

Good News Daily

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Sunday, May 16

Psalm 66 *He made a dry path through the Red Sea, and his people went across on foot.* (v.5b NLT)

I woke up the other night to a storm of biblical proportions—the kind you discuss with your neighbors the next day. Thunder angrily roared and boomed over what seemed like miles. Lightning struck down trees all over our little town. The rain relentlessly fell in thick sheets. Most ominous was the howling wind. Having lived in the south, I experienced a couple of hurricanes that were harrowing. This wind seemed mightier and filled with the holy power of the God of the universe. I was scared lying awake, listening to the storm rage outside.

My thoughts went to God using the wind to create a dry path through the Red Sea to provide a way for his people to escape from the Egyptians. I started to sing the old hymn *How Great Thou Art*:

*O Lord my God,
When I in awesome wonder
Consider all
The works Thy Hand hath made,
I see the stars,
I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout
The universe displayed...*

And I realized it was the Lord revealing his power throughout the world, and I was no longer scared but hopeful and comforted.

Ezekiel 3:16-27; Psalm 67; Ephesians 2:1-10; Mathew 10:24-33, 40-42

Monday, May 17

Hebrews 6:1-12 *So come on, let's leave the preschool finger-painting exercises on Christ and get on with the grand work of art. Grow up in Christ!* (v.1 The Message)

My children are young adults. They grew up in the church and gave their lives to the Lord as children. They know the primary colors of their faith. They have been prayed for, prayed over, and received nuggets of spiritual teaching and wisdom from us. All of that will continue, but the next part is on them.

They need to own their faith. They need to study their Bibles, pray, and worship—to develop their artistic skills to continue the analogy. There is so much more to being a follower of Christ than just the basics of forgiveness and salvation. Growing in your faith is walking every day with the Lord—all the triumphs and struggles, the dreary days and rough roads. As one of my children was preparing to move away to begin graduate school, we discussed finding a church to be involved in as a place to serve, grow, and make friends—like working on painting the bigger picture.

I love the image of our lives becoming a grand work of art as we grow in our faith!

Ezekiel 4:1-17; Psalm 89:1-18; Luke 9:51-62

Tuesday, May 18

Hebrews 6:13-20 *Then Abraham waited patiently, and he received what God had promised.* (v.15 NLT)

God's promise to Abraham in verse 14 was, "I will certainly bless you, and I will multiply your descendants beyond number." "Then Abraham waited patiently, and he received what God had promised."

Let's break down this short but rich sentence. Waited—God said He would do something, but it didn't happen immediately or perhaps when Abraham thought it should. God's timing is always better than ours. Patiently—Trusting that God would do what He said He would do even when it didn't seem

possible. Abraham certainly could not imagine how his descendants would grow beyond him and Sarah since they had no children. Received—Abraham did nothing to cause or help God’s promise to happen. God gave it to him. God gave Abraham what He said he would give him in such abundance. It is the reason we are here today. Promised—God loves us so much and sees us as worthy of making commitments to. He gives His word to us and follows through.

It’s such a simple sentence but means so much more. Chew on that for the rest of the day.

Ezekiel 7:10-15, 23b-27; Psalms 97, 99, 100; Luke 10:1-17

Wednesday, May 19

Luke 10:17-24 *At that same time Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit...* (v.21)

Jesus found joy in the Holy Spirit by hearing the victories of the disciples He sent out in the Lord’s service and in how the Lord was working. I am filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit for many reasons. When I see God working through circumstances in my life and being victorious or when I hear how He has answered someone’s prayer. Hearing that someone has given their life to God fills me with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so does serving with brothers and sisters in Christ. Working together creates a bond that is like no other. Praying over someone or being prayed for brings the joy of the Holy Spirit, as does when the Lord speaks to me.

My heart swells with gratefulness and thanksgiving. My eyes fill with tears of delight. My mouth bears a mile-wide grin, and I want to share that joy with others.

Jesus was all God and all man. The idea of sharing the feelings of joy in the Holy Spirit truly blesses me.

Ezekiel 11:14-25; Psalms 101, 109:1-130; Hebrews 7:1-17

Thursday, May 20

Psalm 105:1-22 *Keep your eyes open for GOD, watch for his works; be alert for signs of his presence.* (v.4 The Message)

Have you seen those pictures meant to bend your mind? They’re usually of an object and are in two colors. When you look at them at first, you see one image. Shift your focus or look away, then return to the image, and you may see something different that you missed the first time.

At first glance I can look at life one way, but when I ask the Lord to see people or circumstances through His eyes, I often see something very different. Sometimes when I look through God’s eyes, I see how He has moved, which I hadn’t seen before and it brings me such joy. Another time I asked the Lord to see through His eyes and He reminded me that He loved a person I was struggling with, and He was working in their life as well. It changed how I dealt with that person. It can be a challenge, but it draws me closer to the Lord in the end.

Lord, please open my eyes to see You moving and working in my life and the lives of others. Shift my focus, so I can see the world as You do.

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 19-32; Hebrews 7:18-28; Luke 10:25-37

Friday, May 21

Luke 10:38-42 *But Martha was distracted with all her preparations...* (v.40 NASB)

When I was on a church staff, Easter week was one crazy busy time. Four services to plan all with extra unique creative elements to bring people closer to the Lord in their Easter experience, as well as a cross made of flowers. It was exhausting, and like Martha’s dinner party preparations, it drew my attention away from my Lord. I would get distracted by the worship services I was preparing for others.

One Easter week, I took an hour away from worship service preparations to work out. I was running at the gym, worship music coming through my headphones, when I had an Easter moment with the Lord. I already knew Jesus as my Lord and Savior, but I needed to go back to him and celebrate what Easter means. I had a private celebration between the Lord and me.

Service is so important. It is one of the spiritual gifts. Preparing meals for loved ones is equally important. Just don’t get so distracted that you miss Jesus in the room.

Ezekiel 34:17-31; Psalm 102; Hebrews 8:1-13

Saturday, May 22

Psalm 108 *And for the sake of the one you love so much, reach down and help me—answer me!* (v.6 The Message)

These words echo a text exchange I had yesterday with a friend. She recently gave her life to the Lord and is just beginning her relationship with Jesus.

I felt a prompting from the Holy Spirit to reach out to her and ask if there was anything specific I could pray about for her. She quickly responded to my text and said she needed help with her anxiety and fears. Stress is so prevalent amid this pandemic. “Reach down and help me—answer me!”

So, I typed my prayer for her. I asked God to wrap his arms around her and remind her that He loved her and would take care of her. Then I sent the text to her and forwarded the devotion I read that morning about not fearing the future alone. It was evident in her reply back to me that God’s peace had come over her. He answered her cry to Him.

Ezekiel 43:1-12; Psalm 107:33-43; Hebrews 9:1-14; Luke 11:14-23

by Mara McClain

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