

Hope

Lord, help me to live a life that gets better and deeper. Amen.

Hidden Power

JUNE 9, 2017

"But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. 8We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.:

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

We all feel at times helpless and hopeless. There is nothing left in us to deal with the challenges beyond what we are capable of. That is when we feel like giving up.

But when we believe that there is another power that belongs to God and not to us, we get to experience the power that is hidden within us.

It is the power that holds us when we fall, encourages us when we feel defeated and empowers us when we are completely drained. It is the power of God that does not depend on me.

As we live with this power, we can go through the dark times of our life.

Lord, help me find the power that is hidden within me. Amen.

Hope for What is Not Seen

JUNE 10, 2017

"...Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen?
25But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."

Romans 8:24-25

When life is tough, we say, "I cannot see my future." But come to think of it, we can never see our future because it has not arrived yet.

No one knows what kind of future lies ahead of them.

But sometimes this invisible future paralyzes us simply because it is invisible and because we cannot control it. But, do we have to just accept the future passively and powerlessly?

We have hope. Hoping for what we do not see is hope. We have something that we desire for our future that is yet invisible. With that hope, we live day by day actively. Waiting for it with patience is different from just powerlessly accepting whatever comes to you. We are actively pursuing and waiting for what we desire, envisioning our future.

What we hope for becomes real through our faith.

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

Lord, let the hope come alive within me. Through the eyes of hope, help me see the brighter future. Amen.

Two Children

JUNE 15, 2017

"For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you,
'Do not fear, I will help you.'"

Isaiah 41:13

Two children are crossing the river with their mother. The current is very strong. One child holds tight the hand of the mother in fear, thinking, "If I lose this hand, I will be swept away by the current." The other child also holds tight the hand of the mother in fear. But at one point this child feels that a hand stronger than his feeble hand is holding him tight.

When we feel that a hand that is stronger than my feeble hand is holding us tight, we see the light in the darkness, the hope in despair and the peace in the midst of fear.

Lord, hold my feeble hand and carry me. Amen.

Seeking

JUNE 21, 2017

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who seeks finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

Matthew 7:7-8

If you ask, you will receive. If you seek, you will find. If you knock, the door will be opened.

The problem is that we don't ask, seek and knock.

As our life gets busy, we forget to ask, seek and knock. We are too busy doing our own thing. Life that is too busy to remember to ask, seek and knock is an exhausting life. We are so tired that we do not even see the many beautiful gifts that life brings to us.

Life is a gift. It is not something that we make. When we recognize that life is a gift, the smile on our face comes back.

Lord, thank you for all the gifts you have given me. You gave me things that I did not even ask for. I didn't even know that it was you who gave me all those beautiful things. From now on, I will live my life, seeking. Amen.

Let Us Press On To Know God

JUNE 27, 2017

"Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord;
his appearing is as sure as the dawn;
he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.'."

Hosea 6:3

Knowing God is not a cerebral exercise. You cannot know God with your brain alone. That is not how you know God. Knowing God is simply being mindful of God, being aware of God's presence that surrounds you and envelopes you. You present yourself in God's presence.

Then the peace that surpasses all understanding comes to you. There comes a quiet confidence deep within your heart. Your heart brightens up. Your life finds the anchor that holds you up in turbulent times. Your blurry vision finds the focus and you are able to see clearly what you need to see.

Let us start this day, being aware of God.

Lord who appears to me as sure as the dawn, please be present in my life today and let this day become bright and beautiful. Amen.

The Truth Will Set You Free

JUNE 28, 2017

"... and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:32

Yesterday, we reflected that we cannot know God with our brain alone. The truth is the same thing. We cannot know the truth with our brain alone. The truth is something that we experience. The truth is not out there. The truth has to be felt within us. That truth is the real truth to us.

When the truth comes into us and echoes in our soul, we experience the FREEDOM. We become free from all those things that used to bind us. We can finally move from the FREEDOM "to do whatever 'I' want" to the FREEDOM "to follow the truth that leads 'me'."

When we know the truth, we have the empowerment within us.

Lord, help me experience the truth in your Word and follow the truth.

Amen.

Life With Passion

JUNE 30, 2017

"Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord."

Romans 12:11

Life without passion is not true life. Life always brings out the vitality.

There has to be a movement of life within us like a fetus moving within the womb of a mother. We have to have something to pursue, something to achieve, and we have to have the confidence that we can do it.

In our life, there has to be dreams. Along with the dreams, there has to be the passion to support our dreams.

Without our dreams, our passion loses its power. Without passion, our dreams become vanity.

Good Morning! Let us get up, rise and run!

Lord who gives me dreams, give me also the passion to let the dreams come alive in my life. Amen.

Dream What I Cannot See

JULY 2, 2017

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

Isaiah 43:19

"Deep into that darkness
peering, long I stood there,
wondering, fearing, doubting,
dreaming dreams no mortal
ever dared to dream before."

- Edgar Allan Poe

The wilderness is the wilderness because there is no way. The desert is the desert because there is no water. Making a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert is not something I can see, I can imagine and I can make sense.

We cannot see, imagine or make sense of the new thing God does. But since God does the new thing, there is mystery in life. Life is mysterious. That is why we can dream. No one dreams what they can see.

Let us dream what we cannot see. God will show us a new thing.

*Lord, help me dream the new world and the new thing that you will do
in this world. Amen.*

The Spiritual Value of Suffering

JULY 5, 2017

"...We also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope."

Isaiah 43:19

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

- Helen Keller

Suffering has a spiritual value built inherently within it. The secret of life is hidden in the suffering. Suffering is not something that should be avoided at all cost; it is something that should be welcomed with gladness.

The secret of life that can be found in our suffering is discovering the truth that the extraordinary power belongs to God and not to us. This discovery gives us strength to persevere in our suffering. In that perseverance, character is formed and in the whole process, hope is made within us.

Hope is not what I will to have; hope is being built within us like muscle. All this begins with suffering.

Lord, help me not to fear the suffering nor to reject it, as though it is an uninvited guest. Help me find the spiritual value in our suffering. Amen.

Dream

JULY 15, 2017

"The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Isaiah 11:6-9

It is hard to imagine this kind of world. But I say to myself that I should never give up my dream for the world Isaiah imagined. When I dream, my life moves towards that kind of world.

When I give up my dream, I become a part of a world where people fight with each other, hate each other and are divisive with each other. My dream of the world Isaiah imagined is resistance to the world of fighting, hatred and division. In that sense, our dreams of the world Isaiah dreamt are dangerous to those who try to control the world we live in.

Let us dream dreams!

Lord, help me find dreams within me. Help me wait for your kingdom to come. Amen.

Dream

JULY 15, 2017

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A Ray of Light

JULY 19, 2017

"Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. 35Therefore consider whether the light in you is not darkness. 36If then your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays.'"

Ecclesiastes 3:11-13

What we see controls our life. What we see is our perspective. If what we see in everything is a dark side, our life will become dark.

Yes, our life can be very dark and gloomy. We see dark reality around us. But even in deep darkness, we can see a ray of light. That is when we can see things in perspective. When we find a ray of light, our whole life will be brightened up.

Let this day be brightened up as we see a ray of light.

Lord, help me see the bright side of my life. Help me follow your light.

Amen.

Light and Hope

AUGUST 16, 2017

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16

Our world is imperfect, and so we respond with hope. Our world is full of darkness, and so we respond with light.

- Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner

Darkness cannot cover the light. The light is stronger than the darkness.
Despair cannot kill hope. Hope is stronger than the despair.

No matter how dark the world may be, there is the light that is burning within us. No matter how much despair you may see in the world, the hope within you will never die; it will only grow stronger within us.

As long as we have the light and the hope, the world will never be able to destroy us.

Lord, you are my light and my hope. Thank you for the strength to be able to persevere in this world. Amen.

Overcome Evil with Good

AUGUST 24, 2017

"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Romans 12:19-21

"He (Jesus) knew that the old eye-for-eye philosophy would leave everyone blind. He did not seek to overcome evil with evil. He overcame evil with good. Although crucified by hate, he responded with aggressive love."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

We need to overcome evil. Evil can be overcome only with good, not with evil.

When we try to fight evil ourselves, we often fall into evil and become the victims of it instead of overcoming it. We become slaves of evil.

We become slaves to hatred when we hate those who hate us. As long as we are slaves to hatred, we can never overcome hatred. Hatred can be overcome only by love.

When we experience injustice, let us be careful so that we don't become slaves to injustice. We can overcome injustice only by justice.

Lord, we pray that Your justice may prevail on this earth. Deliver me from injustice, hatred, and evil. Amen.

Difficult Time

SEPTEMBER 22, 2017

"Now, discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed."

Hebrews 12:11-13

"Difficult times often bring out the best in people."

- Bernie Sanders

At times, we are faced with great difficulties in life. Sometimes it feels like a punishment. But God's punishment is not to destroy us. God's punishment is the discipline to make us stronger.

When we overcome life's difficulties, not only will our hands and weak knees be strengthened but we will be set free from our distorted thoughts and bad habits.

Lord, when I am faced with difficult situations, help me to hold onto your love. Amen.

Struggle

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017

"...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies."

Romans 8:21-23

Life is a struggle and it is beautiful to see a person struggle with his/her life. Because without struggles and conflicts, freedom cannot be attained.

So it is a struggle to be free. We struggle in our lives to be free from things that bind us and enslave us. That is salvation.

Salvation cannot be achieved without pain and suffering, and freedom comes only after we are able to overcome our own pain and suffering.

Even today there is a deep groaning in my soul. It is the hope that longs for freedom.

Lord, hear my cry and make me free. Amen.

Being Chosen

SEPTEMBER 25, 2017

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

1 Peter 2:9

"At birth, we set sail into the world with sealed orders."

- Soren Kierkegaard

Realizing that you are chosen for a specific purpose in life is a wonderful discovery. There's a big difference between living a life thinking that you were born by a random chance and living a life thinking that you have been chosen.

We need to always reflect on what we must do in this world. God will reveal it to us. And that realization will guide our lives.

As we live meditating on that, we will find a direction in life and we can live with a clear sense of purpose.

Lord, show me day by day what is required of me. Once it is revealed, may I accept it with a thankful heart and live passionately trying to fulfill it with all that is within me. Amen.

Kairos

OCTOBER 4, 2017

"Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

Ephesians 5:15-17

"God will supply us with the opportunity, but it's up to us to do something with it."

- Anonymous

In Greek mythology, there is a god of opportunity or of time called "Kairos." He is bald but has a lock of hair on his forehead. It means that you can grab the opportunity when it is in front of you but once it passes by you, you lose that opportunity.

Let us look at what is in front of us carefully. And let us try to understand God's will in this. Once it passes by us, we cannot do anything about it.

Lord, a lot of things are happening in my life. Help me to carefully examine them and understand your will. Amen.

Being Strong

OCTOBER 5, 2017

"And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,..."

Romans 5:3-4

"That which does not kill me makes me stronger."

- Friedrich Nietzsche

When we are able to overcome sufferings, we become stronger. Suffering on its own cannot destroy us. If we have faith, sufferings will make us stronger, not weaker.

Being strong is not our will power. Being strong is having stronger hope deep within. The reason we are unable to overcome difficulties in life is because of despair. If the hope that is within us becomes stronger, then we will be able to stand strong.

Lord, help me not to be fearful of small waves. Give me the courage to rise above the waves. Amen.

Being Connected to God

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

"For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Romans 8:3-4

The law makes us aware of our sins but it cannot help us because our will power is weak.

If our will power is the only power, then we have no hope. We have another power that is working in us and that is the power of the Spirit. The power of the Spirit is the power that we have when we are connected to God. Even though we are weak, when we are connected to God, the sin cannot control us to be its slaves.

Lord, help me to abide in you. Help me to have hope and the strength in you. Release me from the power of sin. Amen

Light and Darkness

NOVEMBER 6, 2017

"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do."

Romans 8:3-4

We have a paradox within us. St. Paul didn't see the paradox within him until he met Christ. Jesus is the light and therefore he exposes darkness. But since there is mercy that comes with the light, St. Paul could embrace his own paradox.

Let us come to Jesus who is the light. We may face our own painful reality but Jesus' mercy will embrace us. The light makes us humble but does not make us feel worthless.

O Lord who is the Light, come deep within me and shine on me. Help me find hope in your mercy. Amen

The Way of Life

NOVEMBER 16, 2017

"Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything."

Ecclesiastes 11:5

It may be frustrating to not know the way of God. But we don't know how comforting that is to us. Not knowing the way of God and not knowing the way of life are the same.

There is light at the end of the way.

Lord, in daily life, help me not to lose hope. Amen

The Light of Life

NOVEMBER 18, 2017

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'"

John 8:12

We need the light that gives us life. We have much darkness within us. This darkness darkens our thoughts, our hearts and our life. The only thing that can defeat the darkness is the light. But I cannot create the light. When we come to Jesus who is the light, then the light will shine upon us and then we will have the light.

Lord, please shine on me. May the darkness go away and your light fill my heart. Amen

Hope Laid Out for You in Heaven

NOVEMBER 21, 2017

"In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel."

Colossians 1:3-5

We cannot live without hope. We can live today because there is hope for tomorrow. In that way, hope works not in the future but in the present.

Hope is what we have now, not in the future.

Apostle Paul talks about the hope that is laid up in heaven. The hope that is laid up in heaven does not remain in heaven, but it gives strength to us who live in this world.

Lord, help me to live every day with hope. Help me to live with faith in hope and love in hope. Amen

Enduring Everything With Joy

NOVEMBER 23, 2017

"May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light."

Colossians 1:11-12

In life, the most important things are endurance and patience. If we have these two qualities, then we can overcome any challenges. We have accomplished a great feat if with joy we are able to endure everything with patience. Being able to do that shows real ability.

In life, there is nothing more powerful than joy. Joy is the energy that breathes vitality into our lives. When joy comes alive, our lives come alive.

Lord, guide us so that we may be joyful always. We realize that joy is the strength that only you can give. Amen

From Darkness to Light

NOVEMBER 24, 2017

"He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Colossians 1:13-14

We cannot break through the power of darkness on our own. The power of darkness is too strong. Redemption is possible for us because God's powerful hands have rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the world of light.

Darkness no longer has a hold on us. Darkness can no longer crush us. Sin has lost its power to crush us.

Let us thank God.

Lord, thank you for rescuing me. When I couldn't break through the darkness on my own, you transferred me from darkness to light. Amen

Life Filled With Hope

DECEMBER 10, 2017

"Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God."

Psalm 42:11

There are times when we need to rebuke ourselves. If we are too preoccupied with ourselves, we will not be able to see our problems accurately. It is important to take a step back and take a look at ourselves from a distance.

We shouldn't let depression and anxiety take over all of us. If there are areas that haven't been taken over within us, we should fill that part of our consciousness with hope. Then, that hope will lead us out of despair and anxiety.

Lord, help me to live with hope. May hope overcome despair. Amen

Glorious Night

DECEMBER 21, 2017

"In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."

Luke 2:8-20

It was a cold and boring night. The shepherds could not stay in their warm houses with their families; they had to stay in the field again, tending the sheep. As they spent another night in the field, they experienced the monotony and the tediousness of life.

The birth of Jesus took them into a different world. They saw the glory. Their dull night turned into a glorious night. They might have continued to live as shepherds, but they would never forget this night. Their life was no longer a boring and monotonous life but a life filled with glory and praise.

That was the purpose of Jesus' birth.

Lord, our life is dull and meaningless without you. We believe that with you our life will never be the same. Please grant your joy as we celebrate your birth. Amen.

A New Heaven and A New Earth

JANUARY 1, 2018

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.’

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.’

Revelation 21:1-7

The New Year has come. John had a vision for a new heaven and a new earth. He had a vision for the place where there are no more tears and pain.

We can survive because we have dreams. Let us start the New Year with new dreams. Yesterday is gone. Last year is gone. We have the New Year before us. Let us take the first step with new dreams.

Lord, help me not to lose my dreams. Help me to start the New Year with new dreams. Amen.

A Future With Hope

JANUARY 3, 2018

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me."

Jeremiah 29:11-14

Memory Verse: "When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me."

From today, let us practise the discipline of memorizing a verse a day.

God's plan for us is to give us a future with hope. It is not our positive thinking or wishful thinking; it is God who gives us a future with hope. God paves our way for a beautiful future. God will open many doors of opportunities this year. Let us pray to have our eyes opened so that we may be able to see the doors when they are open for us.

Lord, open my eyes so that I may be able to see the doors when they are open for me. Amen.

Life that Gets Better

JANUARY 21, 2018

"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

John 2:1-11

Memory Verse: "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." (John 2:10)

Wine gets better as it ages. Life should get better as it ages like a good wine. With Jesus, life always gets better.

Let us live a life that gets better as it ages. Getting old means getting better. Aging means producing deeper taste.

Let us celebrate getting old with Jesus.

Lord, help me to live a life that gets better and deeper. Amen.

God Will Make It Grow

JANUARY 26, 2018

"He also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.'"

Mark 4:26-29

Memory Verse: "...the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how." (Mark 4:27)

We don't know how our life bears fruit. We sometimes see the fruit of our good works but more than often than not, we do not see the fruit with our eyes. We may plant the seed and water it but it is God who makes it grow.

Let us enjoy our good works. When the time comes, God will produce the fruit out of our good works.

Lord, help me not to be discouraged because I don't see the fruit but enjoy the good works that I do. Amen.

Life That Gets Bigger

JANUARY 27, 2018

"He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'"

Mark 4:26-29

Memory Verse: when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs..." (Mark 4:31-32)

Life has to get bigger. Today should be better than yesterday and tomorrow should be better than today. Even though we start small, at the end we should be bigger. Life that gets better is a beautiful life.

Let us learn from our past mistakes and dream about the future. Let us not give up because of our past mistakes and get frustrated because of our worries about our future.

Lord, help me to be a bigger person. Amen.

Yoke Of Slavery

FEBRUARY 21, 2018

"For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

Galatians 5:1

Memory Verse: “Do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)

A yoke of slavery crushes us down. A yoke of slavery is the burden we put on ourselves: worries, fear, doubt, anger, and self-righteousness. They crush us down. Freedom is not what we can achieve on our own. Christ gives us the freedom. When the freedom Christ gives us starts working within us, we not only enjoy the freedom but we can fight for those whose freedom is taken away.

*Lord, give me courage to fight for freedom where there is oppression.
Amen.*

Boast in the Lord

MARCH 4, 2018

"Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'"

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Memory Verse: "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:31)

Our confidence comes not from our own power but from the power of God. God will give us God's wisdom. God will give us the strength to overcome life's challenges. God's love will never depart from us. Because of God, we have become precious people.

Lord, help me to live my life with confidence in You. Amen.

Cry Out To The Lord

MARCH 5, 2018

"Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication. In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me."

Psalm 86:3-7

Memory Verse: "In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me." (Psalm 86:7)

It is good to cry out to God. We face challenges all the time. Life's storms often hit us hard. That is when we need to cry out to God. Crying out is our resistance not to give in to our circumstances that threaten us. It is our faith.

It means that we are alive. God gives ear to those who call upon Him and answer those who cry out to God.

Lord, when life's heavy burdens crush me, give me the strength to cry out to You. Amen.

Justice

MARCH 26, 2018

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching."

Isaiah 42:1-4

Memory Verse: “a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.” (Isaiah 42:3)

Jesus did not come to protect the strong. In fact, the ones who killed Jesus were the powerful people. They were threatened by Jesus. They feared that they might lose their power and privilege. Jesus will not break a bruised reed and quench a dimly burning wick. Jesus will not break the hope of the weak and quench their dreams.

Lord, let Your justice be done in this world. Help me to participate in Your work of justice for the weak and the vulnerable. Amen.

Path of Life

APRIL 2, 2018

"I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure. For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit. You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures for evermore."

Psalm 16:8-11

**Memory Verse: "You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures for evermore."
(Psalm 16:11)**

God always shows us the path of life. We have to constantly search for it in our life. When we are in despair, we hear the voice of hope. When we cannot see anything ahead of us, we see a small light. When we have failed, we experience the encouragement from people and situations that tell us not to give up. These are all paths of life God shows us.

Lord, in my silence, help me to find the path of life You show me. Amen.

What Does The Resurrection Look Like?

APRIL 6, 2018

"So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body."

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

Memory Verse: "So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable" (1 Corinthians 15:42)

The resurrection is not something that we can achieve. It is God who brings about the resurrection. In the same way, we cannot make our life complete on our own. It is God who makes our life complete. Even though we try our best, still we sow what is perishable and we sow it in dishonor and in weakness. But God raises in us what is imperishable and God brings about glory and power in our lives.

Lord, I know that the resurrection is Your work. I surrender myself in your control. Amen.

No Testing Beyond Our Strength

APRIL 15, 2018

"No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

Memory Verse: “No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Testing is a part of our living. We are thankful that God does not let us be tested beyond our strength. God always provides us a way for us so that we can overcome our difficult times. Let us look very carefully around us. We will see a way God has provided for us. Even though we may feel that we hit the dead end, there is always a way out.

*Lord, thank you for providing a way to overcome our life's challenges.
Amen.*

The Spirit Gives Hope

MAY 20, 2018

"Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.'" Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'"

Ezekiel 37:11-14

**Memory Verse: "I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live."
(Ezekiel 37:14)**

God's Spirit makes us alive because the Spirit gives us hope. When we have hope, we will live. We can overcome even death. Hope is our strength. God gave us the Spirit so that we can see the light in darkness and hope in despair.

The Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Give me hope and help me to live with the hope given to me. Amen.

The Beginning and The End

MAY 29, 2018

"Peter began to say to him, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'"

Mark 10:28-31

Memory Verse: "Many who are first will be last, and the last will be first." (Mark 10:31)

There is a Korean word, "Yong Doo Sa Mi" which means literally "dragon's head and snake's tail". It refers to an action that is big in the beginning but very small at the end. Our life should not be like that. Our end should be more beautiful than our beginning. The disciples were nobody in the beginning but at the end, they became saints. Let us run hard to finish the beautiful race.

Lord, help me to fight the good fight to the end with total devotion. Amen.