic Scriptures

Revisiting Treasured Verses

☐ Gate 1 ♦ Actively Wait

☐ Gate 2 ♦ Valiant Superhero

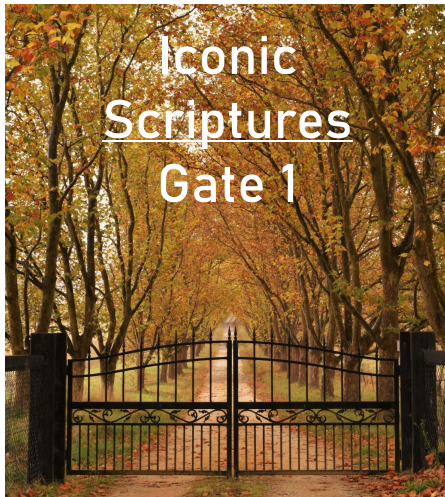
☐ Gate 3 ♦ What is Truth?

☐ Gate 4 ♦ Thank You, Paul

☐ Gate 5 ♦ Staked in Evidence

☐ Gate 6 ♦ Great Cloud of Witnesses

☐ Gate 7 ♦ The Missionary



Gate Key Actively Wait

Iconic Scripture *(Speak God's Word Aloud)*

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,
says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil,
to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah's encouraging prophecy to exiled Israel ♦ Jeremiah 29:11 nkjv



Considerations

Verse 11 of Jeremiah 29 is an iconic scripture, a familiar, often quoted verse.

It is an applicable promise for all of God's people, a true statement of His Loving nature and intention towards us...

a future and a hope!

In Jeremiah's day, the Jewish people needed the assurance of Jeremiah 29:11. Historically, when this verse was penned, their worst fears had been realized. Overcome by their enemy, they had been taken captive and forcibly removed by King Nebuchadnezzar from their homeland to Babylon. The Open Bible's introductory commentary to the Book of Jeremiah reveals why this trouble came upon them: "their empty profession, disobedience to God's covenant, and spiritual harlotry."

Matters were made worse when false prophets, particularly Hananiah, spoke lies to the people, telling them their exile would last only two years.

False hope leads to deferred hope—
"hope deferred makes the heart sick."

Proverbs 13:12 God does not want our hope deferred; He does want us to have faith in the midst of reality. Jeremiah delivered the accurate instruction of the Lord regarding how Israel was to navigate the 70 year exile. It boiled down to this modern day analogy: focus on the windshield instead of the rear view mirror. In other words, hope for the future and trust God with the present.

**Live ... Occupy ... Pray ...
Be fruitful and multiply...Actively wait!**



Prayer

Lord, sometimes it is challenging to understand how my present circumstances demonstrate the promise of Jeremiah 29:11, that it is Your plan to give me a future and a hope. No matter what today looks like for me, help me to trust You with all of my heart and lean not on my own understanding and to actively wait on the unfolding of Your will.

Instruct me when to resist and repel or rest and recover. Amen.

Proverbs 3:5-6



The Scriptures

Instructions to God's Exiled People
Jeremiah 29:1-14

*The Apostle Paul teaches about how to live
in less-than-ideal circumstances.*

Philippians 4:1-20, especially verses 11-13

A Scripture Declaration **Philippians 4:13**

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.



Worship in Song

"Trust In God"

by Elevation Worship (Radio Version)

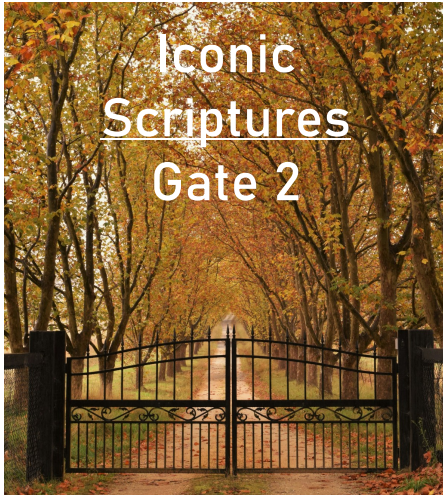


God's Word Transforms

Jeremiah 29:11 is quoted at celebrations and sometimes when there is not much to celebrate. Life in this fallen world does not always bring us joy, prosperity, and success. The Apostle Paul taught that his contentment was not based on circumstances, but on His relationship with Christ. How does Proverbs 3:5-6 and Philippians 4:13 help you to participate in God's promise of a future and a hope?



My Notes



Insights

Batman, Spider-Man, Wonder Woman ... fictional superheroes have common attributes: they wear a costume that conceals their true identity, have an unrealistic super strength or ability, and face larger-than-life battles. Superheroes are often benevolent and they win in the end. Why are people, young and old, fascinated with them? Perhaps because they provide a positive demonstration of three universal human desires: *hope, justice, and empowerment.*

When Chuck and I were early in our relationship with the Lord, a youth pastor friend of ours used interesting parallels between the Bible and the Star Wars movie. His effort was sincere, to help his students grasp more clearly the fight between good and evil and Jesus' victory. For me, Star Wars didn't transform me, but Holy Spirit and God's Word did. God's answer to our human desires far exceeds a man-created story; it is found in His Word and in His Son.

Through Jesus' resurrection, we've been given **LIVING HOPE.** *1 Peter 1:3b*

The foundation of God's throne is righteousness and **JUSTICE.** *Psalms 89:14*

Jesus' **POWER** has given us all that pertains to life and godliness. *2 Peter 1:3a*

The creativity to manufacture characters and write stories is a gift from God.

However, *perpetual hope, justice, and empowerment* were fought for and won on a nonfictional battlefield by our living, valiant Superhero, Jesus Christ!



Gate Key

Valiant Superhero

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One,
will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness,
He will quiet you with His love.
He will rejoice over you with singing.

The good news prophecy through Zephaniah ♦ Zephaniah 3:17



Prayer

Fearless Warrior, Prince of Peace, King of kings, Conqueror. I believe You are in my midst and are the indisputable Mighty One Who saves! I believe You are truly all of these attributes and more. Savior, save...and help me to cooperate with You in the hearts of my family, friends, community, country. May I give You multiple reason to rejoice! Amen



The Scriptures

Our Victorious Superhero!

Matthew 26:62-64

Jesus' Declaration of His Coming Glory

Revelation chapter 1:1-8, and chapter 19

Fulfillment of Jesus' Declaration

A Scripture Declaration

John 16:33b

In this world I know I will have tribulation but I take heart because I know You, my King, have overcome the world! Amen



Worship in Song

"That's My King"

by CeCe Winans (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Psalm 118:16b says *"the right hand of the Lord does valiantly."* "Valiant" means courage, loyalty and faith even when facing great danger. We pondered Matthew 26:62-64 in our Scripture section.

Read the context of those verses in Matthew 26:46-68. Revisit our iconic scripture for today—Zephaniah 3:17. How does this well known verse touch you knowing it speaks of God's love for you?



My Notes



Considerations

“There is his story, her story, and the truth.” Have you heard that quote or something similar? The bottom line is most people believe that they know truth. The question is, do we? What is truth?

That was Pontius Pilate’s rhetorical question to Jesus just before he yielded to the Jews and condemned our Lord to be crucified. *John 18:37-38a*

One would think that truth would be a beloved and sought after attribute. Why then is truth so controversial? Is it because people are genuinely confused about the truth of God’s simple message?

Or is there something else? Is truth perceived as an overt thief to those who love self, stuff, and supremacy, a direct threat to their agenda? Truth is not the friend of the greedy, deceptive, or controlling. Who is it that crucifies truth?

2 Timothy chapter 3:1-9 is the answer.

Truth is the best friend of the humble and the seeking. God’s truth is not hiding atop Mount Everest, the highest point on earth, nor in the depths of the Challenger Deep in the Pacific Ocean’s Mariana Trench. No! It—HE—is present with us. Truth is not a mantra, creed, or mere writings.

Truth is Jesus: “*I am the way, the truth, and the life.*” *John 14:6a*

There are those whose hearts sincerely long for truth, but do not yet know. Jesus tenderly calls such to come to Him.

Jeremiah recorded their answer:

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” *Jeremiah 29:13*



Gate Key

What is Truth?

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

The Apostle John in the Gospel he penned. *John 8:31-32*



Prayer

Lord, I know You reward my belief and faith. *(Hebrews 11:6)*
 I believe Your truth is my shield and buckler *(Psalm 91:4)*, Your law is truth *(Psalm 119:142b)*, and Your Holy Spirit guides me into all truth. *(John 16:13)* I believe that every Word of God is pure *(Proverbs 30:5)*, and all scripture is given by inspiration of God. *(2 Timothy 3:16)* I believe You sanctify me and all of your people by the truth, and that Your Word is truth. *(John 17:17)*
 I believe it is impossible for You, God, to lie. *(Hebrews 6:18)*
 I believe, Jesus, that You are the way, the truth and the life. *(John 14:6a)* I confidently stand firm with the belt of truth fastened around my core. *(Ephesians 6:14a)* Amen.



The Scriptures

Jesus Summarizes Truth
John chapters 13 through 17

Suggestion: Read chapters 13 through 17 in one sitting, ignoring the chapter breaks. These verses are Jesus’ final teaching before His crucifixion, His summary of truth.

A Scripture Declaration

*Re-read the prayer above aloud as a declaration.
 Let your faith arise!*



Worship in Song

“When You Speak”

by VOUS Worship (Official Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

As you read Jesus' summary of truth in John 13-17, imagine you are seated listening to Jesus in the upper room. Notice God's truth is not detached from His desire for relationship with people. Record lessons He spoke that particularly challenge your thinking. Sit with your thoughts and pray. What freedom might the apostles have needed after Jesus was crucified? What freedom do you need?



My Notes



Gate Key

Thank You, Paul

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

The Apostle Paul in a letter to his mentor, Timothy ♦ 2 Timothy 4:7 nkjv

I have fought an excellent fight. I have finished my full course with all my might and I've kept my heart full of faith. The Passion Translation



Considerations

The Apostle Paul (formerly Saul) was a man with an extraordinary drive to pursue his religious convictions and passions. Before his conversion to Christ, he was a religious terrorist. After his conversion, he was a bold and relentless evangelist.

Very few (if any) have a conversion like Saul's. One moment he is vehemently leading an entourage to help him arrest men and women who believed in Jesus. The next moment he is face down in the dirt and voice-to-voice with the Creator, the Messiah. His life and beliefs were wholly reconstructed by his encounter with Yeshua, Jesus. Despite Saul's prior blindness to the truth, in his three days of physical blindness, he saw and fully committed to the Lord's commission. The Damascus Road was the start of Saul's good fight, finished race, and kept faith.

It has been said we must pick our battles carefully but then fight to the death for the ones that matter. Paul did just that.

He began by preaching in the local synagogues and going to boot camp. Three years of Holy Ghost schooling in the Arabian desert and Damascus shaped a counter-cultural minister. Paul told of what he saw and the things God showed him. Who was evangelized by this former Jewish rabbi? The "Goyim," the non-Jewish Gentiles. If you are a non-Jew as am I, we are forever indebted to Paul for opening the door of the Good News to us.

Thank you Paul for fighting the good fight. I hope I make your fight worth it!



Prayer

Lord, help me to learn from your servant Paul how and why to fight the good fight of faith. Whenever my last day is on this earth, whenever my last breath is breathed out, Lord I want to finish with Your name on my lips, your armor firmly in place, my arms wrapped tightly around those You allow me to love and influence, and my hand gripped by Yours. Help me to fight an excellent fight, finish my full course with all my might, and keep my heart full of faith. Amen.



The Scriptures

Acts 9:1-30

Saul's Conversion and Initial Ministry

Galatians 1:11-24 & 2:1-10

Paul's Boot Camp (formerly "Saul")

Acts 26

Paul's Compassionate Prison Witness to King Agrippa

A Scripture Declaration

Philippians 3:14

As Paul did, Lord, with your help, I will press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.



Worship in Song

"Find Us Faithful"

by Steve Green (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Paul was compassionately bold. Some with opposing views may have mistook his passion for pride or narrow-mindedness. Despite his fearlessness, a shadow hung over his life: *"I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."* The fuller context of Paul's remark is in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. Verse 10 gives the anecdote to his guilt and 11 highlights the purpose of his good fight. How do these verses guide you to fulfill today's iconic verse?



My Notes



Considerations

Just a concept? Sometimes faith is viewed as an abstract idea. And yet the author describes faith as having “substance.” A definition for substance is *“the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists which has a tangible, solid presence.”* Let us search Hebrews 11:1 for the solid presence in faith. Lo and behold, it is **“hope”** and **“the evidence of things not seen.”** What? All intangibles.

Perhaps that is the point.

Faith is *not* faith in faith.

It is faith in the tangible Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. He gave us a physical picture of faith through His life, a map to follow.

Consider **Hebrews 11:8**.

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” No map with a pin in the final destination, and no evidence ... yet.

But faith in what God had said moved Abraham forward. Time passed. He homesteaded near Bethel, but had yet to see the fulfillment of the second half of God’s promise, a nation-building heir. In Genesis 15, I paraphrase his question to God: “where’s the substance and the evidence that I will have a son?” The answer? God brought Abraham outside and directed his eyes to the stars while his feet stood on the promised soil. His tent was staked in the evidence. Does God honor faith? Abraham would say “yes!”



Gate Key

Staked in Evidence

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

Now faith is the substance
of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.

Message to Jewish believers who became Christians. Hebrews 11:1 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, help me to recognize the evidence of unseen things which I now see. I trust that You know Your plan and what is best. I want to be fully in sync with You and rest patiently in confident expectation that every unanswered hope or prayer is not forgotten or ignored, but will be answered in accordance with Your love and wisdom, Your timing and ways.

I stake my life of faith on this.

Isaiah 55:8-9



The Scriptures

The “Hall of Faith”

Hebrews chapter 11

Jesus Commends the Faith of a Centurion and a Canaanite Woman

Matthew 8:5-10 and Matthew 15:21-28

A Scripture Declaration

2 Corinthians 5:7

I walk by faith and not by sight.



Worship in Song

“Do It Again”

by Elevation Worship (Official Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

We have hoped for specific outcomes and waited for the evidence of what we have not seen. At times we have not received that which we have asked and prayed for. How does this affect your faith? How does a combination of a temporal and eternal view help you, knowing God redeems all things in His timing? Hebrews 11:36-40 speaks of those who were not delivered. What was their reward?



My Notes



Considerations

We have all heard it...*if you see the word “therefore,” at the start of a sentence in your Bible, look back and see what it is “there for.”* Today’s iconic scripture leads with “therefore” so we will apply that sage advice. According to online info, the original Bible was a continuous text. Chapter breaks were first added in the early 1200’s and then revised in the 1600’s. Therefore, (no pun intended), if we read the book of Hebrews with no chapter breaks, new light is shed on the “great cloud of witnesses” in 12:1.

Preceding chapter 12 is the “Hall of Faith”, the famous chapter in the Bible that highlights significant (and obscure) people who walked “by faith.” Each of them lived by faith through trying circumstances. Abel who offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than his brother and was murdered by him, Noah who saved his family from the flood, Sarah who bore a child in her (very) old age, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, and many more. And then we come upon our iconic verse:

*“Therefore **we also**, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...”* Who is it that surrounds us? Those whose lives testify about living by faith! They teach us how to thrive in our faith walk; they spur us onward in our faith! Their witness is a shining light.

How are we to do this? **Verse 2 ...**

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...” Our Lord is the perfect example of walking by faith.



Gate Key

Great Cloud of Witnesses

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith ...

Message to Jewish believers who became Christians. Hebrews 12:1-2a



Prayer

Lord, thank You for leaving a record in Your Word of many of the people who make up the great cloud of witnesses.

Their stories help me navigate my life. Help me to

*“Remember the days of old,
consider the years of many generations.”*

and to be a faithful steward of their lessons of faith. Amen

Deuteronomy 32:7a



The Scriptures

More Scriptures About Walking by Faith
Hebrews 12

Faith-Building Psalm
Psalm 34

A Scripture Declaration

Psalm 34: 8

*I taste and see that the Lord is good;
I am blessed because I trust in the Lord.*



Worship in Song

“When the Saints”

by Sara Groves (With Lyrics)



God's Word Transforms

Faith is action. It begins with personal action and proceeds to public action. Revisit Psalm 34. List the personal action steps it speaks of (ie: *I will bless the Lord; Magnify the Lord; Taste and See; Come; Listen.*) In Jesus Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), He provides many action steps to help you walk by faith and be a difference-maker. Ponder, record, and do. Start where Holy Spirit directs.



My Notes



Considerations

Let's explore our iconic verse, Isaiah 55:11, in a paraphrased version.

So also will be the word that I speak; it does not return to me unfulfilled. My word performs My purpose and fulfills the mission I sent it out to accomplish.

(The Passion Translation)

The two letter word, “so,” in our iconic scripture functions as a result-connector referring to something already mentioned. In the scripture prior to today's verse 11, the Lord gives us a result-connector, a visual analogy that helps us understand **the power of God's Word.**

Read verse 10 aloud and slow (see below.) Mentally follow the process of rain and snow from the vault of heaven and it's benefit and affect on the earth.

“For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater” ...

Now, in your Bible combine verses 10 and 11. Read them aloud.

Connect the benefits of physical rain to the benefits of God's mighty Word.

What does physical water accomplish on the earth?

Refresh, cleanse, renew, nourish, spark growth, support life.

God's Word is **the “missionary”** sent by God Himself to accomplish life-giving results on the earth—in your life!



Gate Key

The Missionary

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

So shall my word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the things for which I sent it.

God's Word spoken through the Prophet Isaiah ♦ Isaiah 55:11 nkjv



Prayer

Lord Jesus, the fullness of God dwells in You. Thank You for faithfully coming to this earth and bringing the message of everlasting life! Your word is at work in me—in us who believe. I trust Your word will not return to You unfulfilled, but instead will accomplish its assigned mission. Amen

Colossians 1:19, John 12:49-50, 1 Thessalonians 2:13



The Scriptures

Mission of God's “Sent” Word

John 17:17 • Sanctifies (Make holy, set apart)

Psalm 119:103-105 • Gives Understanding, Guides

Matthew 4:4 • Life-Sustainer

Hebrews 4:12 • Exposes and Reveals Truth

2 Timothy 3:16-17 • Teaches, Corrects, Trains

John 6:63 • Spirit and Life

(Search your Bible for more insight into the mission of God's Word)

A Scripture Declaration

Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.



Worship in Song

“Word of God Speak”

by MercyMe (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: *"...when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."* 1 Thess 2:13 Paul is a reliable resource of God's word even today. How do you receive the word of God? Confirm your understanding as the Bereans did. Acts 17:10-12



My Notes



Marble, Colorado
September 2022



Index

Gates 8-14

Iconic Scriptures

Revisiting Treasured Verses

☐ Gate 8 ♦ Forerunner

☐ Gate 9 ♦ No Condemnation,
No Separation

☐ Gate 10 ♦ Renew

☐ Gate 11 ♦ Risk-Taking

☐ Gate 12 ♦ Don't Unpack

☐ Gate 13 ♦ Hills and Valleys

☐ Gate 14 ♦ Inexpressible



Gate Key

Forerunner

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not want.

King David's Psalm about the "Divine Shepherd" ♦ Psalm 23:1 nkjv



Considerations

The Apostle Paul reminded his young mentor, Timothy, *"from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures."*

2 Timothy 3:15a Likewise, many have known Psalm 23 from their earliest days, particularly the first line.

Toddlers are often taught it. I remember my firstborn, Ryan, could quote the entire Psalm at the age of 4. We practiced it five days each week as I drove him to his babysitter on my way to work. Today, my lovely firstborn great granddaughter, Adalee Rose, is learning Psalm 23.

David is the author of the 23rd Psalm. David was an actual shepherd of sheep before he was anointed king of Israel. He truly understood shepherding a flock and wrote from his experience. 1 Samuel chapter 16 is the record of the day the Prophet Samuel arrived to anoint a new king to replace disobedient Saul. God sent Samuel to Jesse to select the new king from among his sons. After examining seven of Jesse's sons, God had not given the nod to anoint. Samuel was baffled. *"Are all the young men here?"* David's father replied: *"There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep."* Samuel said to Jesse, *"Send and bring him, for we will not sit down till he comes here."* David arrived. He certainly did not look like a king...young, ruddy cheeks, and probably a little smelly having been in the fields. None of that mattered. God created & chose him as the forerunner of our Good Shepherd, Jesus.



Prayer

Lord, You equipped David to be king while in the fields. I thank You for the experiences and lessons You have allowed me to gather. I pray You give me opportunities to use what You have taught me in Your Word, daily living, spiritual disciplines, and relationships. Help me purposefully obey You for Your glory and the good of others. I want to serve and honor You in the roles and titles You give me, both privately and publically. Amen.



The Scriptures

The Iconic Psalm
Psalm 23

Jesus, Our Good Shepherd
John 10:1-18

Contrast Between False Shepherds & the True Shepherd
Ezekiel 34

A Scripture Declaration
John 10:4-5

I follow the Good Shepherd, Jesus, for I know His voice and will by no means follow a stranger.



Worship in Song

"Shepherd"

by CeCe Winans (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

“He (God) also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds...He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.” Psalm 78:70-72 We want to be like Jesus. David was in many ways. Integrity and skill are key to serving people as a “shepherd.” Define both.



My Notes



Considerations

Romans 8 is a life-changing Bible chapter which we would be tremendously blessed to memorize! Yes, it is long ... 39 verses, but all of which are powerhouse scriptures, even “iconic!” Have I memorized Romans 8? Sadly, not yet.

But it is a great desire of mine and definitely on my list of highly important things to do in my lifetime. Why? Romans 8 embodies profound, liberating truth, hidden secrets, and undeniable hope. The chapter begins with “no condemnation” and ends with “no separation!” Isn’t this what we ultimately hope for? Sandwiched in the chapter is verse 37 ... ***we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.***

Romans 8 takes us through the journey of ***how*** we are more than conquerors. Ephesians 1:13-14 compliments Romans 8 by confirming that we are sealed into our relationship with Christ. God wants us to cooperate with Him so that we can live the overcoming life, not just be an overcomer in name only. There is one who has come to steal, kill, and destroy.

If Satan cannot have our salvation, he certainly will work to diminish our joy in the Lord through fear, condemnation, distress, confusion. We slam and lock the door to his destructive yakking by obeying the first admonition of Romans 8:

... ***do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit ...***

Where will you begin?

Where will I begin?



Gate Key

No Condemnation ... No Separation

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

Yet in all these things we are
more than conquerors
through Him who loved us.

Paul to the Roman Christians. ♦ Romans 8:37 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, I want to daily live aware of Your law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus which makes me free from the law of sin and death. Your Spirit dwells in me, Christ lives in me, and You give life to my mortal body. I am a joint heir with Christ. I am more than a conqueror through Him who loves me! And now, in this life that is often fraught with trouble, I am confident that I will never be separated from Your love!
Amen.



The Scriptures

Holy Spirit, Guarantor of our Inheritance
Ephesians 1:1-14

Our Participation in our Salvation
2 Peter 1:1-11, 1 John 3:20-24

No Condemnation, No Separation
Romans 8

A Scripture Declaration

Romans 8:31

God is for me; who can be against me?



Worship in Song

“Trust In God”

by Elevation Worship (Radio Version)



God's Word Transforms

Prayer poem based on Romans 8:26-27 ... *"May every groan be transformed into my Father's will; may every sigh be replied from His holy hill. May every word be surely heard by His hearing ear; may every prayer be a share of God's purpose here."* (v1b, 4-3-13) Set aside a designated block of time to pray through the 39 verses of Romans 8. Record what the Holy Spirit whispers to your soul.



My Notes



Gate Key

Renew

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Prophet Isaiah Relaying God's Word to Israel ♦ Isaiah 40:31 nkjv



Considerations

Even Jesus renewed Himself.
In His humanity, He seized opportunities for Sabbath, private moments with His Father, space for spiritual disciplines. His example is one we must follow.

The best voice we can hear on this matter is the Word of God.

... be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:23-24

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

1 Corinthians 4:16

Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psalms 51:8-10

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: ...

Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 103:1-2, 5

God's Renewal Plan

Spirit of our Minds.

New Man. Inward Man.

Clean Heart. Steadfast Spirit.

Youthfulness.



Prayer

Holy Spirit, open my understanding to the overarching discipline of **renewal**. Lead me into the steps You desire me to take in accordance with the needs and demands of my life. Repair any broken places, reinforce any structural weaknesses in my soul. Send me back into the fields that are white for harvest with a renewed mind, a revitalized inner man, a clean heart, a steadfast spirit, and the energy of a teenager! Amen.



The Scriptures

◀ Discover the big picture! read the full chapters based on the four "Renewal Plan" scriptures in the "Considerations" section.

Ephesians 4 • 1 Corinthians 4

Psalms 51 • Psalms 103

A Scripture Declaration

Titus 3:5

It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.



Worship in Song

"The Power of Your Love"

by Hillsong (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Run here, do that! Even our young ones have schedules that do not make space for renewal. In light of the scriptures, how can you model renewal in your life and perhaps help some youth or young families slow the pace and pause in God's presence? Pray about how you can be an example and an influence to others to pursue the spiritual disciplines so they can experience renewal. Make a plan.



My Notes



Considerations

Have you observed that living creatures have an innate, built in characteristic?

They want to live. Think about small insects such as ants, spiders, grasshoppers, crickets. If they sense danger, what do they do? Most run or fly. They don't want to risk being squished.

Risk-taking is contrary to many people. Risk-taking can open us up to trouble, pain, entering heavens' gates sooner than we plan. On the other hand, risk has produced profound outcomes on the world stage and in private lives.

In **Ecclesiastes 11:4**, King Solomon wrote: ***"He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap."*** My first interpretation of this verse has been that if we are afraid of risk, then we want only favorable conditions before we do, work, serve, love. But then I began to wonder...is it wise to sow in the wind? Is it prudent to cast seed to plant in the ground if the wind will swoop it up and carry it into ditches or other fields? And is it a good idea to harvest when the clouds indicate rain is coming. A moldy harvest is a bad outcome to a great planting season. Reckless behavior is not healthy or holy risk-taking. Making safety and comfort our highest goal is not a display of faith in God. A blend of applied foresight and stepping out in faith, unafraid of being squished, is God's plan. Thought-out risk-taking = an expanded soul and life!



Gate Key

Risk-Taking

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

King Solomon's Instruction About Trusting God ♦ Proverbs 3:5-6 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, at times I have chosen safety and comfort over risk. I believe You lead me into Your will. Sometimes You lead me to green pastures and still waters, and other times you direct my path through the valley of the shadow of death or even into the presence of my enemies. Help me to live fearlessly by faith, to trust You with all my heart, not rely on my understanding, but instead acknowledge You in all my ways. My confidence is in You, not me. Amen

Psalm 23



The Scriptures

Peter Takes a Risk
Acts Chapter 10

A Scripture Declaration Proverbs 16:9

I plan my way, but You Lord, direct my steps.



Worship in Song

"Different"

by Micah Tyler (Official Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Doing things differently than you are accustomed is risky business. You know you're tendencies. Do you tend to press and breach boundaries, taking unnecessary risks that are not pleasing to God? Or do you play it safe to avoid getting squished? How can you know when to press and when to pause? God's Word, open doors, and the nudge of Holy Spirit give important guidance. Begin there.



My Notes



Considerations

Today's iconic scripture is one my daughter, Katie, refers to often. She explains her insights. *We have to live in our experiences, but not unpack there. We need to want to be healed whether that is physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally. We cannot be defined by something that has crippled us for decades or months or weeks or days.*

Difficulties can be great teachers, but the teachers must not indoctrinate us to be hopeless. In the paralyzed man's story, he had clearly unpacked at the pool called "Bethesda" where false faith and hopelessness became his companion. Ironically, in Aramaic "Bethesda" means "house of mercy." For 38 years this man believed the legend that an angel would stir the water and the first one in would be healed. Jesus arrived and dispelled the myth and physically healed the man.

When the journey is long and answers to our needs and prayers seem to be "no" or are delayed, we must be vigilant to guard against deferred hope and unpacking in our pain. When asked if he wanted to be made well, the paralyzed man's answer revealed his focus. Instead of a rousing "yes!," an excuse:

"Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool."

"Mercy" was not derailed:

"Rise, take up your bed and walk."

What happened next?

"And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked."



Gate Key

Don't Unpack

Iconic Scripture (Speak God's Word Aloud)

Jesus said to him,
"Rise, take up your bed and walk."

Jesus Command to the Paralyzed Man ♦ John 5:8 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, I need Your healing touch in these areas: *(fill in the blank.)*

I believe You are Who You say—Adonai (Lord, Master), Jehovah-Jireh (The Lord Who Provides), Jehovah-Rapha (The Lord Who Heals), Jehovah-Shalom (The Lord is Peace), Immanuel (God With Us.) I trust You with my life. Help me to re-pack my suitcase and move away from paralyzing hopelessness into Your healing. I do not know the full outcome, but I know You, Jehovah-Shammah (God is Present) are already there. Amen



The Scriptures

Healing Paralysis

Mark 2:1-12 • In a House in Capernaum (Jesus)

Mark 3:1-5 • In the Synagogue (Jesus)

John 5:1-16 • At the Pool of Bethesda (Jesus)

Acts 3:1-11 • At the Gate of the Temple (Peter)

Acts 9:32-35 • In Lydda (Peter)

A Scripture Declaration

Mark 2:11, John 5:11, Acts 9:34

I take up my mat (bed) and walk.



Worship in Song

"In Jesus Name"

by Katy Nichole (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

It has been said, "If you fight for your limits, you get to keep them." This is what unpacking looks like. Can you identify any area of pain, sin, relationships, guilt where you are stuck, where you have willingly "unpacked?" If you are yet lying on your mat waiting for "the stirring of the waters," Holy Spirit has truth He wants you to know. Seek diligently the truth that will set you free.



My Notes



Gate Key Hills and Valleys

Iconic Scripture *(Speak God's Word Aloud)*

...Count it all joy when you fall into various trials,
knowing that the testing of your faith
produces patience.

Written by James, probably our Lord's half brother ♦ James 1:2-3 nkjv



Considerations

Through hills and valleys, our friend, Sandy relies on today's iconic scripture. *James 1:2-3 are scriptures I've been repeating lately for the last two years. I lack nothing and due to this health issue, I've been leaning on this verse with the thought in mind that I will get past this and persevere and to have a joyful attitude. Enjoy life!*

The Apostle Paul wrote a poignant letter to the Colossian church, emphasizing the supremacy of Christ over every false doctrine trying to pollute the truth. His letter includes an instructional prayer to help them walk be overcomers.

*Be filled with knowledge of God's will.
Walk worthy of the Lord.*

Be fruitful in every good work.

*Be strengthened. Have all
patience and longsuffering with joy.*

Give thanks to the Father. Colossians 1:9-12

Where does patience come from? If we look at the Holy Trinity, we see that **God authors patience, Jesus is the example of patience, and Holy Spirit is the source of patience.** *Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus. Romans 15:5 May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God & into the patience of Christ. 2 Thess 3:5 ..the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Gal 5:22*
God provides what He commands.

(Last paragraph gleaned from the Open Bible)



Prayer

Lord, the word "longsuffering" is an appropriate description of "patience." By Your tender love and mighty power, I can say with Paul: *"I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."* Help me to eagerly wait for Your answer and Your return. In the meantime, *I will lift my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.* Amen

Romans 8:18 • Psalm 121:1-2



The Scriptures

Partaker of the Divine Nature of God
1 Peter 1:1-14

God Reveals His Name and Nature to Moses
Exodus 33:12-23, 34:1-10, especially 34:6-7

A Scripture Declaration James 1:4

I will let patience have its perfect work.



Worship in Song

"Hills and Valleys"
by Tauren Wells (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

"...with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:8-9 God's patience and His love are inseparable. If you need your patience refined, ask Holy Spirit if your love needs refinement.



My Notes



Inexpressible

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

...for the joy of the Lord
is your strength.

Nehemiah's Encouraging Insight for the People ♦ Nehemiah 8:10 nkjv



Considerations

Our friend, Cathy, has a smile that matches her last name. Whether her circumstances are delightful or dreary, she beams with joy. I've learned it comes from a place of truth in her soul.

Cathy shares:

I am an eternal optimist, and Jesus gives me structure and foundation to believe that the joy of the Lord is my strength.

In Job, it says we shall be secure for there is hope. God will never fail or forsake us.

If we stand on the rock and His truth, even though things may be shaking around us, we can have joy.

Joy is different than happiness, and I thank the Lord for His joy.

Years ago, Lakeside Amusement Park in Denver, Colorado had a Fun House.

Inside its' walls were activities like rotating barrels, steep slides, a spinning disc that flung people to the side walls, and moving floors. It was so much fun, and in hindsight, so dangerous!

Everything moved and shook and was designed to keep patrons off balance.

And it worked.

We live in a day and age when there is a continuous shaking in our world, similar to non-stop earthquakes. The shaking goes beyond the physical earth. ***"Yet once more, I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."*** God is removing what can be shaken so ***"that the things which cannot be shaken may remain."*** (Hebrews 12:26-27)

God is getting everything ready for His Son's return! That is a joyful thought!



Prayer

Father, when Your Son was born into this earth, Heaven's joy was uncontainable! ***"And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*** And now we anticipate the joy of our King of kings returning again to this earth: ***"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True..."*** Lord, even in this moment,

I'm strengthened with Your joy at the anticipation and hope of Christ's return! I can hardly wait! Amen.

Luke 2:8-14 Revelation 19:11a



The Scriptures

Joy When Truth is Heard, Understood, Applied
Nehemiah Chapter 8

Joy When Salvation Comes, the Lost is Found
Luke chapter 15

A Scripture Declaration

Luke 10:20

I rejoice because my name is written in heaven.



Worship in Song

"House of the Lord"

by Phil Wickham (Official Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Let your joy arise as you read 1 Peter 1:6-8! Write your praise to God! *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love, though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.*



My Notes



Sunflowers, 2022
Munich, ND
Photographer: Barb Kram



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Gates 15-21

Iconic Scriptures

Revisiting Treasured Verses

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Considerations

Written in pencil on lined school paper and tucked away in a special place were the words of Ruth 1:16-17. I was young—perhaps 15. I had a handsome boyfriend with whom I believed I was in love and might even marry someday. Yes, at age 15! I had been reading my Mom’s red Catholic Bible. Even though I did not grasp much of the words and stories, the book of Ruth grabbed me. Pencil to paper,

I copied verses 16 and 17 thinking maybe one day I would say them at a marriage altar. And I did. And he did.

53 years later we are still saying “where you go I will go.”

Some commitments have a honeymoon phase, but not all. When Ruth spoke the words of verses 16 and 17, it meant she would abruptly leave her homeland and make a treacherous trek to a new country and culture. She would be the caregiver of her mother-in-law who was steeped in grief and bitterness over the loss of her husband and two sons. In Ruth’s new home, she would face prejudice, loneliness, poverty, and hard field work with little pay. Her future as a childless widow seemed certain. So why do it?

Ruth forsook “her pagan heritage in order to cling to the people of Israel and to the God of Israel.” (Open Bible commentary.)

For believers, commitment means leaving something behind to move into God’s future. He has a plan, place, and people.



Gate Key

Plan, Place, People

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.

The words of Ruth to her mother-in-law, Naomi ♦ Ruth 1:16 nkjv



Prayer

In the plan, place, and people in my life, help me follow the guidance that Boaz spoke to Ruth as she worked harvesting:

“Stay close by my young women, let your eyes be on the field which they reap...when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink.”

Lord, I know You have fields that You have called me to, and living water for me to drink.

Thank You for filling my life with Your presence and provision. Work in me and through me to be a blessing, a difference-maker, and a light for Your glory to others. Amen.



The Scriptures

“A Full Reward” Story
Ruth chapters 1-4

Discipleship
Mark 8:34-38

A Scripture Declaration
Mark 8:34

I will take up my cross and follow You.



Worship in Song

“I Will Follow”

by Chris Tomlin (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

A good leader is first a good follower. Ruth leads us to follow with humility, submission, and kindness. The outcome was beyond what anyone could think or imagine; she became a part of the lineage of Messiah. Jesus said: “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” Mark 10:34 What is Holy Spirit speaking to you on this matter?



My Notes



Considerations

Ruth did it. She loved as God loves. Others did it also. Perhaps not perfectly, but purposefully. There is One Who *has* loved perfectly. Purposefully perfectly.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

1 Corinthians 13 is often referred to as “the love chapter” of the Bible. It contains distinctly clear instructions about what God-love is and is not. This is true ... none of us loves perfectly. Our actions and words may not always reflect God’s love perfectly, but our desire is present.

When our love is tested, if we fail, we can rely on this truth:

“...the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” Romans 5:5

This means that God’s love is resident in our lives. It is not a mere seed, but instead it is His fully developed love. What do we do with that? We stay attentive, ask the Lord to help us be His light in the world by loving as He does, and we repent and begin again if we fail. Loving as He loves is contrary to our flesh, but in rhythm with our redeemed spirit. But it requires intention. When we sincerely seek to know how to love as God does, we bless

Him, others, and us! We begin by observing God’s love in His Word, by letting Holy Spirit teach us about our Lord’s heart. We love based on verses 4-7 inwardly, outwardly, purposefully.



Gate Key

Purposefully

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God’s Word Aloud)

And now abide faith, hope, love,
these three;
but the greatest of these is love.

Paul’s instructions on how to love as God does. ♦ 1 Corinthians 13:13 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, I am so grateful for the “love-list” in 1 Corinthians 13. You do not leave me in the dark about what Your love looks like. You sent Your Son, Jesus, who purposefully perfectly demonstrated every quality of love in this chapter. And then, by Your Holy Spirit, you poured Your love in my heart. Your “love-list” is not to condemn or overwhelm me, but to provide a vista to aim for, a map to love as You do. Amen.



The Scriptures

God’s Love Chapter
1 Corinthians 13

God’s Love Demonstrated

Hebrews 1:1-3 • John 3:16-17 • All 4 Gospels

For Further Study: Living In and Giving God’s Love
1 John

A Scripture Declaration
1 John 3:1a

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God.



Worship in Song

“The Greatest of These”

by Larnelle Harris (Live Performance Video)



God's Word Transforms

What does God's love look like according to 1 Corinthians 13? *Patient. Kind. Not envious, prideful, puffed up, rude. Putting others before self. Not provoked, thinks no evil, rejoices in the truth. Burden bearing, believes good, endures all things.* Ponder each aspect. Pray about the areas you desire God to help you better demonstrate His love to others. Write 1 Corinthians 13 and meditate on each verse.



My Notes



Considerations

Today's iconic scripture is one which our friend, Marsha, refers to often. She shares her connection to this verse: *In this season, I return to this verse often. It tells me the truth about my Father. He is Sovereign. He has planned my days with love and intent. He is not distant nor uninterested. I am known and loved for all my days.*

Like Aspen trees, God's Word is intertwined, each verse connected for a single purpose: to show us the loving heart and plan of God. The verses, chapters, books tell one story through about 40 authors over a period of 1500 years.

When Marsha shared her Psalm 139 scripture, she also quoted the prior verse.

My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Psalm 139:15

Omniscient (all knowing,) Omnipotent (all powerful,) Omnipresent (present everywhere,) reveals our Sovereign God. This is Who superintended our development in the womb! Incredibly, Jeremiah the Prophet was given an additional profound insight:

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations. Jeremiah 1:5

You also were known by your Sovereign God before the womb, in the womb, beyond the womb, forever. Praise God!



Gate Key

Known and Planned

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in
Your book before one of them came to be.

Excerpt From King David's Iconic Psalm ♦ Psalm 139:16 niv



Prayer

Lord, I believe Your message through David and to Jeremiah is also Your message to me. I believe You planned me for specific purposes, but I also believe "purpose" is not the only reason You created me. I believe You created me to love me and to be loved by me. Whether I was a planned pregnancy and birth or otherwise, I was never unplanned by You.

I am foreknown and loved unconditionally by You.

I rest in Your Sovereignty. Amen.



The Scriptures

Known and Planned By God

Adam and Eve • Genesis 1:26-31

Isaac • Genesis 17:15-22

Cyrus • Isaiah 44:22-28, 45:1-7

(prophecy spoken probably 100 years before Cyrus' birth)

John the Baptist • Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

A Scripture Declaration

Ephesians 1:5, Romans 8:29

*I am predestined to adoption as a child of God
and to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus.*



Worship in Song

"He Knows My Name"

by Tommy Walker (Worship Video With Lyrics)



God's Word Transforms

Two scriptures to ponder deeply. *"But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand."* Isaiah 64:8 *"...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* Ephesians 1:4
Does knowing God knew and planned you before birth alter your thinking about His care for you?



My Notes



Gate Key

Refocus

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

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

God's Promise to His People Through Isaiah ♦ Isaiah 41:10 nkjv



Considerations

There are two kinds of fear.
The fear that makes us afraid,
and the fear that makes us stand in awe.

In our iconic scripture, God is speaking through Isaiah and saying, **“Do not be afraid nor dismayed.”**

The word *dismayed* means to gaze upon with anxiety. As humans, many of us tend to fix our attention on the bad that could happen. But what if we instead focused our minds on the One we are to fear, the One Who we stand in awe of? I'm not suggesting ignoring reality, but what if we determinedly refocus on God?

Consider the woman with the issue of blood. She had every reason to be afraid and stay afraid. Sick for twelve years with a flow of blood no doctor could stop, time and again hearing the physician's words, “there is nothing we can do.” All of her money gone, perhaps also her hope. But then Jesus! Hearing He was nearby, she cast off fear like a blind man's cloak. She went where a ceremonially unclean woman should not be and pushed through the crowds. He was within reach. Had she retreated in fear in that last moment, talked herself out of trusting for her miracle, she would have never known healing and affirmation of her faith. She forced herself forward, then one small touch. Did it feel like the whole world went silent? Maybe. She knew she was healed and Jesus knew someone had touched Him with faith. Finally her fear was gone, but her fear of God ignited!



Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, that You comforted the woman who had received healing. You asked who had touched You, and she **“fearing & trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before You & told You the whole truth.”**

But perfect love casts out fear. And that is what you did for her. You assured her that her faith had made her well and sent her on her way into her new life. That is what Your love does!

That is why I fear You, not afraid but in awe! Amen

Mark 5:33, 1 John 4:8



The Scriptures

Refocus on The Magnificence of God

Psalm Chapters 33 and 34

She Fixed Her Eyes Upon Jesus

Mark Chapter 5

A Scripture Declaration

Psalm 31:23a, 24

*I love You Lord. I am of good courage because
You shall strengthen my heart. I hope in You.*



Worship in Song

“Still Waters (Psalm 23)”

by Leanna Crawford (Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

King David in Psalm 34:1 wrote this: *"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."* Praise takes the focus off of ourselves and our fears over our hurts, health, habits. Praise focuses our attention upon our God. What do you know about God? Can you transfer that knowledge into praise? Fear will flee when you praise the glory of His grace, the might of His hand.



My Notes



Gate Key

A New Thing

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
old things have passed away;
behold, all things have become new.

The Apostle Paul to the Corinthian Church ♦ 2 Corinthians 5:17 nkjv



Considerations

Talk about good news!
2 Corinthians 5:17 is in the top 10!

≧In Christ≦

≧Old Things Are Gone≦

≧All Things Are Made New≦

For the sheer joy of reviewing and
anticipating the goodness of our God
let's look at what He makes new!

Us! *Ephesians 4:23-24*

*Be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
and that you put on the new man
which was created according to God ...*

Israel *Ezekiel 36:26-27a*

*I will give you a new heart and put a new
spirit within you; I will take the heart of
stone out of your flesh and give you a
heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within
you & cause you to walk in My statutes...*

Heaven & Earth *Revelation 21:1, 2 Peter 3:13*

*Now I saw a new heaven and a new
earth, for the first heaven and the
first earth had passed away.
Also there was no more sea.*

Jerusalem *Revelation 21:1*

*Then I, John, saw the holy city,
New Jerusalem, coming down out
of heaven from God, prepared as a
bride adorned for her husband.*

Former Things *Revelation 21:4*

*And God will wipe away every tear from
their eyes; there shall be no more death,
nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall
be no more pain for the former
things have passed away.*



Prayer

Behold ... look intently ... I am doing a new thing!

Lord, You said it and I believe it!

I have and am experiencing Your newness in my life.

I am looking intently, anticipating all things being made new!

There are not enough words to express my gratitude to You.

The best I can do is live my life as You instruct in Your Word,
as a new creation in Christ Jesus!

Empower me to do so. I love You. Amen

Isaiah 43:19



The Scriptures

How To Live the "New" Life

Colossians Chapter 3 and 4:1-6

Praising The Excellency of God
Psalm 8

A Scripture Declaration

Revelation 21:5

You, Lord God, are making all things new!



Worship in Song

"Graves Into Gardens"

by Elevation Worship (Lyric Video)

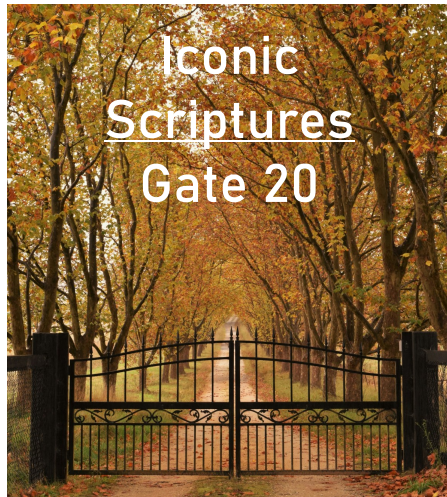


God's Word Transforms

King Solomon wrote: "That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." *Ecclesiastes 1:9* Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes from a human Perspective, but God speaks of divine newness: new mercies, new commandment, new covenant, new name, new song. Look up scriptures about God's newness. Rejoice He is always doing a new thing!



My Notes



Considerations

Theologians have attempted to piece together Paul's last days. Many have concluded that 2 Timothy may have been the final letter he wrote. If this is true, we hold in our hands the great Apostle Paul's final written message.

Despite his imprisonment, Paul continued to encourage and mentor. In essence, he passed the ministry baton to Timothy and gave him sound guidance. In this final letter, we can glean final thoughts from Paul, among which is his profound statement, our iconic scripture.

The setting: Paul was suffering in prison for the sake of the Gospel. He knew his days were closing. Thus he prayerfully committed to the Lord what was important to him, a prayed last will and testament to God. I have wondered exactly what Paul committed. He was clearly a kingdom-minded man so we can believe he committed the many churches he planted, the people he worked alongside, the friends and companions he traveled with, and the leaders he commissioned. But I think there was more. Most likely Paul committed his prayers and hopes into the able hands of almighty God, prayers that he trusted would be fulfilled beyond his lifetime. What have you committed to the Lord for safekeeping until the day of His return? Are you persuaded beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has a firm grip on your work, your loved ones, prayers, you? Well, He does!



Gate Key

Persuaded

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

For I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

Paul's Last Writings Leading Up to His Martyrdom ♦ 2 Timothy 1:12b



Prayer

Lord, Paul was persuaded— absolutely convinced—that You *would perfect that which concerned him; that Your mercy endures forever, and that You would not forsake the work of Your hands.*

Today I pray the same prayer. If I have any doubt that You can keep that which I commit to You, I confess the doubt and ask that you wash me clean. My first prayer that I commit to You is that I will always be fully persuaded about You. Amen

Psalm 138:8



The Scriptures

How to Pray

Matthew 6:5-15

Jesus' Last Will and Testament Prayer

John 17

Our Mutual Prayer

Revelation 22:20

A Scripture Declaration

Colossians 4:2

I devote myself to prayer, being watchful and thankful.



Worship in Song

"Somebody Prayed"

by Crowder (Official Lyric Video)



God's Word Transforms

Just as Paul most likely did, ponder about the people and endeavors that matter to your heart.

Prayerfully commit all into the able hands of the Lord. Use this page to write down your "will & testament" to the Lord, that which you are persuaded He can keep until the day of His return. Study Revelation 5:8. What does it speak to you about the enduring power of your prayers?



My Notes



Considerations

Our iconic scripture, Isaiah 32:18, is a compelling verse to frame & hang on the wall of our home as many have done so. However this verse speaks to much more than our personal blessings; it speaks of God's hand on His beloved people Israel, and His intention toward we, His beloved. God has revived what was dead, restored what was stolen, and healed the disease of many souls, families, and nations.

Isaiah 32:18 is in the core of the first 35 chapters of the Book of Isaiah. These chapters are considered to be the *prophecies of condemnation*, yet God sprinkles hope within the hard prophecies.

What is the anchor for the hope?

Isaiah 32:1 ***"Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.***

Isaiah 32:15a ***Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high.***

**A righteous King and righteous rule!
The outpouring of Holy Spirit!**

The outcome?

- The wilderness that once was overrun with thorns and briars becomes a fruitful field where justice dwells and righteousness remains.
- The work of righteousness is peace and the effect is quietness and assurance.

And our iconic scripture:

- My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Today Israel is fruitful where thorns and briars once grew. This is our hope also!



Gate Key

Our Forever Home

Iconic Scripture

(Speak God's Word Aloud)

My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation,
In secure dwellings,
and in quiet resting places.

Prophet Isaiah's message to God's people. ♦ Isaiah 32:18 nkjv



Prayer

Lord, just as we began our 21 Gates of Iconic Scriptures with the topic of *a hope and a future*, we end there. Thank You that You have loved Israel with an everlasting love and given them a future and a hope. Thank You that You love me without wavering, and give me a future and a hope. You have never abandoned the "Apple of Your Eye," Jerusalem and her people, and You've never abandoned me. I pray for the peace of Jerusalem and I pray they dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. Amen.

Zachariah 2:8, Psalm 17:8, Psalm 122:6-9



The Scriptures

Jesus' Promise

John 14:1-4

Our Forever Home

Revelation Chapters 21 & 22

A Scripture Declaration

Revelation 22:14

I am blessed to do God's commandments that I may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city—the New Jerusalem.



Worship in Song

"New Jerusalem"

by Vertical Worship (Lyric Version)



God's Word Transforms

*Zechariah 2:4-5 "...Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls ..."
"for I," says the Lord, "will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst."*

Why does God's promise to Israel in Zechariah 2:4-5 inspire you?

We are blessed to share Israel's blessings! (Romans chapter 11.) Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.



My Notes

Summary

Iconic Scriptures

Jeremiah 29:11 (1)
Actively Wait

Zephaniah 3:17 (2)
Valiant Superhero

John 8:31-32 (3)
What is Truth?

2 Timothy 4:7 (4)
Thank You, Paul

Hebrews 11:1 (5)
Staked in Evidence

Hebrews 12:1-2a (6)
Great Cloud of Witnesses

Isaiah 55:11 (7)
The Missionary

Psalms 23:1 (8)
Forerunner

Romans 8:37 (9)
No Condemnation ...
No Separation

Isaiah 40:31 (10)
Renew

Proverbs 3:5-6 (11)
Risk-Taking

John 5:8 (12)
Don't Unpack

James 1:2-3 (13)
Hills and Valleys

Nehemiah 8:10 (14)
Inexpressible

Ruth 1:16 (15)
Plan, Place, People

1 Corinthians 13:13 (16)
Purposefully

Psalms 139:16 (17)
Known and Planned

Isaiah 41:10 (18)
Refocus

2 Corinthians 5:17 (19)
A New Thing

2 Timothy 1:12b (20)
Persuaded

Isaiah 32:18 (21)
Our Forever Home





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intentional intimacy with God Almighty.*

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The Gate of Autumn



21 Gates on the Subject of
Iconic Scriptures
Revisiting Favorite Verses