

Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of January 29
Parables Part III –
You're Never Really Lost



Sunday, January 29, 2017

Psalm 34:18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he saves those whose spirits are crushed.

Reflection: Everyone from time to time feels broken hearted and as if our spirit is crushed. Such feeling can make us feel as though we have lost our way. There are many good reasons to feel this way. The promise, however, is that when we do feel broken hearted and defeated in spirit that is right where God meets us with love and grace. Enough love and grace to make it through another day. Over and over again the Bible reminds us of this promise. Over and over again the Bible tells us that we are never really lost, for God is forever with us.

Sacred Pause: When we feel broken hearted or defeated in spirit that is where God meets us with enough love and grace to make it through the day.

Monday, January 30, 2017

Isaiah 40:29-31 God gives power to the tired and revives the exhausted. Youths will become tired and weary, young men will certainly stumble; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary.

Reflection: When we are exhausted God probably won't give us the strength to fly like eagles or to keep on running without wearing out. But that sure is a great metaphor describing the kind of endurance God does give to us. When we are centered in God's grace we are less likely to give in or give up. The grace of God helps us understand that life is a marathon and not a sprint. And like the tortoise, we are given the wisdom to pace ourselves instead of running on ahead exhausted. And that is how we can walk through without being weary.

Sacred Pause: The grace of God helps us understand that life is a marathon and not a sprint. Like the tortoise we are given wisdom to pace ourselves.

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Psalm 139:7-10 Where could I go to get away from your spirit? Where could I go to escape your presence? If I went up to heaven, you would be there. If I went down to the grave, you would be there too! If I could fly on the wings of dawn, stopping to rest only on the far side of the ocean— even there your hand would guide me; even there your strong hand would hold me tight!

Reflection: This entire passage of scripture can be summarized like this: We can run but we cannot hide from the grace and love of God. We are never truly lost. We might separate ourselves from God's love, but God cannot be separated from us.

Sacred Pause: You can run but you cannot hide from the love of God. You might separate yourself from God, but God cannot be separated from you.

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Isaiah 43:1-2 But now, says the LORD— the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you won't be scorched and flame won't burn you.

Reflection: This passage is part of an ancient story about Jacob, the father of Israel. Even though these words of promise are thousands of years old, they are just as rich with positive and reassuring imagery today. The intimacy of God knowing our names, the reality of God going with us through deep waters churning with turmoil or fiery flames fanned by ridicule or anger is what gave Jacob then and us now the strength to never give up on our dreams to change the world with God's unconditional love for all.

Sacred Pause: Never give up on your dream to change the world with God's unconditional love. Keep practicing love and both you and the world change.

Thursday, February 2, 2017

Psalm 16:8 I always put the LORD in front of me; I will not stumble because he is on my right side.

Reflection: This Irish prayer captures today's scripture best. As I arise today, may the strength of God pilot me, the power of God uphold me, the wisdom of God guide me. May the eye of God look before me, the ear of God hear me, the word of God speak for me. May the hand of God protect me, the way of God lie before me, the shield of God defend me, the host of God save me. May Christ shield me today. Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit, Christ when I stand, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me. Amen.

Sacred Pause: Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left.

Friday, February 3, 2017

Hebrews 13:5b-6 I will never leave you or abandon you. This is why we can confidently say, The Lord is my helper, and I won't be afraid. What can people do to me?

Reflection: Our focus this week has been on God's endless presence. Of course we all have to admit that at times it doesn't feel as though God is near. Sometimes we even feel abandoned by God. And yet time after time the scriptures remind us that there is never a time when God is not with us. We are afraid of what people and life can do to us. This is why it is really important to have a community of people walking with us. If we have others walking with us we are less likely to feel as though God has forgotten us. We will experience the love and care of God in moments of fear, loneliness, or grief, with skin on through those who also love God and love us as much as they love themselves.

Sacred Pause: In fear, loneliness or grief we can experience the love of God through those who also love God and love us as much as they love themselves.

Saturday, February 4, 2017

Romans 8:38-39 I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created.

Reflection: If there is a scripture to repeat day in and day out, perhaps it is the one we read today. Just think of the anxiety, guilt, and shame we can save ourselves if we take this verse to heart. This truth of this verse is why we can say, we are never really lost. If God is never separated from us, then how can we ever be lost? We might choose to separate ourselves from God's compassion and forgiveness, but God can never stop being compassionate or forgiving toward us. In that light why would we ever want to separate ourselves from such love? Sometimes we separate ourselves from the very thing we are looking for, thinking we will find it elsewhere, when all along it was already in us and all around us.

Sacred Pause: We might try to separate ourselves from God's compassion and forgiveness, but God can never stop being compassionate or forgiving toward us.