

## Tuesday, August 29

*Birthdays: Gwen Arora, Benjamin Flores*

*Prayers for: Greg Broughton; Tanya Bryant, Klarc; Tom Burgess; David & Betsy Burns; Nita Burrer; Brian & Gail Cahill; Bob & Mary Capps*

**Acts 26:24—27:8 He had reached this point in his defense when Festus shouted out, “Paul, you are out of your mind; all that learning of yours is driving you mad.” (v.24)**

Part of my life involves working with highly educated and very secular professionals. As we socialize together, they often raise the matter of my Christian faith. During these discussions, I’m often told that I’m foolish or naive to believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

For a few years, I did my best to make intellectual arguments supporting my faith in these conversations. Then I realized that was never going to work. Instead, when these discussions arise, I share my personal experiences of the transforming love and healing power of God, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. That changes the conversation. It actually leads to questions about my experiences and what I believe about their meaning. My take-away from these discussions is to remember that God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not ideas. They are realities! The best way to talk about a reality is to share our personal, relational experience of that reality, not have an abstract conversation about ideas. Our best course is always to witness, not argue!

1 Kings 1:38—2:4; Psalms 5, 6; Mark 13:28-37

## Wednesday, August 30

*Birthdays: Bill Kotlan*

*Prayers for: Otto Carl; Wayne & Debby Carpenter; Tim & Nancy Caudill, Keegan Novakosky; Jorge & Elizabeth Cavazos, Arianna*

**Mark 14:1-11 “Ointment like this could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor”; and they were angry with her. (v.5)**

My congregation has recently been involved in a kerfuffle about money. (Specifically, there isn’t enough to meet the budget!) One group of members thinks that we should fire the organist to reduce the budget. As with the speakers in the above verse, these folks talk about the good outreach works we could do with the money we’d save. There are two ideas that aren’t being considered here. The first is that music has been an important congregational offering to God for decades. (Believing that it truly is an offering is a spiritually important part of the community’s identity.) Second, the real congregational issue is and has been about stewardship—individual monetary generosity and commitment. I think we need to gather our hearts and heads together to remind ourselves that not everything in parish life is about money or outreach. Sometimes it is simply about loving Christ and giving God glory in joy and expressive generosity!

1 Kings 3:1-15; Psalm 119:1-24; Acts 27:9-26

## Thursday, August 31

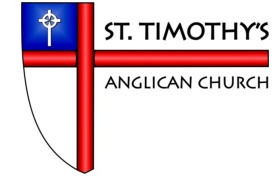
*Birthdays: Ted Jodzio, Heather Palmer*

*Prayers for: Emile & Lynn Champion, Cam; Travis & Shelia Chandler; Greg & Joan Chapman; Gene & Genevieve Chism; Keith & Lisa Coe*

**Mark 14:12-26 And while they were at table eating, Jesus said, “In truth I tell you, one of you is about to betray me, one of you eating with me.” (v.18)**

Sooner or later in life, someone you care about deeply, and believe to be your friend, will betray you. When this has happened to me, I confess that my response has usually been several days of free-floating anger. Unfortunately, that always leads to depression, and often some sort of illness. Recently, it happened again. I was lucky. When I learned of the betrayal, I was with a wise Christian friend. He said, “Before you do anything else, pray that God will hold your betrayer in a loving embrace. Next, ask God to give you compassionate grief, grieving the loss you’re experiencing, but with compassion, rather than rage. The compassion helps you to come to understanding why this betrayal happened. In time, that understanding can lead to forgiveness, which can lead to the possibility of reconciliation.” It was good advice. I’ve worked to follow it. The result has been understanding and compassion, not the enmity and unresolved wounding of past experiences. I pray that understanding and compassion will, with God’s help, eventually lead to real forgiveness and reconciliation.

1 Kings 3:16-28; Psalm 18:1-20; Acts 27:27-44



# ST. TIMOTHY'S TIMES DAILY DEVOTIONAL READING

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PO Box 380 Winter Park, Florida 32790

### Prayer for St. Timothy's

*Most loving God, whose wisdom has guided St. Timothy's Anglican Church since its beginning, stir up your Spirit in our midst and lead us forward in the work we are called to do.*

*Enable this congregation to continue in service to you and in ministry within and beyond our walls.*

*Cleanse us of petty rivalries, sensitivities, vanities, discourtesies – everything which distracts us, thus freeing us to rejoice in the good performed by others.*

*Grant that we may be united in a common purpose and share in a single spirit... your Spirit, Lord.*

*Bless our work together that we may faithfully envision what you are calling us to be and to do, and bless our efforts to be faithful to your calling.*

*Grant that your attractive goodness may be seen in all our faces, your warm accents of love heard in all our words, and in our lives may we show something of you to all the world.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord, AMEN.*

## Tuesday, August 1

*Birthdays: Larry DiSano, Ignacio Munguia*

*Prayers for: Clayton Melanson; Ernie Midgley; Martha Millan-Rodabaugh, Lauren, Cassie*

**Mark 6:30-46 They all ate and were satisfied. (v.42)**

You know that full feeling you get after eating a good meal? It's that feeling of being content and satisfied. This is what I believe the people felt after Jesus' feeding of the five thousand. The story tells us that there were only five loaves of bread and two fish to feed thousands of people. Then after Jesus blessed the food and broke the loaves it was multiplied to feed the many who were there. The story also tells us the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of leftovers. That is a lot of leftovers! Not only does this story show us provision, multiplication, and miraculous power, it shows us God satisfies. Jesus didn't just serve up little tiny scraps and pieces for people to eat. The story shows us they ate and were satisfied to the full. Jesus not only filled their stomachs but also their souls. This is God's provision for us as well. When we feed on Him and His provision, we can be satisfied to the full. I give thanks for God's glorious abundance in all that He does.

2 Samuel 3:6-21; Psalms 61, 62; Acts 16:6-15

## Wednesday, August 2

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Dennis & Tacie Miller; Lois Miller; Fr. Jeff & Valerie Minshall, Joshua, Will; John Moran*

**Mark 6:47-56 He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth hour of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them... (v.48)**

I have a question when I read this passage. I wonder why Jesus was about to pass by the disciples. It is curious to me that Scripture includes this phrase in the NIV. I don't have an answer. Instead I see Jesus' compassion in the next verse. The next verse tells us that the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water. It also tells us they cried out in fear, thinking he was a ghost. The NIV uses the word "immediately" to describe Jesus' action. He calls out to them and gets into the boat with the disciples. I can only think that Jesus saw his friends straining at the oars and the look of fear in their eyes when he was about to pass them by. He also heard the panic in their voices when they cried out in fear, thinking he was a ghost walking on the water. In his compassion, Jesus changed his mind of walking on water the rest of the way and got into the boat with the disciples instead. And so it is with us. Jesus sees our struggles and fears and enters our "boat" with us, bringing calm and peace. I give thanks to Jesus for his former humanity and understanding my fears and struggles.

2 Samuel 3:22-39; Psalm 72; Acts 16:16-24

## Thursday, August 3

*Birthdays: Hillary Gerber, Richard Jennings, Joshua Sullivan*

*Prayers for: Ignacio & Severina Munguia; Alex Musick; Jeff & Lisa Musick, Zach, Ben; Blake & Lauren Muskiet, Ethan, Parker; Gwen Nix*

**Acts 16:25-40 He was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family. (v.34b)**

I belong to a small group of women who study the Bible weekly. Each of us are mothers and also have grandchildren. A prayer request that comes up often is the salvation of our family members—especially our children and grandchildren. We believe the greatest gift and legacy we can pass down in our family is a saving knowledge of God and personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is our hope and desire for those within our families. This passage is an encouragement that God also has the welfare of both individuals and families in mind. May we keep praying for our families to come to a saving knowledge of Christ no matter how impossible it may seem. God wants our family to know Him personally too. Thank God for His indescribable gift of knowing Him.

2 Samuel 4:1-12; Psalms 70, 71; Mark 7:1-23

#### Friday, August 4

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Dele & Kemi Oduola; James & Caroline Osteen; Lizbeth Oviedo; Paul & Heather Palmer; Mike & Jane Pavelka, Pam, Nicholas*

**2 Samuel 5:1-12 And he became more and more powerful because the LORD God Almighty was with him. (v.10)**

When I first came to know Christ, I had a lot of bad habits. It was hard for me to say no. It was hard to say no to drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and even other people. I wanted to clean up my life and stop the habits I knew were dishonoring to God. But I was weak. My Spirit was willing but the flesh was strong. I needed God’s help in many areas. The more I said no to these habits, the stronger I became in following God. I had to do my part in saying no to certain things. As I asked God’s help and continued to read the Bible and quote it often, the stronger I got. My Spirit grew in the ability to say no to the “bad” things and yes to the right way of living. The Holy Spirit became more prevalent in my life and showed in the things I did and did not do. I did my part and the Holy Spirit gave me power when I needed it the most. And now I can say, with confidence, that the Holy Spirit is more powerful in my life than ever.

Psalm 69; Acts 17:1-15; Mark 7:24-37

#### Saturday, August 5

*Birthdays: Keila DiSano*

*Prayers for: Chris & Meagan Patton, Christopher, Cohen; Liz Pearsey; John & Tracy Pegues; Matthew & Ginger Phillips, William, Isabelle*

**2 Samuel 5:22—6:11 David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, “How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?” (v.9)**

Before I came to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, I was afraid of God. I was afraid God was angry with me. I was afraid God did not love me. I was afraid that God wanted to punish me for all my sins. I was afraid in other ways too. I was simply afraid of this concept of God in general. I, like David, did not understand how God (the ark), could ever “come to me.” Then I heard the gospel and good news about Jesus Christ. I came to understand John 3:16. I began to understand God’s love for me through His Son Jesus Christ. I learned that “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” (John 3:17). I came to understand God’s love for me. Now I am no longer afraid of God. I am certain of His love for me. I stand confident in the words of Jesus, “I no longer call you servants...Instead I have called you friends” (John 15:15).

Psalms 75, 76; Acts 17:16-34; Mark 8:1-10

#### Sunday, August 6

*Birthdays: Barbara Garney*

*Prayers for: Jane Pineda; June Powell; Steve & Carol Powell; John & Sunny Pugliese; Mike & Cecelia Railey; David & Carol Ray*

**Psalm 96 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; they will sing before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth. (vv.11-13 NIV)**

I love this promise of the Lord’s judgment of the earth. I know the emphasis is usually on man’s well-deserved judgment. But in this instance, it’s the earth’s turn. And, oh what a relief it will be. I believe man was given dominion over the world—as a husband, a caretaker, a gardener—but not as a destroyer. My heart grieves for the incredible damage I see inflicted upon our mutual home. Let’s name a few: global warming, deforestation, desertification, species extinction. Enormous issues that, to fix, will require the cooperation of vast groups of unrelated people who have conflicting interests and goals. I pray for the success and continuing support of all good men and women who work to identify and repair the damage which, in our ignorance, we as a people inflict upon our planet.

2 Samuel 6:12-23; Psalm 93; Romans 4:7-12; John 1:43-51

#### Monday, August 7

*Birthdays: Lauren Fennel*

*Prayers for: Tony & Nema Redding; Alan & Jan Rendl; Corey & Sloane Ritts; T.J. & Paige Ritts, Ainsley, Everly*

**Mark 8:11-21 The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it.” (vv.11-12)**

Right after Jesus has miraculously fed a crowd of four thousand with seven loaves of bread, the Pharisees come and seek a sign from Jesus. “He sighed deeply...” What an understatement, huh? Jesus did the miraculous in feeding the multitude. And that wasn’t enough. They wanted more. More certainty. More assurances. More conviction. A sign from heaven! I have given God many opportunities to sigh deeply over my performance in my life. I have asked the same foolish questions over and over despite having been “fed” by a daily abundance of miracles. So now, when I contemplate the true miracle of my acceptance by God as one of His children, I know that there is no need for any further sign. I’ve been fed once and for all. The questions are now replaced by trust.

1 Samuel 13:19—14:15; Psalms 140, 142; Luke 23:26-31

#### Friday, August 25

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Cody & Rachel Ault, Alex, Evelyn; Jackie Austin; Jon Austin; Lizzie Austin; Lourdes Aviles, Lance; Wayne Ballentine; Harry Berry*

**2 Samuel 19:24-43 Then the men of Israel answered the men of Judah. We have ten [tribes’] shares in the king; and we have more right to David than you have. (v.43a-b AMP)**

I remember times when I have experienced strong feelings of frustration, anger, and indignation toward another person. The other person did something that I did not like; they did not do it the way I thought it should have been done. I was of the opinion that my perspective was correct and theirs was not; I evaluated myself as being superior to the other person; my perception of the overall context was flawed.

During those times, I felt overwhelmed and did not know what to do; I did not know which way to turn. When I looked for help, the help for which I desperately sought did not seem to be available. Then I remembered that God is always my place of refuge: I cried out to God; He repaired my flawed perception; He helped me to work with others even though we viewed things differently. Good and gracious God, You alone knew the way I should turn. Thank You for setting me free.

Psalms 140, 142; Acts 24:24—25:12; Mark 12:35-44

#### Saturday, August 26

*Birthdays: Wayne Carpenter, Kris Heeter, Judith Jordan, John Pegues*

*Prayers for: Maria Del Carmen Bastard; Martin & Kyla Bayang, Martin, Vicki; Bob & Mary Benning; Steve & Nanette Benoit; Anne Birkhead*

**Psalm 144 Reach down from heaven and rescue me; rescue me from deep waters, from the power of my enemies. Their mouths are full of lies; they swear to tell the truth, but they lie instead. (vv.7-8 NLT)**

I recognize that my worst enemy can be myself; I have been amazed by the power of the enemy who is me. I do not always encourage myself in the LORD. I sometimes allow myself to be encompassed by deep waters. Sometimes it is easier to allow myself to be tossed about in an ocean of falsehood than it is to swim strongly against the current to reach a point of victory, and I neglect the speaking of truth.

When I read David’s psalm, I experience feelings of hope: God loves us; He pays attention to us; He enables us to be victorious in battle; He nourishes us, causes us to flourish, and motivates us to rejoice in community with others whose God is the LORD.

Heavenly Father, please help all of us to focus on You, especially in times when we are tempted to sink into the depths. Help us to speak truth that dispels falsehood; please help us to remember and to confess who You are and what You are like.

2 Samuel 23:1-7, 13-17; Psalm 137; Acts 25:13-27; Mark 13:1-13

#### Sunday, August 27

*Birthdays: Lance Aviles*

*Prayers for: Ed & Zonia Bock; Jim & Kathy Boggs, Chris; Ruby Bosh; Sharon Boyah; Bob & Bonnie Boyce; Frank & Cheri Boyd*

**Galatians 3:23—4:7 As you are sons and daughters, God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son, crying “Abba, Father.” (v.6 NJB)**

Recently, I was having lunch in my favorite diner. In the booth behind me were two couples. I could clearly hear their conversation, which was a debate about God. One couple were Christians, the other were vocally not. What fascinated me about their conversation was that both couples viewed God as judgmental and punishing. I’ve heard enough sermons about the above verse from Galatians to know that Abba is an Aramaic word many biblical scholars describe as a term of endearment for your father (like Dad, Papa, or Daddy). God sending the Holy Spirit into our hearts, teaching us to call God, Papa or Daddy, is a very different understanding from that of viewing God as judgmental and punishing. It means that the Creator and origin of all that has, does, and will exist, wants to live in a such a deeply intimate, loving, understanding, and personal relationship with each of us, that it would be natural for us to call that Creator God “Papa.” That’s a God anyone would rejoice to come home to!

2 Samuel 24:1-2, 10-25; Psalms 146, 147; John 8:12-20

#### Monday, August 28

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Jim & Carolyn Boyd; Gary Bradley, Evan; Nettie Briggs; Bob & Diann Brooke; David & Janice Brookes, Philip; Bruce & Jane Brough*

**Acts 26:1-23 “As for me, I once thought it was my duty to use every means to oppose the name of Jesus the Nazarene.” (v.9)**

When I served in Vietnam, I was part of a Marine unit whose mission was to identify and neutralize Viet Cong leaders. Paul was doing the same kind of thing to Christians in first-century Palestine. As he describes his spiritual journey in his letters, I can see similar themes in my own faith journey. Reading about him was my first inkling that God could and would help me find a transformative path to follow in dealing with my wartime experiences. Paul’s journey in Christ begins with Christ revealing Paul’s spiritual blindness by making him physically blind. He then opens Paul’s eyes to see a new path and a new destiny. I believe that those who reject or oppose Jesus Christ are not enemies, or eternally condemned sinners. I believe they are people who are afflicted with spiritual blindness. What they need is for a Christian to gently open their eyes to restore their spiritual sight. The greatest saints often began as great opponents of Jesus Christ!

1 Kings 1:5-31; Psalms 1, 2, 3; Mark 13:14-27

## Monday, August 21

*Birthdays: Mark Doremus, Barbara Myers*

*Prayers for: Kent & Tracey Weissling, Sean, Jeff; Lee & Erma Wetmore; Steven & Kaylyn White; Joe Boyd & Kate Williams*

**2 Samuel 17:24—18:8 The battle raged all across the countryside, and more men died because of the forest than were killed by the sword. (v.8 NLT)**

When I read this passage, I thought about me running hurriedly through a forest of tall pine trees that were growing every which way in no evident order. I dodged one tree only to encounter another; my feet tripped on bushes as I continued in haste to reach a safe destination. I did not know how to make my way through the forest and it looked like I would never get out; I felt overwhelmed. As I reflected on these thoughts, I recognized that I had been trying to rush through a long to-do list in the same way that I had been rushing through the forest. Each time I tried to decide what to do next I battled feelings of confusion and jumped from one item to another. In desperation I cried out to the Lord. With the Lord’s help, a path began to emerge. I walked calmly and victoriously on the path as I traveled to my destination. I did not succumb to the forest. Thank You, Lord, for rescuing me.”

Psalm 106:1-18; Acts 22:30—23:11; Mark 11:12-26

## Tuesday, August 22

*Birthdays: Parker Muskiet*

*Prayers for: Matt Willoughby, Meghan, Claire; John & Janie Wilson; Danny Winkler, Debbie Bradley-Winkler, Jennifer Bradley*

**Psalm 123 I lift my eyes to you, O God, enthroned in heaven. We keep looking to the LORD our God for his mercy, just as servants keep their eyes on their master, as a slave girl watches her mistress for the slightest signal. (vv.1-2)**

The lyrics to a familiar hymn by Charles Wesley begin with this question: “Depth of mercy! Can there be mercy still reserved for me?”

When people have treated me contemptuously or have castigated me unjustly on the basis of their feelings of anger and their indignant thoughts, my response is to call out to God for mercy for myself: “Have mercy on me, Lord, for I have had my fill of contempt.” Yet even as I cry out to God, I wonder about the other persons. Do I not want the Lord to show mercy to them, even if they have treated me unfairly? Perhaps those who were so unkind to me will also begin to cry out to God and ask for His mercy. O merciful God, we lift our eyes to You. Please help us love our enemies and extend mercy to those who have been unkind. Help us to treat others in the way that we would like them to treat us.

2 Samuel 18:9-18; Psalms 120, 121, 122; Acts 23:12-24; Mark 11:27—12:12

## Wednesday, August 23

*Birthdays: Kathy Freeman, Jason Mickelis, Martha Millan-Rodabaugh*

*Prayers for: John & Kathryn Zacharias; Steve & Phyllis Zapp; Norma Abrams; Eric & Maria Anderson, Nicole, Ashley; Cathy Arellano*

**Psalm 119:145-176 I stay awake through the night, thinking about your promise...Argue my case; take my side! Protect my life as you promised...O LORD, listen to my cry; give me the discerning mind you promised...Listen to my prayer; rescue me as you promised. (vv.148, 154, 169, 170)**

But you promised! You promised! You promised me you would do that! These words remind me of children reminding their parents—not once, not twice, but repeatedly—about something the parents said they would do. The question lurking behind the children’s persistent words is this: Will my parents follow-through on their promises? The psalmist is approaching God in a similar persistent way. The psalmist feeds on the memory of God’s promise; calls out for protection; begs for understanding; asks for rescue. Motivating the many persistent words is the question: Will God follow-through on His promises? The psalmist’s words prompt me to remember that God is always available to hear my cry: He will not leave me alone; He will not abandon me to the enemy; He will not allow me to be bereft of understanding. When there is a cry in my heart, God will hear and answer; God can be trusted. Lord God, thank You for promises that You have made to us. I believe You will do whatever You have promised to do; I accept Your word.

2 Samuel 18:19-23; Acts 23:23-35; Mark 12:13-27

## Thursday, August 24

*Birthdays: Carolyn Melanson*

*Prayers for: Keith & Martha Armstrong; Suzanne Arnold; Gwen Arora; Jeff & Sandi Arora, Ty, Trace, Claire, TJ and Tatum McMahon*

**2 Samuel 19:1-23 As all the people heard of the king’s deep grief for his son, the joy of that day’s victory was turned into deep sadness. They crept back into the town that day as though they were ashamed and had deserted in battle. (vv.2-3)**

How are we to respond when victory is associated with a heartbreaking event for another person? How are we to respond when grief over a heartbreaking event is associated with another person’s occasion for rejoicing? How do we find direction in these times of heightened emotions? When we are overcome by our own feelings we often find it difficult to think of the other person first. Strong emotions can threaten to be overwhelming. When our feelings are in full swing we may have difficulty quieting ourselves. Are we able to consider the plight of others and also walk in a place of peace—without abandoning the reality of our own experience? How can we see and respond from God’s perspective, so that we receive His peace and communicate it to others? Lord, please help us love one another as You have loved us. Please open our eyes to see people and situations as You see them; please give us the ability to share in Your feelings towards them.

Psalms 131, 132, 133; Acts 24:1-23; Mark 12:28-34

## Tuesday, August 8

*Birthdays: Cassie Giles*

*Prayers for: Corey & Sloane Ritts, Declan, Elyn; Ted & Donna Ritts, Eric; Kathy Rohm; David Ronkainer; Tim & Tonya Rose*

**Psalm 78:1-39 Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. He remembered that they were but flesh, a passing breeze that does not return. (vv.38-39)**

This psalm is all about the stubbornness and fickleness of the people of Israel as they worship and then fall away from God’s teachings. And the same thing applies to me, even to this day. I’ve heard the Word, been the recipient of His grace, enjoyed abundance, and still have sinned. And “yet he was merciful!” I’ve been given a lot in this life for which to be grateful. Certainly, of great importance, is the realization that my creator has a full and complete understanding of my frailty. That God, in his mercy, withholds his just wrath against me. That my fleeting presence on this earth is one in which God wishes to communicate and embrace me in love. Amen.

1 Samuel 14:16-30; Psalms 137, 144; Luke 23:32-43

## Wednesday, August 9

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Anthony & Debbie Ross, Justin Boggs, Landen; Al Rosso; Horacio & Leticia, Salazar Jr.; Dick & Jackie Savacool*

**2 Samuel 9:1-13 Mephibosheth bowed down and said, “What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?” (v.8)**

Mepibosheth was the crippled grandson of Saul and son of Jonathan. King David, in his power, decides that he will honor his relationship with and promise to Jonathan and restore Mephibosheth to his lands. David breaks with his cultural traditions! Any other king would extinguish the blood line of any possible contender for the throne. But not David. “A dead dog like me.” That makes me laugh. Am I not a dead dog too? But my King has also broken with tradition. He makes me whole. He invites me to sit and feast at His table. The table of spiritual food that nourishes my soul. He restores me to a place of honor with His own children. Is there enough time to express the gratitude He deserves?

Psalm 119:97-120; Acts 19:1-10; Mark 8:34—9:1

## Thursday, August 10

*Birthdays: Bill Davies, Declan Ritts*

*Prayers for: Aaron & Mary Scherzer, Simon, Amelia; Charles & Jennifer Scherzer; Sarah Scherzer;*

**Psalm 145 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. (v.18)**

To know God, is to love God. And this psalm talks about the wonderful praises that are made to Him. But the reality is such, that showing up in church on Sunday is not a litmus test of whether I am a real follower of the Way. Am I walking the walk and not just talking the talk? “Call on him in truth.” That is so hard to do every minute of every day for me. It is exhilarating to feel God’s presence in my life and know (the truth) that He is with me every minute of my walk. Is it not astounding that He loves me in my weakest moments?

2 Samuel 11:1-27; Psalm 83; Acts 19:11-20; Mark 9:2-13

## Friday, August 11

*Birthdays: Mary Ellen Harrington, Joe Kenney*

*Prayers for: Dennis & Rene Schiltz, McKenna, Brennan, Maggie; Jane Scholwinski; Scotty Scott & Beth Dickinson; Ronnie & Lucy Sefcik*

**2 Samuel 12:1-14 Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die.” (v.13)**

Nathan rebukes David for committing adultery with Bathsheba and ordering the murder of her husband Uriah. And only then does David acknowledge the fact and admit he has sinned. Another great example of understatement. When my God looks into my heart, he sees everything—including the things I hide from the world. Rebuke comes to me now from the Holy Spirit. Mercifully, the Spirit is guiding my conscience more consistently these days. This story of David’s great sin gives me hope in God’s unfailing love and desire for me to choose His path.

Psalm 88; Acts 19:21-41; Mark 9:14-29

## Saturday, August 12

*Birthdays: Jacob Dear, Dena Fennell, Joshua Kenney*

*Prayers for: David & Susannah Schorlemer, Blake, Mary Frances, Louisa, Will; Warren & Donna Settles, Linden, Ethan, Deanna*

**Mark 9:30-41 “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us.” (vv.39-40)**

The apostles told a man to stop driving out demons in the name of Jesus “because he was not one of us.” I guess they had a far different understanding of how the work of God was going to proceed in the world. It was going to be powerful—and they would be the ones to administer that power. But Jesus had a better plan. When “good” is let loose in the world it tends to prosper and thrive. So, when I realize that miracles are for real, and personal and prevalent in my life, there is no going back to a world without Jesus. I have a powerful trust in God’s plan. It is plan that allows me to face an uncertain future with all its distractions that work to wear and abrade at my confidence, a confidence that relies on the Lord’s continued presence in my life and work and community.

2 Samuel 12:15-31; Psalms 87, 90; Acts 20:1-16

### Sunday, August 13

*Birthdays: Nancy Kison, Dianna Stein, Jim Tummy*

*Prayers for: Grant & Heather Seiver, Wade, Mackenzie, Savannah, Isaac, Abigail, Luke; Sandy Shackelford; Robbie & Merrie Sheltz*

**Romans 15:1-13 And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled. (v.4b NLT)**

Don’t you just love the season of waiting? I especially love that God, clearly, is not on our time watch. I often find myself in a continual season of waiting; choosing to believe that what God has spoken over me is truth, whether or not I can see it tangibly. I’ve had numerous prophetic words spoken over me, though many of these words seem foreign—or carry the illusion of the impossible. The season of waiting on God’s fulfillment of promises always brings me back to the great characters of the Bible. Scripture tells the legendary stories of heroic men like Abraham, Joseph, Moses, King David, Paul, etc. Though these men could not see the fulfillment of the promise even in the distance, and their situation seemed impossible, God always proved himself faithful. These stories give me hope to believe beyond what I can see.

2 Samuel 13:1-22; Psalms 66, 67; John 3:22-36

### Monday, August 14

*Birthdays:*

*Prayers for: Valerie Shepherd, David Sierra & Nina Torres, Alondra, Andrea; Antonio & Lizbeth Sierravigas; Brenda Spiess, Lauren*

**Psalm 89:1-18 Happy are those who hear the joyful call to worship, for they will walk in the light of your presence, LORD. (v.15)**

There are two words that strike me every time I read this verse: happy and joyful. For those of you who grew up in any kind of religion, I’m sure you will understand me when I say my first inclination when I hear “the call to worship” is by no means associated with happiness, and definitely not joy. For most of us, I can only assume the phrase “call to worship” is out of responsibility—it’s just something you do every week out of response to your religious traditions. The more I fall in love with the Lord, though, the more I find myself relating to the psalmist. It has become my joy to walk in the light of His presence and continually proclaim His praises. I have encountered God’s goodness no matter my circumstance, and have realized I am meant to come before His thrown with happiness, joy, and laughter. Jesus calls us to be like little children. And as a child I’ll come.

2 Samuel 13:23-39; Acts 20:17-38; Mark 9:42-50

### Tuesday, August 15

*Birthdays: Karen Isherwood*

*Prayers for: Eric & Myschel Spiess; Troy & Brandi Spiess, Coltin, Gavin; Frank & Pat Stahl; Greg & Kathleen Staten, William, Caroline*

**2 Samuel 14:1-20 But god does not just sweep life away; instead, he devises his ways to bring us back when we have been separated from him. (v.14)**

Ever find yourself drawing conclusions about people? Specifically, those like the addicts, the prodigals, the homeless, the mentally ill, etc.? We often think to ourselves, “That person is at the point of no return.” I’ve caught myself doing this from time to time. I might not even be aware of it, but subconsciously there’s something that shifts in me as I begin to label them “lost cause.” Inevitably, I stop hoping, stop pursuing, stop loving. I’m so thankful Jesus did not deal with me this way. He never once labeled me “lost cause” no matter how far gone I was. He loved me and pursued me. In the depths of my sin he went out of his way to beckon me back into his deep infinite love.

Psalms 97, 99, 100; Acts 21:1-14; Mark 10:1-16

### Wednesday, August 16

*Birthdays: Ruth Gray*

*Prayers for: Lee & Dianna Stein; Jackie & Julie Stevenson; Eric & Sylvia Stewart; Russell & Cheryl Strickland; Anne Sundquist*

**Mark 10:17-31 Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.” (v.27)**

I remember the day I found out my friend was healed of cancer. Many of my friends (including myself) were not even aware she was sick. The Holy Spirit had spoken to her clearly. He said, “You will be healed,” and she believed him with her entire heart. And she was. It was a radical, supernatural, doctors-cannot-explain type of healing. And this day—the day supernaturally defeating cancer became a reality—was the day I realized nothing is impossible for God. Jesus turned the philosophies and natural laws of man upside down the moment he came to earth and defeated death once and for all. So yes, humanly speaking we face impossible situations very day. Heavenly speaking, we are more than conquerors.

2 Samuel 14:21-33; Psalms 101, 109; Acts 21:15-26

### Thursday, August 17

*Birthdays: James Johnson*

*Prayers for: Buddy & Diana Sullivan, Jeremy, Nicholas, Joshua, Olivia, Jacqueline; Jim & C.C. Sutphen; Fred & Charlotte Talley; Linda Tervay*

**Mark 10:32-45 “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (vv.43b-45 NIV)**

What a great philosophy, right? Ha! Though I love the teachings of Jesus, becoming a servant among humanity is not exactly my greatest strength. I live in a self-gratifying world; often finding myself living according to my cravings of the moment. Whether it is food, activities, specific people, podcasts, books, etc., I’m always craving something. This results in the constant battle between serving myself or serving those around me.

In order to practice what Jesus taught, I’ve got to learn surrender. In order to be a servant among many, I must practice sacrifice. I must lay down my agenda before my brothers and sisters in need—caring for the widows, the oppressed, and abandoned. I’m convinced this is what moves the Father’s heart more than anything else—when we lay our lives down for the sake of another, and love the way Jesus loved.

2 Samuel 15:1-18; Psalm 105:1-22; Acts 21:27-36

### Friday, August 18

*Birthdays: Abigail Seiver*

*Prayers for: Bill & Debbie Taylor, Katherine, Charlie, Bella; Jim & Elaine Tummy, Jack; Mary Lee Turk; Jose & Brenda Valencia; Pete Varney*

**Mark 10:46-52 “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. (vv.51-52)**

I’ve always wondered why Jesus didn’t just heal every person automatically. Sure, he healed a few people apart from their role, but I’ve noticed specific miracles written within Scripture carry a common theme. People who received healing, had to want it. And not only did they want it, but they had to vulnerably hope, at the risk of disappointment. I often find that hope in God can feel scary. It’s like putting my heart out on the table, exposing my inner-most desires and what I truly want, though it could result in a serious let-down. It is in that place though, at the risk of rejection, hurt, wounds, disappointment, I open my heart and encounter the one thing my soul has desperately been searching for—His perfect love.

2 Samuel 15:19-37; Psalm 102; Acts 21:37—22:16

### Saturday, August 19

*Birthdays: Dennis Miller*

*Prayers for: Dick & Marlene Van Horne; George & Sandra Vick; Beryl Wambaya; Chris & Lisa Wanner, Matthew, Nicholas; Ray & Suzi Waters*

**Psalm 108 My heart is confident in you, O God; no wonder I can sing your praises with all my heart! (v.1 NLT)**

Why is it that heart-confidence and head-confidence seem like quite the different journeys? Personally, my mind has known I can find my confidence in the Lord since before I can consciously remember. But my heart? Oh, my heart. That’s a different story. Logically, God can do anything. He is my protector, provider, comforter, friend, etc. I don’t recall my heart believing this for quite some time though. God had to meet me in the darkest of places. He broke through my walls as I encountered Him in a way that my heart could never forget. Now we’ve made history together. And I can boldly say, “Yes, God, my heart is confident in You.”

2 Samuel 16:1-23; Psalm 107:33-43; Acts 22:17-29; Mark 11:1-11

### Sunday, August 20

*Birthdays: Keegan Novakosky*

*Prayers for: David & Helen Weigand, Aliana Giles, Cassie Giles, Nathaniel Giles, Charlie; Mike & Anna Weil; Cathy Weisser*

**John 5:30-47 “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.” (vv.39-40, 43-44 NASB)**

The date was June 1, 1967; the time was evening; the location was a college dormitory. I was alone and sitting on the bed, disinterestedly reading my Bible. As I was skimming through John 5, words from that chapter stood out to me on stems as if they were being displayed in 3-D. I knew the words that I read were true: my life was characterized by a mixture of incompatible values and practices; while I attended church and sometimes read God’s Word, I did not walk in relationship with God. On the one hand, I was committed to dysfunctional friends, who had lured me into relationships and practices that were not healthy; on the other hand, I was experiencing a feeble, yet growing, response to God who had been offering me the opportunity to walk in relationship with Him.

That evening I made a commitment to receive the testimony of the Scriptures and to receive life from Jesus Christ, the one who came in his Father’s name. That night I experienced a new beginning.

2 Samuel 17:1-23; Psalm 118; Galatians 3:6-14