

Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of January 19
Fear-Less Hope-Full



Sunday January 19

Scripture: Luke 13:18-19 Jesus said, "What is the Kingdom of God like? How can I illustrate it? It is like a tiny mustard seed that a man planted in a garden; it grows and becomes a tree, and the birds make nests in its branches.

Morning Prayer: God, I find myself drawn to conclusions. I tend to want the end result before even thinking about how I might get there. I want a life of joy and purpose. I want there to be a kingdom of Your love, where there's room for everyone. My problem is I want it now. Yet what I am reading in today's scripture is that to get there it all starts small. While marveling at a big oak tree I should remember that the real miracle of the tree is not its size, but that it was birthed by the power of a small acorn. While wanting Your vast kingdom of acceptance and love to be realized by others, I have to realize that it begins in me with small acts of kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. May I be a mustard seed of hope today. Help me to trust that Your kingdom has come, and that through my small acts of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, and love others will feel safe, welcomed and loved. In this prayer, I find renewed hope. May it be so all day long.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: You cannot save the world or others. Yet through small acts of kindness, you're infusing the world with God's unwavering hope and that is life-changing.

Evening Text: God, with confidence that small acts of kindness lead to big change, I prepare to rest. Thank you for the gifts of service that I have been able to share today.

Monday January 20

Scripture: II Timothy 1:7 God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Morning Prayer: God, I am grateful for Your powerful spirit of love that is within me. When my human fears and anxieties could overwhelm me, I can always go inward and draw on that deep core of strength and love to calm my fears and help me to move forward. Help me to remember in moments of weakness that You are always with me. Help me to exercise the self-control to resist fear and to remain positive and hopeful every day. May it be so.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: Is there a fear that keeps you from believing that your small acts of love can have a powerful impact on the world? Hope is the antidote to fear. Choose hope.

Evening Text: Have you lived a hope-full life today? As you prepare to rest reflect on what is good, pure, kind, worthy and loving. These will lead you toward hope.

Tuesday January 21

Scripture: John 6:7-11 "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!" Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" "Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people.

Morning Prayer: God I have heard this story since I was a small child and continue to marvel at it even as my understanding of it has grown and evolved. In the midst of a crowd of 5000+ one young boy has the courage and faith to step up and offer up his meager amount of food. What was going through his mind? In his innocence did he believe that what he had would make a difference? Lord help me to draw on this example of believing that whatever I have to offer can make a difference. Even if my offerings of my time, my talents or my gifts seems meager, they can and will make a difference. Instead of saying it is too much, what I can offer is too little, let me have the faith and the courage to offer it up to You and to others. May it be so.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: Reflect on what you have to offer that might make a difference in someone else's day. Even a smile, a kind word or a thoughtful action can bring hope.

Evening Text: God today I was able to take what little I have and offer it up in an attempt to bring hope to my little corner of the world. Thank you for the opportunities.

Wednesday January 22

Scripture: Matthew 17:20 "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

Morning Prayer: God, on this ordinary day, it seems hard to believe that my faith could move mountains. In the busyness and struggle of everyday life, it can feel challenging to even climb the hill in front of me! I imagine a mountain- strong and ancient, imposing and beautiful, able to withstand any weather, season, or time. But while mountains project all their majesty and I sit here feeling as small as a mustard seed, I can rest with hope knowing that I am created in the image of God. I am designed to have a kind of faith that empowers me to love and serve the world! When I live into that hope, my acts of faith can ignite and shine out beyond what I ever thought was possible.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon text: Pause for a deep centering breath, then take a look around you. Who can you serve at this moment with an encouraging word, a helping hand, or a welcoming smile?

Evening Text: Like the roots from a mustard seed grow deep and spread wide in the earth, I pray my acts of faith will shine out with radiance and warmth to the world.

Thursday January 23

Scripture: I Corinthians 13:3 If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

Morning Prayer: God as I contemplate this scripture I think of all the good I have tried to do and my motives for that. I think of the small things that I do that are big to me but seemingly small in the scheme of things. Help me to know that all I do matters and that my reward is in the love I sow in this world, not the accolades or recognition I receive. I pray that You help us all to see that it is in serving that our needs are met and exceeded. That we are enough. We are perfect and wonderful in Your eyes and that is all that we could ever want and more. Thank you for this day to practice my humility and heart of service. May it be so.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: You have the rest of the day to make someone's day better. Think of the small ways you can do it. A smile, a kind word, an act of service will ripple out.

Evening Text: God, I rest now thanking You for the small ways that I have had to make a difference. I find hope in believing that a small act of kindness leads to change.

Friday January 24

Scripture: II Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Morning Prayer: God, there are times when I am content to meander about, exploring the world in leisure. But when I am on a schedule and heading somewhere new, I want to know exactly where I am heading and exactly how to get there. I want my GPS up and running, ready to guide me step by step. So stepping out in faith does not always come easy. And on this journey of faith there are many times when I face uncertainty, when I feel nudged to take action but fear freezes me in place. When I encounter injustice I hesitate because the path is not always clear to me so rather than taking even the smallest action in response, I get stuck and take no action. Those are the times when I must remind myself that You are with me always. When I am looking into an uncertain future, You are there; in You I can find the courage and the faith to begin with small steps, knowing that even the smallest step can have an impact. May it be so.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: When what you see ahead causes you to freeze in place, remember, God is with you. Close your eyes, feel the presence of God surround you; be filled with hope.

Evening Text: God, today I was able to walk in faith, secure in Your love. Now I come to rest knowing I can rest easy in Your love and grace to wake prepared for tomorrow.

Saturday January 25

Scripture: Luke 16:10a One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much...

Morning Prayer: All around me, God, are activists, celebrities, and politicians doing amazing things to change the world by addressing global injustices and environmental concerns on a massive scale. I can't help but feel small and insignificant with my limited time and resources, yet my desire and passion to bring hope and change is no less passionate. Help me God to focus on being the person who offers one small act of kindness in the life of another. Whether I'm aware of it or not, I have to believe that one small act could be life changing for someone since more often than not I have no idea what burdens others are carrying. It could be as simple as putting down my phone at the

checkout and affirming the cashier with a smile and a greeting. Help me God, to see myself not where I'm lacking, but as one of the many ripples in a body of water extending hope, love, and support. Help me to believe that my contribution, no matter how small, combined with the many contributions of others, collectively can and do change the world. May it be so.

Morning Focus: Hope comes by believing that even though you cannot always do great things, you can do small things with great love. Your small acts of kindness, compassion and service open the door of hope in you and in the world.

Noon Text: Pause and reflect. Has the day got away from you? Recenter. You can be the positive difference for someone or many today.

Evening Text: Reflect on the many opportunities the day brought to offer acts of kindness. Rest well knowing you made a difference today.