

Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of January 26
Fear-Less Hope-Full



Sunday January 26

Scripture: Proverbs 29:25 The fear of human opinion disables; trusting in God protects you from that.

Morning Prayer: God, I confess that too many times I fear what others think about me. Will they like my idea? Will they be offended by what I say? Will they talk about me behind my back? The list could go on. All of that to say, I know the truth of today's scripture. When I fear what others think about me I feel disabled. I am less likely to speak up to injustice. I hold back from sharing creative ideas. I am more cautious about almost everything. So my prayer is that You help me to find ways to fear less what others think of me so that I can live more fully into the gifts that You have given me to share with others. Help me to focus more on what You believe about me as Your beloved child, and far less on what others might think. Instead of being disabled by fear, may I be enabled by hope to let my light shine as a gift to the world. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: Remember who you are. No matter what others might think or say about you, stay focused on what God believes about you. You are a gifted child of God. Shine.

Evening Text: God, instead of ruminating on what others might have thought about me today, I choose to turn my thoughts to what You believe about me and in that I can rest.

Monday January 27

Scripture: II Timothy 2:15 Concentrate on doing your best for God, work you won't be ashamed of, laying out the truth plain and simple.

Morning Prayer: God, I begin this day with the intention of doing my best in everything I will do. My desire is to act with simplicity and honest truth in all of my dealings with people. I know that this sounds simple, but most likely my resolve will be tested within hours, if not minutes as I go into the world. Help me to return to this wonderful reminder and then move forward concentrating on doing my best for You. If I can do that, I know that I will arrive at the end of my day filled with hope-filled peace that I have given my best, my truthful self to the world. I will let the loving model of Jesus be my guide. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: How are you sharing the wonderful and unique gift of yourself with the world today? Seize even the simplest opportunity to be your truest and best self.

Evening Text: God, at times today it was hard to not fear what others were thinking of me. Help me to lay those thoughts down so I can now rest in Your acceptance of me.

Tuesday January 28

Scripture: Matthew 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

Morning Prayer: God, as I read this scripture I am reminded of the childhood saying 'sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me'. Of course the words did hurt; this saying was mostly bravado to throw back at those who were taunting me. But there is truth in that just as the truth is in this scripture. The words people use against me can be hurtful. It is too easy to let my own self-esteem be affected by the words and opinions of others. When I have those moments of doubt about my own self-worth based on the views of others, remind me of Your love for me. Remind me that I am worthy and loveable in Your sight. Remind me that I am Your child, one who has gifts to share in this world and one of those gifts is to not be judgmental of others. Help me to extend Your loving grace when I am tempted instead to offer harsh words or criticisms. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: Are the words of others bringing you down today? Remember that God knows you and loves you. Instead of responding with your own harsh words, respond in love.

Evening Text: God, it's not easy to let me self-esteem not be affected by the actions of others. But when that happens, I simply remind myself that You know me and love me.

Wednesday January 29

Scripture: Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Morning Prayer: God, my heart aches as I read these words of Jesus and remember the devastating persecution he endured. He modeled a radical life of love, offering an unlimited welcome and redemptive justice to everyone. Systems of power and privilege will not accept that kind of equality and grace. I know following the ways of Jesus can lead to critique, judgment, and hate from a world that doesn't understand his ways. Yet I take comfort in this blessing and I rejoice, celebrating that I am created in Your image. I am called to show love and serve in a way that may not be understood, but will bring heaven and Your will closer to earth. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon text: Jesus consistently showed grace and forgiveness to all. Such traits may not lead to power and prominence in our world, but they are still the pathway to peace.

Evening Text: God, I end my day feeling peaceful and content. Not because today was easy, but because I lived into my truth as Your beloved, a gift to the world.

Thursday January 30

Scripture: Psalm 118:6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can anyone do to me?

Morning Prayer: God, I pray that you help me to be one and all with you. I know that you see the perfection that you have created in me but the imperfect human always causes me to doubt that you are for me at all times. I pray that my eyes are opened to that perfection in myself and all your creatures and that I live my life in Your will. I know that fear is a lonely place and that with faith in You at all times those fears can be allayed. Help me to not worry about what others think of me so that I

can do my best to be an example of a deeper faith today. Even if others try to harm me, they cannot take away my faith. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: Try to see the person that God sees in you at all times. Remember God looks at your heart. Set your heart on compassion and forgiveness.

Evening Text: I rest tonight in the comfort and love of God who is for me and knows my purpose. I have lived this day with confidence and compassion, blessed and whole.

Friday January 31

Scripture: Romans 8:31 If God is for us, who is against us?

Morning Prayer: God, sometimes it does feel like the whole world is against me. Crisis at work or in my family, illness, or fallouts with friends...all of these add up and seem to create havoc, especially when they seem to come at the same time. Not only do I feel overwhelmed but in those moments I feel like I am being judged by how I am responding to each of those crises. So I am grateful for the reminder in this scripture. It reminds me that You are always on my side. You are always there to support me. You can help me put everything in perspective. I just need to take time to be present with you, to listen to the still, small voice that says I can handle this. May it be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: If you are beginning to feel overwhelmed with what life is throwing at you today, pause, be reminded that God is with you always. God's love will sustain you.

Evening Text: God, as the day is drawing to a close, I am grateful for Your love and grace that sustained me today and will continue to grace me as I rest.

Saturday February 1

Scripture: Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread... for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. God will not leave you or forsake you.

Morning Prayer: I wish I could always move throughout my days and nights, God, without fear or dread, but in reality, there are times when I experience great fear and anxiety. Help me to redefine my understanding of courage. Help me to remember, God, that to be strong and courageous doesn't mean I won't experience fear or dread, but that with You, I won't have to face anything alone. It comforts me to reflect and recall the many challenges that have come and gone over the course of my life thus far. No matter what others may have thought about me, You were there for me and with me, always providing comfort from friends and relations, financial support...whatever the need, You were there and You will be there again. So instead of fearing what others think or the future ahead, I pray for strength to remember how You are always for me. In that, I can find hope. May it always be so.

Morning Focus: You are more than what others think you are. You are who God believes you are. You are a gift to the world. The world needs your light to shine.

Noon Text: Experiencing fear? Anxiety? Tension? Take a deep breath in and say "Be still and know..." pause and hold, then slowly release "that I am with you."

Evening Text: God, as the day winds down, help me to move from the challenges of today to rest in the peace of Your unconditional love for me and others. May I be hope full.