

**Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of January 13
Love Wins Week 2
Heaven**



Sunday January 13

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is when we pray for an ill or troubled friend. Who do you need to pray for today? In your prayer for another, the Kingdom of Heaven is as at hand showing how love wins.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-10 Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Morning Prayer: God, the scripture today is so well known as your teaching on prayer that it is easy to just skip over the words. I can say the words by memory and at the same time not even pay attention to what I am praying for. Your Kingdom of love coming soon and Your will be doing on earth as it is in heaven is no easy prayer. When I look around and see the kingdoms of power and privilege ruling and controlling, then I realize how important this prayer really is. We need Your Kingdom of love to come soon. We need a Kingdom where Your will for love and justice on earth breaks down the divides we have created. So today, help me take my part in helping Your Kingdom of love and welcome for all people to be seen and experienced today. For when Your Kingdom of love reigns supreme, we all win. May it be so.

Noon Text: The Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth when you pray for a friend in need. Who do you need to pray for? Your prayer for others in need shows how love wins.

Evening Text: God, today I have lived in both a kingdom of power and control and Your Kingdom of love. It's Your Kingdom of love that gives me peace and helps me find rest.

Monday January 14

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is by taking steps to care for the planet. How might you take care of the Earth and reveal God's Kingdom of love, knowing that in doing so, love wins.

Scripture: I Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails.

Morning Prayer: God, I am thankful for this short reminder that love has never, can never, and will never fail. Knowing that Your love is constant and unchanging, sufficient to meet my every need and hold me through all circumstances helps me to believe that I can also love in this way. My prayer is that today I might grow in my understanding of such amazing love, and have my eyes opened to see the many ways in which I can offer unfailing love to the world around me. May it be so.

Noon Text: How have you experienced love today? How have you shared love today? Lean in to the rest of this day with the intention to love without limit.

Evening Text: God, I know there were moments today when I could have been more loving. I release those moments to You now as I prepare to rest. Help me to love as You do.

Tuesday January 15

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is in our words of affirmation and encouragement to someone who is feeling down and out. Who might you affirm and encourage today and in doing so reveal the power of God's love in the Kingdom of Heaven right when someone needs it the most?

Scripture: Matthew 6:33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Morning Prayer: God, having grown up with the idea that heaven is a destination, it is incredible to me that the Kingdom of Heaven is so much more. Day in and day out I have the opportunity for Kingdom living. When I act and speak in ways that are pleasing to You, I feel like I am in sync with You. When I am in sync with You I realize that I do have everything I need. When we are in sync I can look at everyone I encounter as Your beloved child, just as I am. And by reaching out to others in love I remain in sync. It is not always easy; it is not always my first inclination to love someone different from myself. Help me to look beyond our differences, to look with eyes of love. May it be so.

Noon Text: Is there someone in your life that needs words of encouragement and affirmation from you today? Take time to reveal God's love through your affirming words.

Evening Text: God, rest at the end of my day comes easier when I know I am resting in Your love and that tomorrow I will wake refreshed and ready to face another day.

Wednesday January 16

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is through our kindness instead of cruelty. What acts of kindness can you do today as a sign of God's love overcoming any words or acts of cruelty? In doing acts of kindness you are showing how love wins.

Scripture: Luke 17:20-21 When He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation. Nor will they say, 'Here it is!' or 'There it is!' For remember, the kingdom of God is within you."

Morning Prayer: God, there are times I wonder where You are and in a simple act You confirm You are there, right where You need to be. Meeting a simple need by a stranger holding a door or a friend helping out with a larger task I can't do alone, these acts of kindness show Your love and caring through Your people. God help me to find ways to help others when they need help. I am not looking for glory or reward, but to show others that You live in me and my kindness is a sign of Your love. May it be so.

Noon text: Is today the day you step out in faith and do something you have been thinking about that serves your community. By taking the step, love wins!

Evening Text: As I relax at the end of the day, I thank you for the kindness others showed me today. May tomorrow bring more signs of Your love through my acts of kindness.

Thursday January 17

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is when we are generous and not frugal with our time and presence with others. Who needs your presence today? Your loving presence reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in the moment. In that moment love wins.

Scripture: Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them. For to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

Morning Prayer: God, give me the faith and innocence of a little child. Teach me that excessive pride and cynicism make it more difficult for me to experience the kingdom of heaven here on earth. Let me find ways to get in touch with the little child inside of me so that I may better experience Your loving presence. May it be so.

Noon Text: God, give me the innocence of the child inside of me so that I may experience Your loving presence.

Evening Text: God, as the day ends, let me put away my pride and ego in favor of humility and love, and give me the restful peace of Your loving presence.

Friday January 18

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth when we bless our children, grandchildren or any other child. Children are precious and showing them love shows them how special they are. When they feel special love wins.

Scripture: I John 3:1 Consider how much love God has given to us, that we should be called children of God.

Morning Prayer: God, generally it is pretty easy to love a child – with their wonder and innocence. When it is not a child it can be much harder to love someone who looks, thinks, speaks and believes differently than I do. Some of that is fear; some of it is pride. My prayer today is that I am able to overcome fear, put aside pride and see everyone as You see them. Let me recognize them as Your child, just as I am. Let me love them as You love them. Then we all win. May it be so.

Noon Text: Have you had an encounter with a child today? Children are so generous with their love. Bless them by being generous with your love. It's win-win for everyone.

Evening Text: God, like a child I can rest well tonight secure in Your love. Thank you for the many ways I have experienced Your Kingdom in my life this week.

Saturday January 19

TODAY LOVE WINS: The Kingdom of Heaven is both here and far away. It is experienced both in life and in death. The way the Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth is through our acts of justice and mercy. Over time love has the power to dismantle unjust systems. In that dismantling the Kingdom of Heaven rules and reigns supreme. Whenever the Kingdom of Heaven rules love wins.

Scripture: Revelation 21:25-26 Heaven's gates shall never be shut by day, for there shall be no night there. They shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

Morning Prayer: God I find today's scripture very interesting. Is it true that the gates of Heaven never close? Wow! What a sign of Your unconditional love and unlimited welcome. This scripture shows that nothing on earth or in eternity can separate anyone from Your never ending love. Help me

to live today with a heart that is open to everyone I interact with. May Your love within me protect me from separating people into groups that I like or dislike. May Your love in me flow through me in ways that bring joy, laughter, welcome and hope throughout my day. For when that happens love is seen as the open gates to heaven on earth. And that's how love wins over and over again. May it be so.

Noon Text: The Kingdom of Heaven is seen on earth through our acts of justice and mercy. Over time love has the power to dismantle unjust systems. Keep choosing love.

Evening Text: God, tonight I rest in the assurance that no matter what the news reports say, Your love is still working in ways that bring hope and healing to our world.