

Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of February 9
Fear-Less Hope-Full



Sunday February 9

Scripture: Matthew 9:13 Jesus said, "now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices."

Morning Prayer: Thank you God for this day. Every new day is a gift and an opportunity to learn from You and understand Your teachings more fully. I confess that sometimes I wish following the Way of Jesus included step-by-step instructions to follow, a specific map to guide me, or a checklist to tick off. But You don't want us to live by legalistic rules. You want us to live by love. Help me to step outside of systems that emphasize power, control, and barriers. Help me to walk in step beside You, showing mercy to those I come across today and to myself. Jesus gave grace, forgiveness, and compassion freely on earth. Help me do the same. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: How can you show mercy today? Look for ways to give a warm welcome, lend a helping hand and smile, or offer your loving presence to someone who needs hope.

Evening Text: Thank you God for your loving teaching, modeled in the life of Jesus. I show mercy to myself for whatever was done or left undone today and rest in Your love.

Monday February 10

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain."

Morning Prayer: God, it is hard to be steadfast. Every day my feelings and circumstances can lead me to see the world and my place in it in a different light. Some days it's easy to see how everything I do could be an act of love for You and for Your creation. On other days I can't see anything but fatigue and discouragement, and I struggle to simply get through the day. Help me to see all of my life as an offering to You. Help me to know that all that I experience in my human life can be offered as a sacred act of love and devotion to You. Remind me that even when I can't see results You are still able to use all my efforts for good. Help me to forgive myself when I fail to remember this and rise again each day to meet my life with a sense of hope and a steadfast optimism that none of it is in vain. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: May you see everything that you do today as sacred, offering it all as an expression of hope and love for the world. May it bring you endless joy.

Evening Text: God, help me to rest in confidence that my work is never in vain. May I persevere when I don't see results, trusting that there is always more that I don't see.

Tuesday February 11

Scripture: Galatians 6:2-3 Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

Morning Prayer: God, I think this is something I probably need to remind myself of every morning as I prepare for my day. In Your eyes I am no more or no less important than anyone else. On the flip side of course, there is nothing I can do to make You love me more or love me less. You love me and I am important in Your eyes. This sets the standard for how I am to love and view everyone else – as equally important and with the kind of love You have for me. So as I go about my day help me to be alert to the opportunity to share another's burden. Help me open my eyes, and then open my heart to help Your children, my brother or sister. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: Is there someone in your sphere that could use your help, who is shouldering a burden that is overwhelming? Don't be afraid to reach out in love to help them.

Evening Text: God, today when I reached out to share another's burden what I realized was that in doing so I am able to ease my own. In sharing Your love, I feel loved.

Wednesday February 12

Scripture: Proverbs 3: 27-28 Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it's in your power to help them. If you can help your neighbor now, don't say, "Come back tomorrow, and then I'll help you."

Morning Prayer: God, so many mornings I wake up and only think about how I am going to take care of all the things on my plate - where I have to go, deadlines to meet, people to see, commutes to be made. All of those things are important. Yet when I read today's scripture I fear that my schedule doesn't allow much if any room for me to deviate. What am I going to do if I come across a person in need? I can choose to keep my head down and follow my schedule. And if a friend, family member or stranger needs a moment or two of my time I can also choose to be available. Today, I want to try to practice the latter more often. May I see the opportunity to serve others as a part of the things I need to take care of today. Even though I struggle, saying, I know that today is not just about my "To Do" list, I also struggle to find time to help others. So I pray that You can help me to remember that if I deviate from my schedule so that I can help a person who needs my attention, then my day will be a great day. Instead of me telling the person in need, check with me tomorrow, I can check off my "To Do" list for today tomorrow. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon text: How are you doing with your schedule? How have you dealt with interruptions? Remember to make the needs of others a part of what you have to do today.

Evening Text: God, I pause to prayerfully reflect on my day and I choose to be thankful for the times when my day was interrupted with the gift of helping someone in need.

Thursday February 13

Scripture: Luke 6: 47-48 I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built.

Morning Prayer: God, I feel at times as if my life has been built on a foundation of sand. I fear that I may not be good enough or smart enough or worthy. I then remember this teaching and find comfort in knowing that though the storm can be fierce, by following the way of Jesus, I have dug deep and built on stone. Help me to not let what I can see cause me to fear that I have not prepared for it. Help me to know that with Your strength all things are possible and all will be well. I pray that on this day that I can follow the ways of Jesus by showing the love and mercy that is so freely given to me and to all whom I will encounter. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: Have the confidence that like a house built on a sturdy foundation so can your life be built on the solid foundation of God's unconditional love for everyone.

Evening Text: God, I rest peacefully knowing I have tried to live with love and acceptance as You have taught me. I pray for the gift of acceptance to start anew tomorrow.

Friday February 14

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:7-8 "Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!"

Morning Prayer: God, today is a special day where many celebrate love, but most use this day to recognize and celebrate the romantic love between partners (Eros), or perhaps Philia, the affection between friends. Celebrating romance and friendship is a wonderful thing and something we should not take for granted and of course the hope is that the romance and friendships will last forever. But every day I am thankful for Agape Love – the unconditional love You have for me and everyone, the love that never gives up, loses faith, is hopeful and endures forever. Of that I have confidence. This is the love I hope to model – loving without conditions my brothers and sisters in Christ – all of Your children, no matter where they are from, their race, their faith, their sexual orientation or gender identity. Let me love as You do. May it be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: For some today is a day to honor the love of our lives, for others perhaps longing for that love. But everyone can rest secure in the unconditional love of God.

Evening Text: God, if my day was spent with my love or if it was spent alone, I am still filled with joy and with hope having experienced Your love throughout.

Saturday February 15

Scripture: Romans 15:13 I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Morning Prayer: I read this scripture, God, and I know it to be true. In some of the worst times of my life, even when I was overcome with stress, or pain, or fear, or worse - all three at the same time, a part of me never 'completely' lost hope. I've lost sleep and appetite to fear, but even if my experience was the outcome I feared the most, You were there providing me with comfort by way of friends and family support, resources seemingly out of nowhere when I feared financial collapse, and options, answers, and insights from resources I'd not even considered. Help me, God, to always be open to the source of hope, You. Help me to also be a model of Hope to others who, like me, have struggled or who are struggling now, so they, too, are filled with hope. May that hope bring peace to my life and those I love. May it always be so.

Morning Focus: God's mercies are new in every moment. Set a hope-full intention to delight in that love, then bravely offer it out to the world.

Noon Text: Do a body scan. Are you feeling fearful? Inhale deeply citing "As God is with me," hold, then release slowly citing "I am not alone and there is hope."

Evening Text: God, I am thankful for Your gift of presence today and for allowing me to be the gift of presence to others. I rest filled with hope for myself and others.