

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*



THE ALLIANCE

40 DAYS  
OF *prayer*

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## WEEK 1

### THE HOLINESS OF GOD

*Hebrews 12:14*

A. W. Tozer writes in his book *The Knowledge of the Holy*, "We know nothing like the divine holiness. It stands apart, unique, unapproachable, incomprehensible and unattainable. The natural man is blind to it. He may fear God's power and admire His wisdom, but His holiness he cannot even imagine. Only the Spirit of the Holy One can impart to the human spirit the knowledge of the holy."

God is holy. Pastor Chip Ingram says, "He isn't six or ten or one hundred times more holy than the best person you know. God Himself is an entirely different category in which He is the only member."

God reveals His holiness to us in many ways, as we will see in the Scriptures this week. As we reflect on God's holiness, how do we respond? Will we take off our shoes? Will we get on our face? Will we make every effort to keep peace? Will we confess or praise? Will we be God's holy Church?

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## REVEALED IN CREATION

ISAIAH 6:3

The words penetrated my heart. *Piercing. Uncomfortable.* “We have to be careful we don’t worship the creation more than the Creator.” Beauty is all around us. From the orange–red sunrises to the breaking of ground as the bush bean seed emerges; from the quiet, focused deer that peer through the trees to the intricate blossom of the Christmas cactus plant. What beauty do you see in creation? Creation declares the glory of God, but our verse today lifts up the Creator Himself, the Lord of Hosts. While the heavens declare His glory (Ps. 19:1), creation is not what is to be glorified and praised.

The seraphim are calling out, proclaiming, broadcasting, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord” (Isa. 6:3). He is set apart. The whole earth with its grandeur, beauty, intricacy, and life points us toward the holy, pure, set–apart God of all creation. It can be easy to get the cart before the horse, the creation before the Creator. Like me, our intent might be to acknowledge the God behind it all, but sadly our hearts and minds are focused more on the beauty we see before us. What God has created must draw us to Him. Admire the beauty of creation, yes! Stand in awe of what our holy God has “masterpieced.” But let us not fix our eyes and thoughts on the creation only. Let us be sure to move past the physically seen to the One who called it all into being—and it was good.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord, I thank You and praise You for all that You have created—from the beauty of the sunset to the majestic mountains. Your glory fills the earth and spreads across the galaxies. We confess that we cannot comprehend Your holiness, but we taste and sense a portion through what You have revealed in creation. Lord of Hosts, forgive us for times of worshiping Your creation before You. We ask that, when our eyes behold the wonders in creation, our hearts and minds will be drawn by Your Spirit to worship You, the holy Lord of Hosts. Amen.*

## REVEALED THROUGH PLACE

EXODUS 3:1-16

“This is a thin place,” a friend once said after a particularly powerful time of prayer on the hilltop where we met. “As we pray in this place, I can feel the distance between heaven and earth collapse and a deep sense that we are in the presence of God.” Sometimes a place feels different to our spirit in a way that draws us to experience His otherness, His excellence, His love, and His holiness.

In our reading today, Moses encounters a thin place that drew him with curiosity, kept him with reverence, and astounded him with revelation. The living God spoke to him. There is fear, confusion, awe, and growing faith as Moses hid his face in the presence of God. He was in a thin place that wasn't so much about the location as it was about God's choice to reveal Himself in that place as “I AM.”

I AM—not limited by space or time, so He is in all places at all times. In pain and confusion and darkness, God is there at work, bringing hope and good news that there is light that darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5). We can find Him in thin places, as well as any place that we call on His name.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, I pause today to contemplate the holiness of Your ongoing presence in my life. Help me to notice things that make me curious today, and remind me to look for revelation of You and Your holiness. Thank You for the gift of Yourself, I AM, and help me to understand the power and revelation that You bring to an ordinary day when I recognize that You are in it. Amen.*

## REVEALED IN WORSHIP

## REVELATION 4:8

When I read this Bible passage, Bishop Heber's hymn rings in my ears. I remember hundreds of worship services where I, along with countless others, sang at the top of our lungs, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!" As awesome as these moments of worship are, they are but shadows of what is happening in God's heavenly Throne Room right now. Only a few people on this side of heaven have peeked into this heavenly room, and their witness is consistent.

They see the Lord seated on the throne, radiating with beauty and power. Day and night, strange and majestic heavenly creatures equipped with hundreds of eyes gaze upon God's holiness in wonder. As they take it all in, worship and adoration burst out of them.

"God is three times holy! Let the heavens and the earth know His purity and otherworldliness and melt in humble adoration before Him!!! There is no one like our God!"

This heavenly scene continues to unfold in Revelation 4 with 24 elders casting their crowns and prostrating before God in worship. Holiness has a confrontative effect over anyone who encounters it. They either run and hide, as our first parents did in the garden, or they surrender through confession and holy adoration. The amazing thing is, when we do the latter, Jesus clothes us with His holiness and equips us to experience the holy life. Let's remember our place before God today and fall before Him in holy adoration.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Jesus, as I gaze upon Your holiness, I declare with the angels, "You are holy, holy, holy." I celebrate that about You because it's Your holiness that makes my salvation possible. I admit my lack and cling to You. Would You anoint me with Your Spirit in a special way today? Will You reveal to me the empty wells in my life so I can walk away from them? Would You wash my heart, mind, body, and soul with Your presence? Make me holy as You are holy, Lord. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

## REVEALED IN OTHERNESS

1 SAMUEL 2:2

The word “holy” is one of those words that evokes a duality of feelings in me. It brings memories of the old-time corito, “Santo, Santo, Santo . . . Dios en tres personas.” A hymn that speaks of the Triune Holy, Holy, Holy—perfect, complete, mysterious, and separate from sin. This profound truth inevitably highlights the vast chasm that separates me from Him; He is perfect, and I am not.

Yet, in a profound way it also brings warmth and peace to my soul. Warmth in knowing that this Holy One claims me as His beloved. Peace in knowing that no one can ever rival His supremacy, for He remains unmoving, unchangeable—a solid rock.

As we embark on this 40-day journey, it is my hope that you, too, may experience Hannah’s profound joy in worshiping the Holy One. The One who loves you regardless of how different you are from Him. The One who remains a cornerstone of unwavering constancy.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

Reflecting on your own life, how can you see God’s holiness reflected in the world around you? Take a moment to thank Him for His unique and perfect nature. Are there areas of your life where you are placing your trust in something other than God? Seek Him as your one true source of security and strength.

*Dear God, we praise You for Your unmatched holiness. You are the only God—our rock and our refuge. Thank You for Your unwavering love and faithfulness. Help us to place our trust completely in You. Amen.*

## REVEALED IN OUR ACTIONS

PSALM 96:9

As a kid, I loved lying under the summer night sky, gazing up at the stars in silent awe. I wondered where my middle school problems—friendship squabbles, white lies, awkwardness, and a search for meaning—could possibly find resolution in that distant expanse where I imagined God lived. The gap seemed too great between my front yard and God’s house.

In a way, I had that right. The gap is immeasurable. It’s like that math trick where you keep going half the distance to the finish line but never get there. God is uncontainable, incomprehensible, wholly other. If we’re honest, we can’t imagine facing Him without averting our eyes to revisit our shame or trying to prove ourselves loveable. We imagine that He tolerates rather than loves, that He is disappointed rather than delighted. God’s holiness, we perceive, is demanding.

Here, the psalmist’s words are unexpected: God’s holiness is beautiful.

Like the stars that inspired childhood awe, God’s otherness is magnificent. Metaphors fall short as Isaiah, with his eye-covered wheels and train-filled temple, testifies crying out, “Woe to me!” God’s holiness—fierce yet beautiful—brings us to our knees. We fall down in the same moment we are drawn in by His presence. Reverence meets wonder in His heavenly Throne Room. But no cosmic gap keeps us distant, for Jesus has brought us nearby becoming our holiness—trading splendor for humility, taking on flesh, giving His life, and reconciling us to the Father. He is worthy of all glory and honor and blessing.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, You welcome us into Your presence because of Your Son. Thank You that the gap that stood between us because of sin and brokenness is no more. We stand before You, bearing the holiness of Jesus, sharing in His joy even as we gladly bow before You in reverent awe. The heavens declare Your glory, Lord. Thank You for revealing Yourself to us in creation and showing the splendor of Your holiness to even the youngest child. Help us to fully receive Your love. Thank You, Father. Amen.*



## REVEALED IN THE NATIONS

EZEKIEL 38:23

Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 are the prophecies the Lord declares to Ezekiel about how Israel will be attacked by Gog and his allies in the future. The alliance of Gog is formidable due to their great numbers of troops and nations, which God has described as “come like a storm” and “like a cloud covering the land” (Ezek. 38:9). This “storm” will not be anything like Operation Desert Storm but will be the storm of all storms.

In God’s majestic ways, He will use this storm to prove, show, and make Himself known as the Lord by destroying it, for He has no rival. The three verbs—prove, show, and make—could be synonyms and used interchangeably, though each has unique depth and strengths. When used together, as in Ezekiel 38:23, they deliver the absolute proof that God is the Lord.

The attribute of God’s holiness in Ezekiel 38:23 is His authority and power. God’s holiness sets Him above every creature with breath, and nothing unholy can withstand His holy wrath. When the storm of storms occurs, nations will acknowledge that our God is indeed the Lord of all!



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Dear Lord, holy, holy, holy are You—the Almighty, who was, who is, and who is to come. May our gaze ever focus on You as our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. Grant us the strength to walk with You in holiness. May Your love for us overflow to the lost so they will come to know You before the storm of all storms and the Second Coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Armies. The whole earth is full of Your glory. Amen.*

## REVEALED IN HIS CHURCH

1 PETER 1:15-16

The battle between the flesh and the Spirit rages in the life of every believer. The Apostle Peter cautions us against slipping back to our old sinful lifestyle. We are called to be holy, set apart from sin, and set apart for Him. The Lord never requires of us that which is impossible to accomplish. The call to holiness is achievable and within reach, for the Spirit of the Lord Himself, the Spirit of holiness, empowers us to obey this commandment. Moreover, our Holy Father is conforming us to the image of His holy Son, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.

“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one” (John 17:11).

To be holy, we need the Father. We can do nothing apart from Him, and our command to be like Him comes directly from Him.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Holy Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your call to holiness. Thank You for setting us apart and empowering us to live a life of holiness through the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Continue to reveal the beauty of Your holiness as we seek Your face and meditate on Your Word. In the name of our Lord Jesus, amen.*

# 40 DAYS OF prayer

## WEEK 2

### THE ETERNALITY AND UNCHANGABLENESS OF GOD

*Isaiah 40:28*

This week, we journey into the timeless nature of our Almighty Creator who exists beyond the constraints of time. His character remains steadfast and unwavering throughout eternity. We are reminded that every good and perfect gift originates from God, and His faithfulness endures forever. Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, stands as a constant presence throughout time, unchanged from yesterday to today and into eternity. As we meditate on these foundational truths, our prayers are rooted in the unchanging character of our eternal God. Draw comfort, confidence, and hope from His immutable nature as we lift our hearts to Him in prayer.

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## FOREVER FAITHFUL

## PSALM 41:13

I have an impossible question today. What lasts longer—*forever* or *everlasting*?

I assume that this question might not have surprised you as much as it did me when my brain mustered it up, but truthfully, I think of this question every single time I read Psalm 41, Galatians 6, Romans 6, or the infamous John 3:16.

I assume this question is impossible because both words indicate no ending.

I remember sitting in my AP physics class and thinking “Man, this class is going to last . . . forever,” when in fact it was approximately 45 minutes long and would end as soon as the school bell rang. I also remember playing dodgeball in physical education. It felt like it only lasted two and a half seconds, but it actually lasted the exact same amount of time my AP physics class (though if I had it my way, phys-ed class would be . . . everlasting).

I have now come to realize this: my current mindset dictates the appropriateness in applying the choice between “forever” or “everlasting.” As we look at David’s words in Psalm 41:13, he illustrates to readers that God will be blessed from “everlasting to everlasting.” In other words, God will be *forever* or *infinitely* blessed. This seems to indicate that if *everlasting* did somehow end, God would still be blessed. Reading the 12 verses prior to Psalm 41 will tell us that God’s eternal faithfulness to the reader is why He makes this declaration.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Dear God, I praise You because, unlike the trials and tribulations in my life, You will remain. This gives me the peace of mind I need to go through my everyday life. I thank You because Your love is everlasting, and You have and will lavish that love upon me in abundance. God, I repent from the times my earthly mindset altered my understanding of who You are and what You are capable of doing through and for me. I thank You that no matter what my mindset is, You keep Your promise to be forever faithful to me. Amen.*

## ETERNAL FOUNDATION

## PSALM 90:2

My mom was rushed to the emergency room a week ago at the time of this writing. She suffered a massive hemorrhagic stroke. Our family was given two options—both shattering. One, let mom go. Two, opt for immediate brain surgery and give her a fighting chance to live. We chose the latter, and the ICU has been our home ever since.

Family and friends, life is but a vapor. We're here one day; we could be gone the next. Intensive care units have an acute way of reminding you of that. Only two things in this world are constant: God and His presence. In this moment of great despair, both have been a source of strength.

The psalmist declares in Psalm 90:2 that the God we worship, the God who's sovereign, is everlasting to everlasting. In layman's terms, creation has never been void of its King. God is and has always been.

Doctors have not given our family any assurances. It's possible mom could make a full recovery; it's what we've been in deep prayer for. But it's also possible that heaven could be her home soon. Whatever the future holds, our family is at peace. For in Christ, we have surety; not only will we see our beautiful and irreplaceable mom again, but the same God who would openly welcome her into eternity is the same God whose presence will remain with us and every person left behind.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, this life is hard. When it rains, it often pours. But thank You. Thank You for always being present. Thank You for always being there. And thank You for never abandoning Your sheep. To You be all the praise and glory! Amen.*

## IN THE BEGINNING, JESUS

JOHN 1:1

As we continue to reflect on the steadfast and unwavering character of Jesus Christ, John begins his gospel wanting us to know that Christ Jesus has always existed.

“In the beginning was the Word” takes us to the very start of all things, reminding us that before creation, before time itself, He existed. “The Word was with God,” shows us that Jesus is not a distant deity, but one who is deeply connected to the Father, sharing in the divine essence and purpose. “The Word was God” declares explicitly the divinity of Jesus. He is not merely a prophet or a teacher, but God Himself, who has come to reveal the Father to us. This truth is foundational for our faith. It reassures us that when we encounter Jesus, we encounter God in His fullness.

Reflecting on this verse, I invite us to consider the significance of Jesus in our lives. He is the Eternal Word who spoke creation into existence, the Living Word who came to dwell among us, and the Final Word who reveals God’s love and redemption. As we meditate on John 1:1, let us be reminded of the power, presence, and preeminence of Christ. May these truths deepen our faith, strengthen our hope, and inspire us to truly live and love like Jesus. In every beginning, in every moment, through every difficulty, may we recognize Jesus as the Word who is always with us and is always God.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord, when the troubles and sorrows of this world come knocking at our door, may we take comfort knowing that when we pray in Jesus’ name, we are praying to the One who has full authority over every situation. The One who has full power to intercede on our behalf. The One who has and will always exist and be with us. The One who has promised to never leave nor forsake us. Amen.*

## ALPHA AND OMEGA

## REVELATION 1:8

The God that we serve was present, is present, and will be present to come. I am not sure which of those three have most affected your spiritual journey, but I want to encourage you that God is in the business of redemption through His presence.

Our past—where we have been—shapes who we are today. It is just the reality of our human life. Some of us have had amazing pasts full of great parents, a solid faith, and lots of ice cream. Others of us have had pasts we would have rather fast-forwarded through—marked by divorce, confusing spiritual grounding, and lactose intolerance. Regardless of how you started, Jesus can redeem your past by His presence. His love is bigger than who you used to be.

Our present—some of us read this today needing answers for the now. The answers won't be in the questions we are asking but in the person we are pursuing. Jesus redeems our present.

Our future—the unknown is a scary thing. We don't know what our life will look like or what God's plans are for you and me. But I promise you something—Jesus can redeem where you're headed with His presence.

Make today a day where you allow Jesus to show you His presence and that your pursuit of Him would take top priority. We serve a big God whose presence is transformative. May we allow Him to be the life change in us!



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*God, thank You for not being limited by the clock or the calendar. You are a God that does redemptive work that transcends time. I ask that You meet us today on the journey to know You more. You are the God who was, who is, and is to come! Thank You for Your life-changing presence. May Your greatness shine all the more as You redeem our Alliance family for greater Kingdom work. Amen.*

## UNCHANGING NATURE

1 SAMUEL 15:29

Consistency is crucial in the art of baking. It is comparable to a science in producing the perfect pastry. A small oversight can lead to disastrous results—leftover water in a bowl can prevent cream from whipping, and over-mixing can render a cookie as dense as a puck. Nobody desires that outcome! Yet, despite our best efforts, the world often throws unexpected challenges our way, disrupting our plans. Life's constant fluctuations are the consequence of the imperfections and uncertainties caused by sin. We become disillusioned by the expectations that we place on ourselves. Our thoughts may become clouded in the lies of the enemy. However, amidst this uncertainty, we find solace in the unchanging nature of God.

God, in His essence, remains unaffected by fluctuations and change. He is already perfection personified. His plans are steadfast, His promises and covenant unwavering. While we may not fully comprehend His divine intentions, we can trust that He is faithful and true.

During seasons of vulnerability and change, let us remind ourselves that true consistency is discovered in the unwavering nature of our God.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the opportunity to commune with You and be in Your presence. Lord, we are burdened by the inconsistencies of life, and we become discouraged by the unexpected challenges that we face. Would You remind us of Your truth—that no matter the fluctuations we face, Your unchanging nature remains the same? Your promises and plans have never changed. You have remained faithful to us. May we continue to hold on to Your unwavering love in the waves of life. Amen.*



## UNCHANGING PROMISE

MALACHI 3:6

Malachi the prophet is delivering a message from the Lord to the Israelites. They were not living in a way that God was pleased with. In the verses preceding verse six, he calls out their behavior but then encourages them that He has not changed. He is calling them to return to Him. The same God that has been merciful and compassionate to the generations before them will do the same for them.

The cycle of sinful behavior, repentance, worship, then repeat is found throughout the accounts of the Israelites. Yet, God never changed. He remained faithful to His people even when they disobeyed, dishonored, and devalued Him. He was patient with them to return to Him, repent of their ways, and worship Him.

In Lamentations 3:22-23, it says that “the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” This was true for the Israelites then as well as for us today.

As a parent, I have noticed that when my kids disobey, they hide from me. Their shame, fear of disappointing, or the consequence creates a painful distance between us. I still love them, but when we deal with the issue, they experience the faithful love of their mom no matter what.

God the Father desires the same thing. No matter the situation, no matter the mistake, no matter the shame, deal with the situation. Experience His unchanging character of compassion, mercy, love, and faithfulness today.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord, You never change. You are a God of compassion and faithfulness. Help me not forget who You are. Forgive me for the things I have done that were not pleasing to You. Forgive me for allowing sin to bring distance between us. Today, I come close to You to experience Your love, Your mercy, and Your faithfulness in my life in new ways. Today I am so grateful for Your character that never changes and is always ready to restore me and bring me fullness of Your presence. Amen.*

## JESUS, UNCHANGING SAVIOR

HEBREWS 13:8

How often have you heard the phrase, “People never change”? This phrase has often confused me because change is inevitable. The aches and pains of growing older, the changing seasons from winter to spring, transitions in one career to the next or relocating from city to city exact a toll on a person’s soul. The process of learning who you are and who God made you to be can often feel like a void. This crisis can feel confusing and empty. Yet, it is a part of growth that every person will experience at least once in their lifetime. God has created change with multiple purposes. There are beautiful aspects of change that are valuable for learning about ourselves and God.

Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” How wonderful it is that we have a God who is never changing, a God who is patient with us in our growing. Have you ever thought about God and how He has never had to grow because He is always the same, all-knowing? A God who allows us the time, space, and freedom to wrestle with the difficulty of changes we encounter day in and day out. From the heartache we feel when we experience a loss of a loved one to the joys of seeing our children walk for the first time—our God is incredibly patient, and He waits for us to learn about His unchanging character.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Jesus, we thank You for Your steadiness that continues to ground us. Thank You for being stable even when our faith in You is unstable. Thank You that You are the solid ground that we can depend on in the storms. Thank You for Your patience in pursuing us so that we could know You more. Amen.*

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 3

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

*Proverbs 19:21*

Things don't often go according to the ways that we want them to. Life is full of twists and turns. In times of unexpected changes, our faith in a sovereign God serves as a compass to guide us through uncertainty. We can steadfastly hold onto the Lord's great plans as it makes a profound impact on directing our lives. He orchestrates our schedules, even with abrupt life redirections. Reflecting reveals His unseen control and thereby strengthens our faith. Trust in God's sovereignty, despite disruptions, as He shapes your journey.

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## HOW LONG MUST WE WAIT? THIS IS MY SOVEREIGN GOD'S UNIVERSE

JOB 42:2

The Lord described Job as being blameless and fearing Him unlike anyone else on the earth. However, God allowed Satan to test his faith. Job lost his children, livelihood, and his health. In an instant, Job's life was turned upside down, but instead of cursing God, Job chose to worship the God who gives and takes away. His suffering continued as he felt condemned and criticized by his friends. Sitting in dust and ashes, Job became depressed and filled with prideful indignation as he tried to prove his innocence and righteousness. Finally, Job demanded for God to explain Himself, and he questioned God's wisdom. The Lord, being near to the brokenhearted, answered Job by asking him questions that he could never answer with his limited understanding. Graciously, God revealed to Job His presence and power in a personal way, which humbled, convicted, and led Job to repentance and restored relationship with the Lord.

We might not understand the purpose of infertility, sudden death, broken relationships, or disabilities. We might feel like our situation is not fair or does not make sense. Like Job, we may never get an answer to our questions, but even in the chaos, our sovereign Lord is present and desires a deeper relationship with us. As we continue to trust the Lord's heart, even when we don't understand what has been filtered through His hand, we can proclaim in full surrender to God, "I know that You can do anything, and no one can stop You."



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Gracious Father, thank You for never leaving or forsaking us even when the fog around us feels so dense that we can't see the light at the end of our tunnel. Thank You for being a very present help in times of trouble and a gentle Shepherd through dark valleys. We lift up purposeful praise to You as our weapon against discouragement and doubt. Help us to daily trust in Your power, plan, and extraordinary provisions. Thank You for seeing us and settling our hearts and minds with Your supernatural peace. We love You, Lord. Amen.*

## WHO HAS THE LIVING GOD? ACKNOWLEDGING HIS REIGN

PSALM 115:3

Many times, and for many reasons, humanity has asked the question, “Where is God?” We have spent an insurmountable amount of time searching to answer this question. Patience, however, is not something in which humanity excels. Humanity’s impatience has led them to answer this question by making their own gods, fabricating them in a conglomeration of images they have seen throughout their lives. However, these images—these “icons”—are nothing more than a figment of humanity’s imagination. They do not hear and do not speak. They do not see, nor feel, nor move, nor act. These icons are nothing more than pale imitations, testaments to the false hopes, promises, and desires of their sculptors.

In our darkest moments, wherein our troubles have encircled us, and all hope seems lost, we may ask, “Where are you, God?” We find hope here: “Our God is in heaven.” While such a statement seems to force us to believe that He is far off, reigning from a realm beyond our reach, the psalmist reminds us that He exists; He is not a figment of our imagination. He is beyond what we can imagine, beyond what we can dream. He is the God who hears, the God who sees, the God who thinks and feels, who moves around us. He is our Good Shepherd. In the moments where we lose sight of Him, He has not lost sight of us.

In all things, whether we see Him or not, He reigns.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, You are beyond my understanding and comprehension. When You seem far, my heart, soul, and mind long for You with broken desperation. Part of me knows, without shadows of doubt, that You reign. Nevertheless, there are times when all I can see is the shroud of darkness that embraces me. Show me Your light again and let the only shadow I see be the shadow of Your wing. Remind me of Your presence. Remind me of Your warm embrace. You are mine, and I am Yours. I will never lose hope because You are my God and my King. Amen.*

## WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? EMBRACING THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION

ISAIAH 25:8-9

Sobs shook my chest and took my breath away as I walked along the wooded path near our house. On this day, the burden of infertility felt too heavy to bear. Years of waiting felt crushing, waves of sorrow drowned me in hopelessness and despair. As I walked, I cried out to the Lord for relief, for answers, for hope, begging Him to take this burden from me.

I didn't know it then, but two years later the Lord did take that burden from me and blessed our family with a miracle, the gracious gift of a beautiful baby girl. The joy I felt as I held our daughter for the first time felt overwhelming and indescribable. The sorrow of our waiting seemed brief and minute compared to the elation now filling our souls. However, that joy was just a small taste of God's goodness compared to what awaits us in eternity. Isaiah reminds us that our current sufferings and tears will one day be wiped away forever. Death will be swallowed up. Hopelessness will be a thing of the past. In that day, we will rejoice in the Lord's salvation. Our waiting will be over, our trust actualized, our salvation sure, and our joy complete.

So, while tears still stain our faces, let us press on to that glorious day when our faith will be made sight and we will confidently and triumphantly declare, "Behold, this is our God; we waited for Him, and He saved us!"



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, thank You that this world is not our home and that our tears will not flow forever. We know that You are our sovereign Lord, able to save us from our sorrows and make all things new. While we wait in hopeful expectation, help us keep our hearts and eyes fixed on You. Help us to trust You, even in the midst of our tears. You, Lord, are our trustworthy God, and we rejoice in Your salvation! Amen.*

## **THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD: DECLARING THE POWER OF CREATION**

**JEREMIAH 32:17**

Our God reigns supreme over any circumstances we face. Remember that Jeremiah boldly declared God's sovereignty, even in the middle of dire circumstances, like an overwhelming Babylonian siege and his own imprisonment.

When the Babylonian army besieged Jerusalem and Jeremiah was imprisoned by the king of Judah for prophesying the city's fall, he prayed, "In Your power, You made all of creation. There is nothing You cannot do."

When our world feels out of control, when evil appears to prevail, we may overlook God's presence and might. Global conflicts, tragedies, medical emergencies, and injustices can overwhelm us, clouding our understanding of God. We question, "Where is God?"

In such moments, nature becomes a profound teacher. Creation attests to the omnipotent God who established the earth's foundations and stills the seas (Job 38), as well as the compassionate God who provides for sparrows and adorns lilies (Matt. 6).

Whatever you are facing today might feel overwhelming and cause you to doubt either God's greatness or His goodness. But just a small reconnection with nature can realign your theological perspective—a walk in the woods, the warmth of the sun on your face, or the song of birds in a nearby tree.

Consider what hymnwriter Maltbie Babcock penned about the sovereignty of God during his frequent walks amid the beauty of upstate New York: "This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget; that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet."



### **REFLECTION PRAYER**

*Ah sovereign Lord, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. God, help me to pause today to see all that You have made, and as I do, remind me of this truth from Scripture: "Nothing is too hard for You." Bring to mind both Your greatness and Your goodness as I observe the majesty and beauty of creation. And whatever today may bring, may I find rest in peace in the fact that You remain the King and Ruler of all. Amen.*

## WHO HAS THE UPPER HAND? REFLECTING ON THE AUTHORITY OF GOD

ACTS 4:27-28

By the time we get to Acts 4, Jesus' promised Holy Spirit power to witness is at work. The disciples are performing signs and proclaiming the Resurrection. Lives are being made whole, the church is growing rapidly, and opposition to the gospel is fierce.

After Peter and John heal a lame beggar, the religious leaders arrested and threatened them with worse if they kept preaching Jesus. Politely refusing, Peter and John returned to their friends to share what happened. Their prayer gives clarity as to their perspective and earnest desire.

The coordinated rebellion against God of Psalm 2 was on display when nations united to crucify Jesus. "Why do they do this?" the psalmist asks. Acts 4 tells us it is because the plan of God had predetermined it would happen. Evil's plot was in vain. Our sovereign God leveraged evil to bring salvation to the very rebels plotting against Him and His Anointed One.

This depiction of God's sovereignty reminds us that evil cannot thwart the purposes of God. It instructs our perspective on the opposition we may face and the opposition being faced by brothers and sisters around the world. Evil opposition is not the greatest hindrance to the advancing Kingdom, but perhaps our own fear and silence are.

So, we ask God for boldness to witness in the face of threats, mistreatment, even death itself because God will not let evil stop His plans—so neither should we.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, I take great courage knowing Your plans will come to pass exactly as You have determined. I confess that sometimes I fear opposition, remain silent, and shrink back. I confess that sometimes I give evil too much credit and forget who is actually in power. Please help me to remember who is on the throne. Please give me boldness to proclaim Jesus to the lost and dying, hoping to see rebels become friends, no matter the cost to my own well-being. Amen.*



## MY SOVEREIGN GOD'S DESIGN: EMBRACING HIS DIVINE PLAN

EPHESIANS 1:11

It's the age-old question—do we really have free will or are we predestined to fulfill God's will? Too often we think the answer is at one end of the spectrum or the other, but somehow, as only God can do, the answer is, "Yes, it's both." We like neat, tidy boxes into which we pack our perfectly worded, thought-out answers. But God, in His perfect mystery, inhabits both spaces.

God's plan is for us to enter His Kingdom as babes who have nothing to offer on our own but rather are fully dependent on Him for every aspect of our care and nurture. With this mindset, it is easy to accept our place of inheritance. Just as an infant has no way to choose a family of origin, when we come to the Kingdom as infants to be reborn into a new spiritual way of life, we place ourselves in a vulnerable position—just as Jesus willingly did for us in the physical realm.

Without the Spirit, none of this could make sense, but it is He who nurtures our souls according to the Father's perfect plan for our lives, and as we yield to Him, He grows us and saturates us in God's perfect love (Rom. 8:26–38; 1 John 4:7–21). Confident and content in His love alone, like babes receiving the perfect nourishment and care, we thrive and are ready to fulfill the purpose He places in us.

What a beautiful plan He has!



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Precious Lord, thank You for adopting us as sons and daughters—imperfect beings somehow fulfilling Your perfect plan. And just as an infant fails to feed perfectly, spitting up from time to time, we recognize that You don't leave us hungry. Thank You for feeding our souls and holding us close to Your heart even through the messiness of our lives. May we find our confidence in Your love alone and may we yield to Your perfect plan today. May the lost and hungry world see in us that for which they are longing. To the praise of Your glorious name. Amen.*

## REVEALING THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY: WHO IS IN CHARGE HERE?

COLOSSIANS 1:16-17

Look at the chaos in the world! From wars to riots to out-of-control classrooms to governments, it seems that no one is in charge. We anxiously drink our coffee worrying about life's uncertainty. Our low view is deceiving.

Jesus is in charge! Paul tells us Jesus is sovereign at every level—spiritual, political, physical, and ecclesiastical. What threatens your peace? Everyone has a phobia. Is it a natural disaster? Jesus is in charge of nature. Are you afraid the government will disintegrate into chaos? Jesus will direct human history to serve His purpose. Jesus is the King of Kings. Jesus is not only sovereign, He is omnipotent and infinitely wise. He knows what to do and is able to do it.

American evangelist and author, Greg Laurie, said, “If you have a big God, you will have small problems. If you have big problems, then you have a small God.” Is Jesus first in your worldview? If Jesus really has supremacy, you can rest and not be fearful.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Sovereign Lord Jesus, teach my heart to fear only You, trust only You, and to rest in You alone. May Your omnipotence and sovereign control of my life and of human events fill my mind so that I trust rather than stress. I surrender my fears and anxious thoughts to Your Spirit of peace living within me. You are my King, my Protector, my Provider, my Healer, and my Lord. Amen.*

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 4 THE POWER OF GOD

*Revelation 4:10-11*

Creation is a profound demonstration of God's omnipotent power and His ability to create something new out of nothing. The intrinsic nature of creation not only demonstrates the infinite wisdom of the omniscient God, but also demonstrates the authoritative power of His Word, with which the entirety of creation was made. We read throughout the Scriptures about the manifestation of God's power time after time as He moves to fulfill His plan and purpose for His chosen ones. He is naturally supernatural. His Word reveals that He is above and beyond seasons, circumstances, human realities, and the forces of darkness. His power has no comparison.

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## THE SUPERNATURAL POWER THAT OVERRIDES HUMAN LIMITATIONS

GENESIS 18:14

“Is anything too hard for the Lord?” These are the words of today’s text, Genesis 18:14. In answer to this question, any good Christian would say “No!” But do we really posture ourselves like we believe this?

I think we could rightly say that our best experience of this truth, “Nothing is too hard for the Lord,” is predicated on us most fully abiding in Christ (John 15). Of course, the power of God is complete and is not dependent upon my abiding. However, my fullest experience of His strength is best appropriated as I abide in Jesus.

I was recently in a building that had a problem with pigeons. The owners had placed a realistic looking plastic owl in one window frame. I watched numerous pigeons cluster around the powerless owl and coo songs of laughter and disdain. Why? The owl looked good, it appeared to be real, but it was powerless. It lacked presence. It had no life. The pigeons discerned the truth quickly. Hence, the owl had no power nor effect.

Sometimes, when I fail to abide in Christ, I may look noble and spiritual, but a closer inspection reveals that the “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” presence is lacking from my life. Therefore, at those moments, I am a powerless pretender.

Let’s strive, not to serve more, but to abide more deeply. Then we will hear the echoes of Jesus, “With man this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26).



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Abba, we are grateful that You are “God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth” who also reigns in and through our lives. Thank You that the tapestry of Your power is woven through with the fullness of love, grace, joy, and goodness. We once again surrender ourselves to You, the Vine, acknowledging that “apart from You, we can do nothing.” Fill us afresh with the fullness of Your Holy Spirit. May our lives, like creation, be a billboard of Your power and presence. Amen.*

## THE MIGHTY POWER THAT ACCOMPANIES UNLIMITED UNDERSTANDING

PSALM 147:5

History seems to confirm the idea that “power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” This adage often rings true whether we’re talking about nineteenth century monarchs, lords, and emperors or twenty-first century politicians, celebrities, and CEOs. However, as Christians, we know that power doesn’t diminish human character but merely shines a spotlight on the incurable wickedness of the human heart apart from its Creator.

Likewise, God’s infinite power isn’t the cause of His incomparable goodness but a platform that showcases it! Creation is magnificent because its Creator is magnificent. His plan is perfect because He is perfect. His love never fails because He cannot fail. Every act of God—from creation to the Cross and from Eden to eternity—is fully and completely good because He is fully and completely good. Even in His silence, He is good. Even in His justice, He is good. Even in the storm, He is good.

If you’re like me, sometimes you wrestle with this. We struggle to resolve the perceived dissonance between God’s power and our seasons of pain. We don’t understand why, if He is infinitely good and powerful, He doesn’t show up in our difficult circumstance like a comic book superhero and save the day.

I’ve learned that those very moments are personal invitations from a loving Abba Father saying, “Come to me”—because it is only in that tension that we can experience the freedom of wholehearted surrender to His will and encounter the beauty of unwavering trust in His goodness.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, we rejoice in Your omnipotence and sovereignty. We find peace and comfort in knowing that Your absolute goodness holds the reigns of Your infinite power; and that unlike human power, Yours will never be corrupted. Thank You, Lord, for being our Good Shepherd. Help us remember in seasons of difficulty that You love us and are working powerfully on our behalf and for our good, despite what we may see or feel. We choose to surrender our will to Yours and to trust You without reservation. Our hope is sustained, and our strength is renewed in You alone. Amen.*

## THE DIVINE POWER THAT MAKES ANYTHING POSSIBLE

MATTHEW 19:26

It's easy to live our daily lives within the boundaries of the possible. In a world that celebrates the pragmatic and scoffs at the enigmatic, our temptation will be to fall in line.

Jesus meets a man in Matthew 19 who has done well within the boundaries of the possible. He has played by the rules and has carved out a wealthy life. The practical has afforded him comfort. Structure has loved him like a pillow after a long day.

He asks Jesus, "Teacher what must I do to have eternal life?" This man assumes that he just has to play by the right rules, on the right playing field. He quips to Jesus, "All these [laws] I have kept. What do I still lack?" He is asking for logical steps to obtain an eternity that defies logic. He desires the solace of a religious trellis, but Jesus offers the challenge of a relational wild vine. Jesus asks for his heart, not just his head. He tells him, "Sell what you possess and give it to the poor." This is impossible.

As Jesus grieves the chasm that the rich must bound to find surrender and death to self, His disciples interject, "Who, then, can be saved?" To this, Jesus replies, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Jesus makes an offering to those who follow Him. Leave the pragmatic and possible to the culture. Join team Jesus and live your life out of bounds.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*God, where do You want me to live out of bounds? Where do You want me to step into the impossible? Where can my obedience defy the sensible? I pray that, as Your child, the impossible and wild love that I exhibit would make the world curious. I pray that my faith would create questions so big that only You, God, could answer them. I submit to You that the challenges that stand in front of the Church seem impossible. At the same time, I confess that I serve a God who specializes in the impossible. Amen.*

## THE ETERNAL POWER THAT CREATES EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY

ROMANS 1:20

We use Romans 1:20 to point out that those who do not believe are without excuse. But there is also a sense that people who have not heard of Jesus can be drawn to a reality clearly seen. Their hearts can be moved to long for what they cannot fully grasp but know must be real and true. Creator God has “placed eternity in their hearts,” putting them in a position to respond. Ours is the privilege of making Jesus known among them!

Paul says the glory of creation is summed up in the reality that God’s eternal power and divine nature have been fully revealed. God is all-powerful, creating out of nothing. The Father spoke the Word in Jesus, and by the power of the Spirit, there was light. No lesser explanation gives justice to the reality of creation. No other explanation captures the awe of our existence!

God is sufficient. He is more than enough! There is order overwhelming chaos and beauty overwhelming brokenness. Creation is groaning under the curse of sin, but groaning with hope because, through Christ, all will be renewed to His glory!

God is sustaining. He is at work for the good of those who love Him, and the good He is working impacts the whole of creation. The Garden City is coming! The signposts are everywhere! And when we see it, we are overwhelmed with a cry of glorious praise. He is for us. His eternal power and divine nature tell us so!



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, there is much that burdens our hearts. Intercession for others and petition for ourselves is always on the tip of our tongues. Confession and direction come as we listen for Your Spirit’s still, small voice. But foundational to it all is our cry of indestructible praise for who You are and what You have done. Remind us today of specific examples in our lives of Your power, sufficiency, and sustenance. Remind us of Your love, compassion, and grace through creation! Give us a glimpse of worship around Your throne, when all is renewed. Amen.*

## THE LIFE-CHANGING POWER THAT CALLS NEW THINGS INTO EXISTENCE

ROMANS 4:17

Abraham didn't live to see the fullness of it, but he knew God was faithful. So, he believed it until the day he drew his last breath. He trusted the God who "gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not," or, as the KJV says, the God who "calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17).

We have a sight problem. We struggle to believe God unless we see. But may I remind us today that faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1, KJV).

Often, God speaks something for which He's calling us trust Him, and its fulfillment will come in a future generation. We may not live to see it, but God is true to His word. What He speaks is already done. It is ours to believe and trust Him, even if we don't live to see the fullness of His promise.

We are living evidence of God's promise to Abraham: "And [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen.15:6). Aren't you glad Abraham believed God?

Friend, God keeps His word. What has He spoken to you? Is it for now? Or is it for a future yet to be seen? Trust Him for what is not yet as though it already is—even if it is meant for future generations you won't see. They'll be glad you believed God.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*God, forgive us for being people who walk more by sight than by faith. You are who You say You are. You will do what You say You will do. You speak and it is done. Out of nothing, You create that which we do not have the capacity to imagine. So, we trust You. We remember the ancients were commended because of their faith. And so, we follow their lead and trust the God who calls into being things that were not as we hold onto Your multigenerational promises that advance Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.*



## THE RESURRECTING POWER THAT RAISES DEAD TO ETERNAL LIFE

EPHESIANS 1:18-22

A presidential inauguration is a substantial moment because it vests the power of the presidency in one person. You may be anticipating—or fearing—how this president will wield that power.

In his prayer at the end of Ephesians 1, Paul makes clear that the power of presidency pales in comparison to the power of God, which he describes as “incomparable and mighty” (Eph. 1:19). The same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at the right hand in the heavenly realms is no less active in our world today.

You may be thinking, *but Paul didn't know our situation*. That's true, but he knew the strength of worldly power all too well. He wrote this letter from a Roman jail. He was unjustly imprisoned in the world's most powerful empire based on trumped-up charges brought on by religious leaders who yearned more for worldly power than heavenly connection. Rather than dwell on his circumstances, however, Paul prayed for our hearts to be enlightened so we could know the hope, riches, and power that supersede earthly rulers, principalities, and authorities.

In what power are you placing your hope? The same power that resurrected Christ is reaching into people's lives so that they, too, can experience His resurrection power. The same power that placed all things under His feet may be preparing to renew the Church in ways we don't believe are possible. Let's pray in faith as we anticipate how God might move—and for eyes to see how He is already moving.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord, You alone are worthy of our praise. I pray that the eyes of my heart may be enlightened so that I may know the hope to which You have called me and the riches of Your glorious inheritance. Help me to focus on Your Kingdom. Guide me to renew my faith and trust in Your incomparable power daily. Amen.*

## THE REIGNING POWER THAT DRAWS A MULTITUDE TO HIS THRONE

REVELATION 19:6

Last year, we lived in an area of our country that experienced the totality of the solar eclipse. By the power of God's Word at the beginning of creation, He set into motion what was revealed to millions of people on that April 8, 2024. People came from all over the country to observe the wonder of God's creation and experience a one-time event in most people's lives. When the time of the totality arrived, it was so awe-inspiring that people began to cheer and shout with great joy. The response of the crowd was, "It was spectacular," "amazing," and "beyond anything I imagined."

In the same way that God's creation drew people to the solar eclipse, Jesus is drawing multitudes of people from all creation to Himself with great praise and applause. People will respond with even louder cheers and greater joy when encountering the living Christ. People traveled many miles to see the eclipse because they heard the stories of what the experience would be like. Our stories of the wonder and truth of Jesus from biblical accounts and our personal experiences with Jesus will draw people from every family, neighborhood, city, tribe, and nation to the throne of Jesus along with the 24 elders and multitudes of angels. Share your personal stories so others will also experience the power, awe, and wonder of the One who created the sun and the moon.



### REFLECTIVE PRAYER

*O Lord, Your Word teaches us that Your creation proclaims Your power, wonder, and glory. As we observe Your awesome creation each day, may we remember Your reigning power is drawing people from all over the world to Yourself. May we be prepared each moment to share our stories about Your presence, Your forgiveness, and Your victory in our lives. Then, we will rejoice when many people we know and when people we prayed for are part of the roaring crowd before Your throne. Amen.*

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 5 THE LOVE OF GOD

*1 John 4:16*

The Beatles famously said, "All you need is love." The reality is that this statement is truer than most realize, but our understanding of love is limited—it is often dependent and conditional. That is not the love that people need; instead, we need true love.

God's love displayed in Scripture and experienced in our lives goes beyond the love we know and experience on a daily basis. 1 John 4:16 says, "God is love." Love is who He is; it is His character. He came to this earth to display this perfect love, to show Himself, and to provide an opportunity for all of us to experience what we long for—love.

Consider Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

"All we need is love," and the good news is that love is given to us in Jesus Christ.

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## **GOD'S LOVE NEVER FAILS**

**PSALM 36:7**

My family and I live in a very interesting place—in just two-square kilometers, about 80 nationalities of immigrants from different parts of the world coexist. Every day I see how they have to fight against the injustice, poverty, uncertainty, and the challenges they face because they are living in a different culture than their own.

In Psalm 36:7, David shows us the great love that God has with each of us and how, as a good Father, He wants to take care of us in our pilgrimage through life. Life drives us to move faster and be more independent by supporting our daily decisions in our own capacities, not finding moments during the day to stop and ask God what is best for our lives or what we should do each day.

There is an invitation that David makes to us to stop the daily agendas about to explode, the media bombardment of social networks, and the excess of information we are exposed to every day. We need to recover those times alone with our Creator.



### **REFLECTION PRAYER**

*Father, help me to see Your love that reminds me of Your greatness and Your care for me. Help me to stay in You and do Your will in my life every day. Amen.*

## GOD'S LOVE DRAWS US IN

JEREMIAH 31:3

Our “pandemic pet” was a brown baby bunny. My daughter, Kelsey, carried tiny Floppy everywhere for weeks. Even after the bunny was fully grown and exiled to the backyard, the instant that someone left a door open, he would hop upstairs and hide under Kelsey’s bed. We never found Floppy under my son’s bed (in the same room) or in any other dark cubby-hole. Kelsey alone was Floppy’s safe space. Last year, when we lost Floppy, she was devastated. No new bunny could replace that special bond in her heart.

In *The Other Half of Church*, Jim Wilder describes this type of strong connection using the Hebrew word *hesed*, translated in the verse above as *unfailing kindness*. Jim explains that strong, deep, joy-filled attachments provide the same powerful chemical reaction in the thalamus of our brain as addictive drugs. Once an attachment forms between a mother and infant, for example, no one else can ever replace that bond. However, as we grow and mature, we can form new attachments—for example, when a new child joins the family.

Our Father longs to form a secure attachment with us reminiscent of the way that Kelsey bonded with Floppy. God draws us into a safe space with his *hesed*: all-encompassing, all-consuming, worth-more-than-life-itself love. How can we become fully, unconditionally attached to Him in a way that lights up our thalamus? How can we expand our network of secure attachments with other people, drawing upon God’s compelling love at the core?



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, we are so easily entertained and distracted, satisfied with short-term dopamine hits that leave us anxious and empty at the end of the day. We long for meaningful connection and peace. What is preventing us from forming a secure attachment to You? We will be silent now and listen.*

*Draw us with Your everlasting hesed love and unfailing kindness. Satisfy our core longing for attachment. From the overflow of Your love, may we reflect a deep, abiding joy towards one another. In You alone will we find our safe space and peaceful refuge. Amen.*

## GOD'S LOVE REJOICES OVER US

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

Zephaniah starts this passage by emphasizing the presence of God in our lives. It is a pretty special feeling knowing God wants to be with us. Zephaniah wrote this passage to reassure the faithful in Israel that they have not been forgotten but rather have been remembered in love by God Himself. Do we sometimes feel forgotten? Alone in our work in the world? Sometimes, God's presence does not feel close. This is an important reminder that we serve a God who loves us so much that He chooses to be in our midst.

Zephaniah goes further and says that God is not just with us, but He will fight for us victoriously, love us personally, and be exuberantly joyful about that love. When we are alone, defeated, fearful, and sad, Zephaniah reminds us that our God has come to reverse each of these with His love. We are no longer alone when we are in His presence. We are no longer defeated as we share in His victory. We no longer know fear when we feel His love. We are no longer sad when we share in His great joy. What are we struggling with today? Whatever it may be, God has come to relieve our burden with His great love for us.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord, we thank You for being a God who loves us. We thank You for not abandoning us to ourselves but offering Your love that covers all our inadequacies. When we stray from You in the future, please forgive us and bring us back with Your great love. Maranatha. Amen.*

## GOD'S LOVE IS FOR ALL

JOHN 3:16

The familiarity of this passage makes it easy to miss the challenge it presents to us. We are invited into eternal life with Christ now, to know His love and by His Spirit within us, make His love known. 1 John 3:16 tells us that “Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.” By saying this, John connects the act of Jesus laying down His life for us (John 10:11) to the call for followers of Jesus to lay down their lives for one another (1 John 3:16).

The invitation to follow Jesus requires daily surrender to His way. This is the essence of godliness, that we become like Him by doing the things that He does—first and foremost loving God, neighbor, and self by the grace of His Spirit within us. This means that John 3:16 is not only a statement of fact or a pithy summary about what God has done for us. It is also an invitation for us love the world the way God does—He gave the best of Himself in order to transform the world that was distant from Him, that even opposed Him. What about you? What would it look like for you to give of yourself, trusting that God might use that act of love to transform others? Who is He inviting you to love today in a tangible way?



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lead me, Lord, in loving the world as You do. Transform my thinking about those around me to see that You withheld (and withhold) nothing in order to redeem the world. As I receive the grace You have given me through Christ, guide me in reflecting and extending that same grace to others. Amen.*

## GOD'S LOVE IS OUR GIFT

ROMANS 5:5

“And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5).

God is a self-revealing God, and He is always eager to reveal His love. This is an invitation to an encounter with God, which is an encounter with love. Love is who He is. He can’t differ from unconditional love.

I often meet with those who are so burdened with shame that they cannot approach God. Together, we ask Jesus for a fresh revelation of God’s love for them. He never disappoints. I frequently witness the weeping that comes when God pours out His love into their hearts through the Holy Spirit. Honor replaces shame. Joy returns.

Likewise, when we teach our youth to hear God’s voice for the first time, the words they first hear and recognize are “I love you.”

In Acts 2:17–18, God declares He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh and they shall prophesy. This is an act of God’s character of love. He has made Himself known to us through His “rhema” words to our hearts, inviting relationship and intimacy.

The Holy Spirit is constantly communicating God’s character, truth, and will. We must actively participate in acknowledging and receiving God’s love. This means continually being filled with the Holy Spirit, the expression of His love, the promise of the Father.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Dear Father, thank You that You are love. I repent for not keeping myself in the love of Christ and falling into shame and fear. In Jesus’ name, now I receive a fresh revelation of Your love for me and the filling of Your Holy Spirit and joy. Thank You for hope and healing from shame and fear. Your perfect love casts out fear. Help me live daily knowing the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit for the glory of Your name, Jesus. Amen.*



## GOD'S LOVE IS NEAR

ROMANS 8:35-39

Nothing.  
Nothing can undo it; no one can take it away; no act can break it down.

Nothing.  
Not my past, mistakes from yesterday, failure still remembered, regret and sorrow.  
My past cannot separate me from Jesus' love.

Not my present morning threats, daily disappointments, missed opportunities.  
My present cannot separate me from Jesus' love,

Not my future; no weakness; no helplessness; no fading health.  
My future cannot separate me from Jesus' love.

Nothing inside—  
Not arrogance and pride, not anxious thoughts and fears, neither confusion nor discouragement.

Nothing outside—  
Neither enemies, nor persecutions, nor economic decay.

Nothing could, nothing can, nothing will separate me from Jesus' love.  
Nothing.  
Nothing.  
Nothing can separate me from Jesus' love.

Jesus' love transforms threatened weaklings into victors, failures and losses into triumphs, fretful servants into more than conquerors, weakness into perfected strength—all through the love of Jesus.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*I praise You for giving us the love of Jesus Christ. I praise You that nothing can separate us from that love. I praise You that I need not fear those realities that cannot come between me and Your love. Now, Lord, please teach me to live that love with the people I meet here so that they can know this love that conquers all. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## GOD IS LOVE

1 JOHN 4:8, 16

In his letter to the Early Church, John addresses false teachings and issues that they were facing. These included things like denying Christ as the Son of God and people who claimed to know Christ but didn't obey His commands. In addition, there were those who claimed to love God but had become indifferent to those in need—I wonder how this could have been? Yet, as I look around, I see how very real these issues are still today. Verse eight says, “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” If we claim to love God, we must believe in Christ, obey His commands, and love others.

“God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 John 4:16). He first loved us and sent His Son to be the sacrifice for our sin while we didn't yet love Him nor believe in Him. He, our Lord and Savior, is love. This should generate a response in us to run out into the world loving one another with servitude, knowing we are then abiding in God and He in us. This requires risk and doesn't promise to be easy; it will come with challenges and maybe even pain. God is powerful, and His love casts out fear! Where we live, the enemy deceives many with lies that bind people in fear to evil spirits. They make offerings to appease them. May they find Jesus, who made the ultimate sacrifice for them!



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Dear Father, I'm thankful that You manifested Your love through Your Son who paid the price for my salvation, that I may have eternal life through Him. Through Him, I have freedom, confidence, and an example of what true love is. I humbly admit and am open to the change that is needed that I may be more like Christ. Help me, Holy Spirit, to perfect Your love in me. I pray that in my deeds and in truth, I can lovingly obey Your commands and love others as You do so that others may see You in my everyday life. Amen.*

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 6

### THE GRACE AND MERCY OF GOD

*Ephesians 2:8-10*

The attributes of our great God are many, but His grace and mercy are perhaps two of His most generous. By His grace, and through His mercy, we have been saved—as He not only offers us salvation but secures it. Grace is a gift, and it is by His mercy that we receive such. The Greek word for grace is *χάρις*, meaning, “of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ.” The Greek word for mercy is *ἔλεος*, meaning, “kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them.” In so knowing the Lord, we recognize His kindness in loving us enough to offer Himself generously. May we love Him deeper as we know Him more.

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## ACCORDING TO HIS LOVE

PSALM 25:6-7

After hearing a sermon that reminded me of how often I fall short, I asked the Holy Spirit to reveal anything that was hindering my walk with God. Immediately, I sensed the Spirit saying, “I want you to bask in the Father’s love for you.” To those of us who struggle with shame, this answer may seem surprising. Shouldn’t He have told me to get my act together? But I believe that I heard the Lord correctly.

In Psalm 25:6–7, David pleads with God to remember His great mercy and love, saying, “Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good.” While reading the passage, it struck me that David made his petition before Jesus went to the Cross. As believers saved by grace, we don’t need to beg God not to remember our sinful ways. And, instead of asking Him to remember His mercy and love, we need to remind ourselves of how much we are loved by Him—in other words, to bask in His love.

To truly live in freedom, we must understand that the Cross changes everything. Because of what Jesus did, all our sin, all our shame, is under His blood . . . and God remembers it no more. When the Father looks at us, He doesn’t see our sins or failings; He sees His beloved child through eyes of grace and mercy.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Father, we thank You that You remember our sins no more. When we feel like we’ve failed You, remind us that the Cross changes everything. Instead of dwelling on our sins, may we be conscious of our righteousness in Christ. Help us to understand the Old Testament through the lens of the New Covenant, which is a testament to Your abundant grace and mercy. Remind us of our need to continually bask in Your love and meditate on Your goodness to us. When we do fall short, help us to freely receive Your forgiveness. Amen.*

## THE RICHNESS OF HIS GRACE

PSALM 145:8

Psalm 145 is filled with truths about who God is. David describes God's goodness, righteousness, trustworthiness, and faithfulness, and right in the middle of it all, David declares that the Lord is gracious. What does God's grace mean for us?

Well, we read in Ephesians 2 that His grace saves us; it moves us from death to life. In Titus 2:11–12, we discover that His grace that offers us salvation also leads us to holiness by teaching us to live “self-controlled, upright, and godly lives.” Later in Titus 3:7, we learn that His grace justifies us “so that we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.” And in 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul explains the sufficiency of God's grace to empower us and help us in our own trials and weakness. This only scratches the surface of references to God's grace in Scripture. There is always more to be learned and written regarding His grace.

Psalm 145 is a passage that I have come back to over and over again in my life when times are difficult and I need to be reminded of who God is, and I always feel God's invitation to rest in His character. Let us remember that when it comes to grace, it is God's job to do the work, and it is our joy to rest in the truth that He is gracious and that He has poured out His saving, sanctifying, all-sufficient, and eternal life-giving grace on us.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Gracious Father, You are so good. May we never stop learning as You teach us more about the richness of Your grace for us. Thank You for saving us by Your grace, for doing what we could not do and blessing us with the hope of eternal life with You. Help us to allow Your grace to lead us to repentance and holiness. Show us how Your grace is sufficient for us in our weakness. Teach us how to rest in Your grace as we go throughout our days. Thank You for never leaving us. Amen.*

## THE FULLNESS OF HIS DWELLING

JOHN 1:14

What a beautiful story . . . the Creator of the universe, who so intimately designed every part of the cosmos, also created us. Our God decided to come into our culture and way of being to empathize with you and me. His love for His children led Him to come to live among us. Even though our context was one of suffering, He still came. I love that He didn't just come in part—instead, He came fully.

A whole person, conceived by God but held in the womb of a young woman to grow, Jesus relied on His creation to take care of Him (His humility is clearly greater than ours). He came as one of us, clothed in flesh and bearing the weight of suffering—our God lived with His people. He endured the full human experience: loss, rejection, embarrassment, love, and connection. Jesus bore all of these things to give all of humanity the image of the invisible God. Not only did He reveal to us His image, but He offered the invitation to be with Him.

His invitation is not just for us to come to Him, no; instead, He comes to dwell with us and in us. He conquered all of humanity's sins so He can now live inside humanity. We are His home; our body, soul, and spirit all hold the presence of the God who made us. How great is our King, who came to be a missionary for you and me.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Jesus, the Living Word, we take a moment to respond to You. You gave Your time, blood, and grief to share in the fellowship of suffering with Your children. Through Your suffering, You demonstrated Your heart to draw all people into an intimate moment-by-moment relationship with Yourself. Jesus, as we reflect on our own stories, we invite Your companionship into the different seasons of our lives—times of joy and loss, peace and chaos, rejection and adoption, knowing in all those experiences, You are with us. We thank You for Your nearness. Amen.*

## THE SACRED GIFT OF GRACE

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

In today's passage, Paul beautifully communicates the truth of God's grace.

Grace is God's unmerited favor and kindness extended to us, despite our shortcomings and failures. It is a foundational aspect of salvation! We don't deserve it and can't earn it ourselves, yet He offers it to us in abundance.

Understanding the depths and the richness of His grace can transform our perspective on everything around us. This frees us from the burden of trying to earn our salvation ourselves and instead invites us into a deeper relationship with Him. God's grace is limitless, reaching into the depths of our brokenness and offering us redemption when we turn to Him. Because of the abundance of His grace, we can have assurance that no matter how far we've strayed, God's love will remain steadfast and true. In times of struggle, His grace sustains us and can draw us closer to Him. Even within moments of triumph, His grace can serve as a reminder to us of our need to depend on Him.

If we reshape our perspective to be aware of them, we can see continual evidences of God's grace to us each and every day—in the big things, but also in the small, everyday things that are easy for us to miss. Regardless of the season that we are in, we can trust and appreciate God's grace as evidence of His kindness, mercy, and love for us and His desire for us to turn to Him in response!



### REFLECTION PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank You for the richness of Your grace that knows no bounds. Help us to grasp the depth of Your love and to live in the freedom that comes from knowing we are saved by grace through faith. May Your grace empower us to walk in obedience daily, and may our hearts overflow with gratitude for what You have done for us. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we want to exhibit Your grace to others as vessels of Your love and mercy in a world that is in desperate need of You. Amen.*

## HIS THRONE OF GRACE

HEBREWS 4:15-16

Grace—our personal invitation to enter the presence of God with confidence. A gift won for us by Jesus, defeating everything that, if it wasn't for Him, would prevent us from running into the Throne Room like a little child. Our ability to approach Him is not the result of any adequate measure of faith we muster up throughout our lifetime but is rather due to His steady, immovable, never-changing grace.

We have individual provision of His grace because Jesus knows exactly what we experience and exactly what we need, for He Himself has walked through everything we face and more. Because “we do not have a great high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses” (Heb. 4:15), the grace available to us in Jesus is not a distant handout but is instead daily, personal, and sustaining. Jesus has met every temptation yet resisted in every way, living without sin so that we can know freedom to the fullest—our complete, unhindered access to the throne of God, which we visit to receive His mercies extended to us anew every morning. If we have accepted His gift of grace that brings us there, nothing has the ability to take away our access to His throne—for there exists nothing stronger than the blood of Jesus.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

*Lord God, thank You for Your good gift of grace that is personal and abundant. Thank You that You are not distant, unrelatable, or separated but instead intimate, empathetic, and connected. Help me to have confidence to approach Your throne like a child, bringing every concern, request, and joy to You. I pray that I would be daily more in awe of the grace that You lavish on me and that I would be daily more desirous to enter Your Throne Room with boldness. Amen.*



# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## **BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS**

### **RUTH AMOH**

Ruth has served faithfully in the local church for over 20 years in multiple ministries. She has her master's degree in counseling from Crown College and is a mental health professional. Ruth grew up in the Hmong District Alliance churches and has a passion for bridging theology with mental health.

### **ERIN BELL**

Erin is married to Amissha, and they are the parents of one son. Erin serves as the lead pastor at Hope Alliance Bible Church in Maple Heights, Ohio, and as an adjunct professor at Crown College Graduate School of Online Ministry.

### **SUSAN BOUTERSE**

Susan is the pastor of spiritual formation at Anchor Church in Tacoma, Washington, and oversees the Anchor Internship and Anchor School of Discipleship and Ministry. She and her husband, Phil, have three grown children and love to be with friends around the table or outdoors in the Pacific Northwest.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## HANNAH CASTRO

Hannah serves as the story & editorial manager in Development for The Alliance. She is passionate about telling stories of God's goodness—of what He's doing in and through His people and the world. She believes that sharing testimonies is vital Kingdom work. Her and her husband, Ciro, live in Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

## ISAAC CHARLES

Isaac serves as the program manager for Church Ministries. He is a consecrated and ordained official worker with the Ohio Valley District, pastoring a church plant called Jubilee Intercultural Alliance Church in Columbus, Ohio. He has been married to his wife, Leena, for 15 years, and they have two boys, Brayden and Bryan. They immigrated from India to the U.S.

## ENID CHERRY

Enid and her husband, Sean, live near Birmingham, Alabama. They have two daughters—one starting high school and the other finishing college. They enjoy coffee, playing games, and watching Alabama football. Roll tide! Enid now serves as office manager for The Alliance South.

## JOY COCHRAN

Joy is a consecrated woman in ministry (CWM) who serves with marketplace chaplains at Hord Family Farms in Bucyrus, Ohio. Married since 1991, she and Joel have four grown children, two daughters-in-law, and two grandsons. They enjoy hosting and leading their young adult small group and serving at North Woodbury Alliance together.

## MYRNA CRAIG

Myrna is a licensed minister with the C&MA at Reach City Church in Cleveland, Ohio, where she serves as the director of youth. She is passionate about helping young people understand the truths of God's Word and build a firm foundation in Christ Jesus.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## JARVIS CROSBY

Jarvis is married to Sharon, and they have three adult kids and nine grandkids. He serves as professor of cross-cultural studies and TESOL at Toccoa Falls College in Georgia and as a Candidate Recruitment and Development representative for The Alliance. Jarvis also served as an international worker with The Alliance in the Philippines for 18 years.

## MATT CYR

Matt lives in southeast Wisconsin with his wife, Elyse, and two young children. He serves as a workplace chaplain with Corporate Chaplains of America. His passion is to lead and equip the local church to fulfill the Great Commission of King Jesus.

## JULIE DAUBÉ

Julie is passionate about seeing the Lord reawaken His people to the work of the Holy Spirit and restore the rightful place of the supernatural to His Church. She lives with her husband, Alex, in Columbus, Ohio.

## CLAIRE ELROD

Claire is an accredited Alliance worker currently in Grace Church's Greenhouse program in Cleveland, Ohio. She is from South Carolina and graduated from Toccoa Falls College in 2023 with a bachelor's in children and family ministries and a minor in Bible and theology.

## ANDRE F.

Andre and his wife, along with their three children, are serving with CAMA Services in an agricultural capacity in Southeast Asia. Their passion is to serve people holistically, meeting their greatest felt needs while bringing the hope of Jesus to them.

## PABLO GARCÍA

Pablo is married to Kim, and together they are raising three children under four years old. He serves as the executive pastor of global and local partnerships at Princeton Alliance Church in New Jersey. This role highlights his passion for fostering connections—within both the local and global community.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## **JULIE GRIFFIN**

Julie is the USN chaplain spouse of LCDR Stephen Griffin, serving the military at The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia. She is also a hospital chaplain contractor at Mary Washington. She has been a wife to Stephen since 2007, and they have four adventurous children. She is passionate about loving God and people well.

## **DANO H.**

Dano is an emergency nurse practitioner who works as a chief nursing officer at a hospital in the Middle East where he also directs a nursing school. He has been married for 14 short years to Tara, and together they have seven children ages 2-11.

## **JEFF AND KATE H.**

Jeff and Kate are the field director couple for the Holy Land field of the C&MA where they and their three children have lived and served since 2014.

## **REBECCA H.**

International worker and author of *Rachel's Dance*, Rebecca is passionate about heart healing and leading others to encounter more of Jesus. She and her husband serve with marketplace ministries in Africa.

## **ERIK HANSEN**

Erik lives in Cleveland, Ohio, with his wife, Jaynie, and their two kids. He serves as a pastor of technical arts and has a heart to equip technical and creative people for the church and for the Kingdom, both locally and globally.

## **BAO HER**

Bao is a co-director for aXcess at the National Office and an assistant vice president for Alliance Missions. Before taking on her current role at the National Office in May 2022, she and her husband served as international workers in Asia for 18 years.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## SCOTT KUBIE

Scott serves as the president of Orchard Alliance.

## MONICA LAMBERSTON

Monica is married to Navy Chaplain Kyle Lamberston. They have been married for 10 years and have two beautiful children. They were recently reassigned from Cherry Point, North Carolina, to Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan. Monica and Kyle enjoy pouring into the lives of service members and their families wherever God leads them.

## BURT MANCHESTER

Burt served in The Alliance for 34 years with his wife, Jan. His pastoral ministry mostly involved working with children and families. As a retired pastor, he still enjoys interacting with children as a school bus driver. In his free time, he likes golfing and spending time with his grandkids.

## JOHN MCDOUGALL

A West Point graduate, John was serving in Iraq in 2003 and heard God's call to become an Army chaplain. Since 2010, John has been Alliance chaplain, serving God and soldiers around the world. John and his wife, Bree, have three teenage children and plan to remain in Alaska after military service.

## JEFF MILLER

Jeff is the district superintendent of the Ohio Valley District. He lives in Lexington, Kentucky, with his wife, Pam. They have served together in Alliance ministries for nearly 40 years. They have two married daughters and two delightful grandchildren.

## TIM MILLER

Tim and his wife, Marlene, have served together with The Alliance for over 40 years. Thirty-seven of those years have been in the local pastorate and another four in a district-related capacity. They are the parents of four daughters and three sons-in-law and the delighted grandparents of six grandchildren . . . so far!

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## **TERI N.**

Teri is passionate about using stories to connect people to Jesus and one another. She enjoys facilitating activities for international worker families, helping them navigate transitions and emotions. Teri and her family serve with aXcess in Latin America. She also leads the TCK Advocates, an Alliance Missions member care team.

## **DAVID PHAM**

David is an Alliance Theological Seminary graduate and an English ministry pastor in the Vietnamese District. He is passionate about empowering the next generation of ministry leaders and enjoys the intricacy of caring for his indoor houseplants while enjoying a cup of espresso.

## **KEVIN PIES**

Kevin is the executive director for the Alliance Chaplain Ministries for military and federal chaplains. He is a retired U.S. Army Chaplain Colonel, a graduate of Crown College (1982); Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1987 (MDiv); and an Army War College Fellow Graduate of the U.S. Institute of Peace (2014). He served in many assignments throughout the U.S. and abroad. Kevin is a Montana native and is married to Elisiane (Lisi) Indicatti-Pies, a Brazilian native.

## **JEFF PRICE**

After spending five years in the combat arms, Jeff became a chaplain and is currently serving in the Army Reserves. He and his wife, Megan, live in Indiana and have one daughter. Jeff is passionate about helping others grow deeper in their faith.

## **DE'ANDRE RALSTON**

De'Andre (PD) lives in South Jersey with his wife and three children. In his spare time, PD loves serving as a first responder and playing games with his family. He has been affiliated with the C&MA family for almost 16 years.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## LISA RAMSEY

Native Montanan, Lisa joined the Missoula Alliance Church as a young adult where she met and married Ron Ramsey. She has her PhD in counselor education and supervision. After serving for 15 years with CAMA in Kosovo, Ron and Lisa now co-direct CAMA at the National Office in Ohio.

## DREW RINEHARD

Drew and his wife, Anna, live in Lexington, Kentucky. He is in his final year of leadership development residency at First Alliance Church, where he works in young adult ministry. He and Anna are pursuing missions with the C&MA.

## AMY ROEDDING

Amy is passionate about helping the next generation step into their ministry calling in the Alliance family. She serves as the director for Candidate Recruitment and Development for The Alliance, and through her role, oversees both men and women being developed and placed for Kingdom work in The Alliance. She enthusiastically pursues helping women find their place of ministry. Amy also teaches spiritual formation for Crown College's online ministry program. Amy and her husband live in Pataskala, Ohio.

## JIM SAPPPIA

Jim, with his wife, Kathy, and their three children, served with aXcess for 20 years in Thailand and in a CAC country. They currently live in Pickerington, Ohio, where Jim is the director for Global Link.

## EMILY SMITH

Emily graduated with her bachelor's in English from Iowa State University in 2021 and is currently an editor/copywriter at the Alliance National Office. She resides in Columbus, Ohio, where she enjoys serving her church and is surrounded by a beautiful, loving community.

## MIGUEL T.

Miguel and his wife serve with aXcess in a creative-access country.

# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## MARK TAUBE

Mark grew up as an Alliance missionary kid in Argentina and Ecuador. He now serves as a church planter and field director with The Alliance in Montevideo, Uruguay, along with his wife, Kora, his three kids, and an amazing team of Alliance international workers.

## TOUA THAO

Toua is the director of NextGen ministries for the Hmong District. His friends call him “Susan’s husband.” His three sons, Ezekiel (18), Israel (17), Psalmist (3), and daughter, Shiloh (10), call him a “dinosaur.” God calls him “extra grace required.” Toua longs to see a next generation of believers rise up in the church.

## JUSTIN THORNTON

Justin and his wife, Adreanne, have four kids and currently live in Toledo, Ohio. Justin is the former director of multiplication for the Great Lakes District of the C&MA. He longs to see the love of Jesus famous in every community everywhere.

## CHUCK TYREE

Chuck is lead pastor of Norwich Alliance Church in Connecticut. A Norwich police chaplain for 10 years, Chuck is a law enforcement council instructor and critical incident management team member. He wrote, *James, The Righteous Life God Requires* and is a husband and father.

## SHARON VANVLYMEN

Sharon is a wife, daughter, and mom of four. When in high school, her youth leaders had a huge impact on her. She felt God ask her to work with students in the local church, and it has been the best decision.

## BOB W.

Bob pastored a C&MA church in Bellevue, Nebraska, for eight and a half years, taught theology and New Testament at Toccoa Falls College, and since 2008, has been teaching Christian studies and Bible at Forman Christian College University in Lahore, Pakistan.



# BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

## SCOTT WAKELEY

Scott is dedicated to equipping, encouraging, and empowering youth workers to lead the next generation. After 30 years of local church ministry experience in a diverse metropolitan church, he stepped into shaping and leading the LIFE Conference and Alliance Youth. Scott has been married to June for 37 years. They have five married adult children and are blessed with 11 grandchildren with more on the way.

## KELVIN WALKER

Kelvin is Doni's husband, his kids' father, his kids' spouses' father-in-law, and his granddaughters' Buelo. The beloved son of Sarah and the late Rev. Oscar Walker, he lives in New Jersey and loves being the district superintendent of the Metro District. Most of all, he is Abba's child.

## ADAM WILLIAMS

Adam is a 20-year youth ministry veteran currently serving as interim lead pastor at Kenmore Alliance Church in Buffalo, New York. He loves Jesus, his wife, Molly, and his daughter, Mae. He is an avid board game nerd, Buffalo Bills fan, and Kan Jam try-hard.