

Genesis 22:14 ESV

So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Don't ever forget that the Lord will provide for you! This text is a reminder that the Lord will provide, even though Abraham was given a hard and tough task the Lord didn't stop watching, and when God saw that Abraham was willing to do whatever God told him, that was when the Lord told Abraham don't kill your son, because God knew that He could trust Abraham, especially since Abraham didn't hold Isaac from God!

God is speaking to us today, that we don't need to hold back from God but whatever we have we need to let it go and give it back to God, because when we hold it for us and not give it back to God we show that we love it more than we love God. Our love for the Lord should never be put into question, and we should always have faith in the Lord to believe that no matter what we have or don't have, the Lord will always make a way somehow!

The Lord will provide, but you have to take your hands off of it and give it to the Lord. What are you struggling to let go of, because you still want to be in control but you have forgotten that the Lord will always be in control! Don't stress yourself out by trying to have in all under your wraps, the Lord is telling us today that He will provide for us but it is also on us to trust Him with all that we have!

Let it go and trust in the Lord, and believe that the Lord will work it out. God will always work it out, and God won't leave you hanging because He watches us every day, and because the Lord watches over us, we are never without because the Lord always comes through, and because of that keep the faith knowing that with the Lord there is nothing that you can't overcome because the Lord will always give you the power to stand and to not fail!



Proverbs 16:18-19 ESV

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. [19] It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

As we walk with the Lord, we have to make sure that we are walking with the Lord, because a bad attitude doesn't exhibit the Lord, and every day we have to be humble, we should be grateful, and we should never be arrogant because the Lord doesn't have any problem with humbling you and taking things away to check you!

You should never have a negative attitude when God has been good to you, and as we look at our lives and being a child of God, don't ever think that you have it all, that you have all the answers, and that you are better than somebody else. We all have been blessed by the Lord, but we should never let what we have cause us to look down on anybody or disrespect each other!

We should love each other, we should help each other, and we should always have each other's back because we are a family. It should also be an attitude of love, and love is being kind to each other, love is helping others that are dealing with a pain, a burden, or a crisis, love is about picking each other up, love is about showing kindness to each other, and love is about displaying the love of Christ in our lives!

Be thankful everyday with the life God has given you, and the blessings God has given you, and with that don't ever think that you can escape the penalty of mistreatment! Never put yourself in that position, but always be that light of the world and that kind spirit, to where somebody else is able to see God in you, to where somebody is inspired by you, and to where somebody else is following the right road of God's goodness!

Be a builder for Righteousness and not a bulldozer of Ungodliness!



<u>Psalm 23:1 ESV</u> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

This text is a reminder that the Lord is our Shepherd, and within this text this is a beautiful picture of the Lord, this is a beautiful picture of joy, hope, love, peace, and providing because the Lord is a Father is a Father that will never not provide for us. I know sometimes, you feel down, you feel despondent, and you feel uneasy but this text is a reminder the Lord is with you every day!

As we look at our lives, aren't you glad that the Lord is your Shepherd because when you have this life that we live we have to grow closer to God, and not just grow in the Lord but we begin to see how much we need the Lord, and when I see that God is my Shepherd and I don't need to compare my life to somebody else. I know the Lord will take care of me, whether it is struggling in my finances, struggling to pay a bill, struggling to get into a school, struggling to get a medical procedure, and struggling to get groceries.

We all face a struggle, and we all face some moments of despair, we all face some moments of pain or even burdens but we have to always know that the Lord is my Shepherd. He is my Shepherd in good days, in bad days, in tight moments, in times when I am struggling with pain, struggling with forgiveness, struggling with darkness, struggling with burdens, and struggling with hurts but the Lord is our Shepherd and He gives us what we need!

The Lord gives us all this confidence and this reminder that He will take care of us, and because He will take care of us I know that there is nothing the world can offer me that God doesn't already have, and God will give me more than what the world will, and that it is why I know that He is my Shepherd, He is a Shepherd that loves, that will provide, that won't leave you, that will keep me & always watch out for you!



Genesis 2:7 ESV

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

I've always been intrigued by this text, but it is also a reminder and a blessing to us all that we have been birthed by God, we have been born by God, and God has breathed life into us. We have been given life by the Lord, and you know to understand that should be something that makes us always thankful and grateful because the Lord didn't have to breathe life into us but He did!

All of us have breath to live, and you know that should inspire us to make the best out of every day that we live, we should make the best out of every situation, and we should never waste our breath but we should improve daily. That is the blessing with life, and the Lord has given us His breath, and because of that I don't need to waste time with anything or anyone that is not keeping me alive.

Man couldn't do what God has done, because man is limited and we have our limitations. Man might have athletic ability, drawing capabilities, the ability to lift 500 lbs, the ability to drive a race car at 200mph, but even with that man can not give life. The only giver and taker of life is the Lord, and because the Lord is the giver of life I should give the Lord my best, and should not stop but He deserves my best.

As you go through this week, give the Lord your best and don't take anything for granted but you need to give the Lord your best and watch how the Lord will take care of you! You don't have to live a life of regrets if you don't want to, but you got to get up and you have to stand firm and have the will and determination to make sure that you are living every day without any delay or pause because God is our giver!



James 1:13-14 ESV

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. [14] But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

If you know that it is not right, why do it? We are reminded in this text that the Lord won't be tempted with evil, and the Lord won't tempt us. We have to understand that we can't blame the devil for some of our choices, if we put ourselves in those situations because every door that is open isn't the door that you need to walk through!

Temptation is real, temptation can make you think that you are invincible, and temptation can look pleasing until you taste it. It is a reality that we need to watch what we do, we have to watch the way we go, and we have to watch what we play with because you can't play with fire and expect to not be burned. Like our Parents used to say: "Don't play with matches because you can set the house on fire."

Have we set our spirits, our lives, and our hearts on fire because we have played with the fire of temptation, and when you play with the fire of temptation for too long it can send you down the wrong path! God is reminding us today that we need to watch what we do and watch how we follow the Lord. We can't follow the Lord, and play with the devil because it doesn't work that way!

Watch what you do, and as you continue to follow the Lord we are reminded in this text that we don't need to follow the temptations that can make us fall, and we don't need to ever put ourselves in any situation that will make us regret what we do. Don't entertain what you don't want, what you don't need, and what is not going to bring you a blessing but just cause you to have more trouble than rewards!



Nehemiah 6:3-4 ESV

And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down.

Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" [4] And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner.

Michael Jordan once said this: "'I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying." I believe that to be true, when we are looking at this text and not just our lives, that we all have to make sure that we continue to do the work. Don't ever stop being strong, being determined, and having the courage to continue to press on and move forward.

We live in times where people try to stop us, people try to make us quit, and people can even try to discourage us but that is not something that we can afford to do. We all should have the faith in the Lord, that makes us not give in to anything or anybody that will try to push us to a place of failure and not having victory!

That is where it comes to a personal responsibility that you have to decide that you won't quit, you won't give in, and you refuse to give in because you have made the choice and the decision to always go higher, to always go forward, and to always improve and give your best effort! Don't ever stop giving your best effort, but whatever you trust the Lord and allow the Lord to give you the words that you need to always have a strong and successful life!

So it depends on you, and it is on you because if you want it then go get it and stop being a pushover but make sure that you are following the Lord, and make sure that you are staying in the race. Do it, and watch how the Lord will bless you and watch how the Lord will set you free from fears, enemies, or doubts because you choose to not quit but to keep going forward!



Psalm 97:7,9 ESV

All worshipers of images are put to shame, who make their boast in worthless idols; worship him, all you gods! [9] For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

Worship is real because the Lord is real! As you live for the Lord there is something that should be erased from you and that is "Worship." We should always have an attitude of worship, and we should also be ready to praise the Lord because we should never enter into the house of God, or just wake up with a lack of gratitude to God.

One thing we should always remember though is.... "Don't Put Anyone Ahead Of God" That is something that you do see, that there is idol worship that is around us because people will praise a Politician, praise a Athlete, praise their achievements, praise their bank account, or praise other things ahead of God. We need to always make sure that we are giving the Lord more of our praise, than we give anything or anybody else.

When you are with the Lord, and when you really believe in the Lord there is nothing that should get in the way of praising the Lord. When we put things or people ahead of God, we are disrespecting God and it is a slap in the face of God, because how can we think about putting anything ahead of God when God has done everything for us!

Always have a grateful heart and a grateful spirit, and when you have that kind of spirit that will take you far, and you will also see that when I praise the Lord my faith is renewed, my spirit is replenished, and my joy is restored because I know there is nobody in the same class of the Lord, and nobody can stop my praise from happening and going forth!

PRAISE GOD!!!!



Mark 11:24 ESV

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

The Late Great Theologian E. M. Bounds spoke it this way: "What the church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men who the Holy Spirit can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer."

This is true for us as believers, that it is important for us to pray and that we should be dedicated believers in the power of prayer and seeking the face of the Lord. How often are you praying, and are you praying enough or are you just praying when you decide. Prayer should always be a focus of determination to grow with the Lord, and your spirit and walk with the Lord.

Don't neglect the power of prayer, and there is something that we have to have in our possession as followers and believers of the Lord, that we should have that desire of prayer, we should thirst in prayer, we should be hungry for prayer, and we should always have the spirit of praying for our Church, Pastor, and each other because we can't be a strong Church and have no prayer.

That should be our focus and our desire, and when we walk with the Lord we need to always make sure that we are praying for the power of the Lord to always circulate and have a mode of prayer that makes us not neglect the Lord. The Church will never be healthy without prayer, and as long as the Lord keeps us alive we can and we will keep the Church alive by the power of prayer and seeking the Lord every day of our lives.

Prayer is the weapon that will give you victory in any spiritual battle!



Psalm 92:1-2 ESV

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; [2] to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night,

The Late Great Theologian A. W. Tozer said it this way: "If God gives you a few more years, remember, it is not yours. Your time must honor God, your home must honor God, your activity must honor God, and everything you do must honor God."

This is a beautiful quote isn't it, and it is a great reminder that we should always be in a spirit of praising the Lord, and that praising the Lord starts in our homes, praising the Lord should be a contagious attribute, that we never stop praising the Lord but that we can always have the right spirit and frame of mind because praise should always be alive!

When you praise the Lord, and when you are giving the Lord your best there is nothing that will stop you, and there is nothing that is going to eliminate your praise, because when you praise the Lord and when you are alive in the Lord, there is nothing that will stop your praise because you know that the Lord hasn't forgotten about you!

Look at life, and look at every area of your life because wherever you are, and whatever is in your life the Lord has given it to you, and because the Lord has given it to you praise Him! Praise Him for your family, for your health, for your food, for your body, and for your life. Don't ever stop praising the Lord, because all of us have been fortunate to receive blessings and have the blessings of God surround us so we should never stop praising Him!

Keep on praising the Lord, and when you keep on praising the Lord nothing has control over you, and nothing will ever stop you from getting closer to the Lord when you keep on praising Him, because you refuse to let your spirit be cutdown but you always keep your spirit upbeat because praise never stops when it has the attention on God!



Proverbs 18:21 ESV

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

Pastor Bill Johnson says this: "You won't have to watch what you say, if you watch what you think"

There's something true to this text and quote, because we do have to be careful what we say, because when you speak are you speaking life into people or are you speaking death into people! Some people say crude and mean things, and that is when you have to look at yourself and you have to ask yourself...... "Have I been guilty of death?"

There are people that speak death because they want to speak death, they want to speak crudely, they want to speak ugly, and they want to have a voice that is not of God but of their own self! That's why some Churches don't grow, because there are people who are speaking death instead of life and then the Church suffers because there are murderers in the Church that speak death into the Church and cause the Spirit not to have access!

You have to speak life into people, and we have to speak life into the Church because if we don't speak life into the Church...... The Church will die, and the Church won't be able to have anything going for itself, because the day of the Church being the main attraction is over, and now it is on to speak the right things over the Church in order for us to see the Church function into a well built/breathing organism!

As we move forward, and as we continue to trust in the Lord it is on us to make sure we are speaking positive things, Godly things, and things that make us have a spirit of togetherness, a spirit of love, a spirit of friendship, and a spirit of community so that we all can be pleasing in the eyes and the sight of the Lord!



Genesis 35:2 ESV

So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments.

One thing that we all should be careful about is not putting things ahead of the Lord, because there are always things that we look at and see is what is ahead of God, and are we allowing things to get in the way of God, because we have fallen in love with things more than we have fallen in love with the Lord.

I believe that we should always make sure that we are not pulling ourselves into things that are taking us away from God. Nothing is more important than God, it doesn't matter if that is your husband, your wife, your child, your car, your academic awards, your athletic awards, your house, or your bank account. Nothing is more important than the Lord!

One of the biggest problems in our world is that we are making idols out of people, making idols out of those in whom we feel like they are on our level. We make more idols out of Presidents, CEO's, Businesses, and other things that sometimes can take the place of God. We should never give things that are not blessing us, more attention and more of our time than we do the Lord!

As you follow the Lord, and as you walk with the Lord don't ever stop making sure that you seek the Lord first, and when you are seeking the Lord first God will always allow you to rise, and God will always take care of you! We just have to make sure we are giving the Lord our time, our attention, and our full commitment!



Matthew 6:9-10 ESV

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. [10] Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

The great poet and philosopher and some have called "The Prophet" Khalil Gibran said this about prayer: "Prayer is the song of the heart. It reaches the ear of God even if it is mingled with the cry and tumult of a thousand men." I believe that to be true, that when we are praying, and when we are talking to the Lord it is something that we always need, we we always need to participate, and we always need to continue to express because prayer is what keeps us in times of trouble.

We live in troubling and tough times that we need to pray, because can't we see just how much is going on in our world and we see that as we live in this life there is always some kind of trouble, some kind of tragedy, and some kind of trauma but that is when we have to make sure that we pray. We need to pray fervently, and prayer does not have a time limit but we should never limit our time with the Lord!

As long as you are walking with the Lord you need the Lord, and because we need the Lord let us never live any life that we feel that our lives are secure enough that we don't need more of the Lord. We should always strive and crave to continue to seek God, and seek God every day because every day has enough troubles but as long as we have the Lord we will make it through the storms, through the burdens, and through the tears.

Let us pray always for the Lord to have His way, and because the Lord is having His way we can always trust in His way, and we can always believe in Him that we know that the Lord will always do the right things for us. God has not forgotten about you, and God will always take care of us. We need to take care of our souls and spirits as well, by praying to the Lord and seeking the Lord and watching how the Lord will surely bless us!



Exodus 5:2 ESV

But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

The late great Theologian Charles Spurgeon said this: "In seasons of severe trial, the Christian has nothing on earth that he can trust to, and is therefore compelled to cast himself on God alone. When no human deliverance can avail, he must simply and entirely trust himself to the providence and care of God. Happy storm that wrecks a man on such a rock as this! O blessed hurricane that drives the soul to God--and God alone!"

As we look at this quote, and as we reflect on what the Lord is doing as we think about the things in our lives we begin to see that there will always be a Pharaoh that will arise who will try to stop what the Lord is doing, and will have a spirit of arrogance to where Pharaoh never believes that he is untouchable!

One must always be careful and watch the attitude and the spirit of trying to be a Pharaoh, and it is a good reminder that even though we see that there is this negative person and spirit, the Lord will always take care of His children, and the Lord always shows us that we don't have to allow Pharaoh to win in our lives.

Somebody will always feel like they own you if you let them, but that is when you have to tell anybody that the person that you belong to is the Lord and because you belong to the Lord who can stop you! Don't ever allow a loud voice or a stubborn spirit, make you stop or make you forget about the power of the Lord, because God can always give you victory over the ones trying to stop you!

You are never stopped when you don't bow down to Pharaoh! Bow to the Lord, and make sure to continue to serve and fear the Lord, and watch how the Lord will take care of you!



Proverbs 17:13 ESV

If anyone returns evil for good, evil will not depart from his house.

The late Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelies said this: "The best revenge is to be unlike him who performed the injury."

Looking at this text, and really understanding what the Lord is speaking to us, it is necessary for us to realize that revenge or doing anything evil is not what we are called to do! We can't do anything that is filled with evil, if it is not pleasing the Lord because we have to be watchful of how we are going about living, especially after we have been hurt!

Don't allow the fact that you have been hurt, make you start to want to hurt others or try to get even because doing evil to people will never bless you, doing evil to people will never satisfy you, and doing evil to people will never bless you! If you don't want to be blessed do the wrong things, and you have to watch how you live and what you do after you face some tough times!

Our lives should always be Godly, and there are those days that when we live with the Lord and when we live for the Lord, if we are going to be living for the Lord, then we should always be cautious of our actions! The Lord knows what we are doing before we do, and when we don't have the right attitude or spirit it can hurt us, it can damage us, and it can have us doing things that are not right or Godly!

Don't bring the wrong ingredients to your house, but keep the Lord in your house and when you keep the Lord in your house evil can't and won't get in because we refuse to become bitter! There is nothing special or attractive about being evil, follow Jesus and have purity and please the Lord at all times!



Exodus 18:8-9 ESV

Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them in the way, and how the LORD had delivered them. [9] And Jethro rejoiced for all the good that the LORD had done to Israel, in that he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians.

All of us need a Jethro, because if we are honest there is never a time in our lives that we don't need somebody that has wisdom and that is Godly! One thing we should always remember, just because a person has age doesn't mean they have the Lord! Don't seek people that don't have the Lord in your life, that is when you can find yourself troubled!

It is good to know that the Lord will send the right people in your life, you need the right people in your life that love you enough to both support and chastise you at the same time! We don't always like to be corrected, but what would be the point of having somebody in your life if they can't be honest with you? Too often we want people to pump us up, instead of having people who will pump us up and talk to us directly!

Evaluate who is in your life, the people who are in your life that have this level of love and this level of commitment to us that they will want us to be at our best all of the time! If you don't want to see me at my best on a daily basis, then you don't need to be in my life! Stop keeping people in your life who are only there for celebration, but aren't there for correction!

<u>Don't chase people. Be yourself, do your own thing and work hard. The right people -the ones who really belong in your life- will come to you. And stay. - Will Smith</u>



Ezekiel 2:1-2 ESV

And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." [2] And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.

"A sermon that just informs the mind can give people things to do after they go home, but a sermon that moves the heart from loving career or acclaim or one's own independence to loving God and his Son changes listeners on the spot." - The Late Pastor Timothy Keller

This is the truth that we should always have a hunger for the word of the Lord, and something else is true that a preacher without the Holy Spirit is a preacher that won't have any effectiveness. You can't be effective as a preacher if you aren't filled with the Spirit, and when the word of God is working it will affect us all that we all are growing!

The word of God has the power, and when we have the word of God in our lives something in us should make us want to grow in our lives, grow in our walk, and grow in our faith! A person will never if a person doesn't want to, because sometimes our growth is on us and not others!

When you look at your life you should be on a quest for spiritual growth! If you don't try to improve you can't complain about life being unfair to you, because the word of the Lord is real, the word of the Lord is our lifeline, the word of the Lord is our guide, and the word of the Lord is our meal! However we can never get healthy if we don't eat the full meal, because a person won't be healthy if they only want sweets instead of all food groups!

The word of God will improve and make us grow, and it is always on us to make sure we are taking it all, getting it all, and growing in our walk with the Lord!



Luke 8:22 ESV

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out,

Christian Author Elisabeth Elliot once said this: "If you believe in a God who controls the big things, you have to believe in a God who controls the little things. It is we, of course, to whom things look 'little' or 'big'.

How often do we face some storms in our lives that can frighten us, scare us, or just make us have a season of panic? We face something that is not easy, something that is rough, and something that can make us have a moment of worry if we are honest!

That's the thing that when we trust God, and when we go to the other side we don't always realize what awaits us on the other side, but that doesn't mean we should go on the other side! Just because you can't control the weather, doesn't mean you should let it control you! When you trust God, you go to the other side, but that doesn't mean you'll always be able to have a smooth ride!

You might not always get what you want, but when you go to the other side it's not about what you want, but it's about trusting the Lord enough to know that He will bless you, and He will allow your faith to grow and to be better because of your willingness to go the extra mile with the Lord! The Lord is telling you to go the extra mile, and because we are going to the other side we see that the Lord won't leave us nor forsake us!

As you live today, and as you follow the Lord never forget how much the Lord has done for you, and what God keeps doing for us, don't let a little rain and turbulence stop you from trusting in the Lord at all times!! Go to the other side, and watch the Lord take care of you!!



Genesis 18:32-33 ESV

Then he said, "Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it." [33] And the LORD went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

The Late Theologian Charles H. Spurgeon said this: "I desire to press forward for direction to my Master in all things; but as to trusting to my own obedience and righteousness, I should be worse than a fool and ten times worse than a madman."

I love this text, and I believe that it is true that we need people in our lives that will speak up when it is time to speak up! We need people in our lives that will keep up the right talk, because we don't need quiet people when storms show up, but we need the right people to speak up for us all of the time!

We need people in our lives, that will speak what we need because when we have people that speak and pray with the right spirit and with the right attitude that will bless us, and that will grow us because we all need real people in our lives. We don't need fake people, but we need real people in our lives that have our back, and that know how to pray and talk to the Lord!

Let us have those people in our lives, and let us live the way that is pleasing in the eyes of God, because when we do what is right, and when we live in the right way the Lord is there, and the Lord won't leave us alone! Let us always walk with the Lord, and let us always have a spirit of service, because when we speak right then we will see how much the Lord will do for us, and how much the Lord will keep us from being vaporized!



Psalm 34:15,18 ESV

The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry. [18] The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

Walt Disney once said this: "All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me.... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you." — Walt Disney

This is such a reality, and this so true because as we look at life that we all will have to deal with some adversity that comes in our lives. I don't think adversity is meant to break us, but in the midst of adversity is when you begin to see how much you need the Lord, and you also see just how much you have to have a strong foundation!

As you walk with the Lord, you'll never be able to walk through this life without some storms but the Lord has given us the right rain jacket to wear so when storms show up, we have the word of God as a good rain jacket. Understand that problems will come, but don't allow your problems to keep you from talking to God, but sometimes the problems are there to help you get to where God wants you to be!

How can problems bring me closer to God? They do this because of the purpose to why they were initiated and instituted, and as we walk with the Lord our problems are not meant to kill us but they are meant to make us more committed, and those problems show us how much we need God, and we aren't always as strong as we say!

Problems will not break you as long as you have the right foundation, and when your foundation is in Jesus Christ no matter what comes my way, there is hope in knowing that the Lord has not and won't forget about me!



Psalm 119:81 ESV

My soul longs for your salvation; I hope in your word.

The Late Great Theologian Charles H. Spurgeon said this: As for His failing you, never dream of it — hate the thought of it. The God who has been sufficient until now should be trusted to the end."

As we live with the Lord, and as we walk with God do we have enough trust in the Lord and in the word of God to continue to walk with the Lord as life continues to do what life does. Life is a very unstable environment sometimes, because you can be easy and smooth sailing one minute and then next thing you know something does happen and it can really knock you down but even though you get knocked down, the word of God will keep you when you keep it in you!

Does the word of God live in your life? How much are you feeding yourself the word of the Lord on a daily basis, because you have to understand that if you don't have the word of God in your life then you will falter and you won't be able to stand when life is troubling, when life is shaky, and when life is terrible!

Life can feel like that, but we are reminded in the word of God that the Lord is our strength and our hope because we know that the Lord is always going to be with us but at the end of the day, we can't allow some tough times to make us stop submitting to the Lord and trusting in the Lord, but we need to always make sure that we always seek the Lord and in seeking the Lord we never lose faith!

"Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right." - Max Lucado



Colossians 1:24-25 ESV

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, [25] of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,

Pastor & Author John Piper said this: "I want you to see persecution and opposition and slander and misunderstanding and disappointment and self-recrimination and weakness and danger as the normal portion of faithful pastoral ministry."

It is important to pray for and support the Pastor, because one thing is for sure that as the Pastor leads the people of God it is important and necessary to pray for the Pastor, and to follow the leadership of the Pastor. As the Church grows, and as the Church continues to follow God, the Church needs leadership, but a healthy leader is one that has a healthy following!

We stay in it when we follow the word of the Lord, and when we continue to trust the Lord we have the responsibility to pray for our leaders, follow our leaders, and serve in the way that will glorify the Lord and help make the vision of the Pastor continue to go forward and to excel!

As the Church, it is vital to be that kind of Church that is healthy and that is not participating in anything that will cause the Church to become sick or that will cause the Church to decay from backlash! Let us serve the Lord, and lift up the Pastor because the work of the ministry is a blessing and can be hard, but with the right spirit, team, and God there's nothing that can't be done or accomplished!

Hebrews 13:17 ESV - Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.



Revelation 18:14 ESV

"The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!"

The Late Theologian C. S. Lewis said this: "Like a good chess player, Satan is always trying to maneuver you into a position where you can save your castle only by losing your bishop."

We are walking with the Lord, but there is something that we do have to make sure that we realize and understand in this life that you never want to be a person that is one that is only remembered based on tragedy, and that tragedy is that you are forgotten all because of not following the Lord!

The Lord is in charge of our lives, but are we following the Lord and are we walking with the Lord enough? Can you imagine your life going from a beautiful picture, to then it just falls apart and all you are known for is a case of what you once were. It is possible, and it can happen to where we lose our influence and lose our power because of how we were supposed to follow the Lord, but then our lives have gone nowhere because of how we have lived!

That's how we live or should live with the Lord, that we should live in a way that we live for the Lord, that we follow the Lord, and that we understand the importance of following the right fruit trail! The Lord has the right fruit for us, but are we eating it off of the right tree, or are we eating on the wrong tree that doesn't have any scent of God's presence on it?

We are God's children, and when we are children of God that is something that we have to follow, and when we are living for the Lord don't allow yourself to be a forgotten story instead of a piece of literature to study and remember! It is about following the Lord, and when we follow the Lord we understand and know that in all things the Lord will keep us sane and together, and we can always follow Him with the right spirit.



Revelation 3:8 ESV

"'I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

The Church is the greatest institution and establishment that the Lord ever created. As we look at the Church, and as we walk with the Lord we must understand the reality of open doors. The Lord gives open doors, but if the door closes the Church has to take the responsibility, and realize that it can be the Church's fault by missing out on what the Lord is doing.

We all have opportunities to be better if we want to be better, that is the thing that we have to realize how we walk with the Lord we have to stand with a sense of faith, a sense of belief, and a sense of understanding how valuable we are in Jesus Christ. We need to know that, but we also have to get to the place of maturity within our walk with the Lord, that if we don't take advantage of what we have we can't be mad if we never see it again!

Even in your life don't allow things and doors that can be great for you to pass you by, because nobody is guaranteed another day and we are not even guaranteed blessings! Anything that we have the Lord has given it to us, but we have to be good stewards over it. You can look at a building that once was standing strong, and that once was something beautiful but over time it went down, the walls became disgusting, the foundation started to erode, and there is no vacancy because what once was no longer is.

The Church has to look at it the same way as well, that when the Lord gives us the open doors and the opportunities to improve if we don't take them and if we don't do them then we are in that season and that place that we can go from operating to now dead. We should never want the Church or our lives to become a tragedy, or become a cold season because we didn't take advantage of the open doors that we have in our lives!

STOP PASSING UP WHAT YOU'LL NEVER GET AGAIN!!!



Ezekiel 3:16-17 ESV

And at the end of seven days, the word of the LORD came to me: [17] "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me.

Former First Lady of the United States Rosalynn Carter once said this: "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

That is a true statement, and as the Church it is important to understand that the Leader God gives, is the one that God has instructed and placed within that the Leader the charge to lead the people where He wants them to be. Leadership is always about giving the people hope, inspiration, and building up their spirits!

Too often people think they want to be leaders, but they don't want to spend time getting to know people that they are charged to lead! God can't use a stubborn or selfish person to lead His people, but in leadership the Lord will use the leader of His choice to preach, teach, serve, instruct, and to do exactly what the Lord says!

Leadership is like running a race, you don't just settle for 2nd place when you really can get 1st place. The Church should never settle when it can do more, and more than that as the leader it is important to have a spirit of high faith when leading God's people. Leadership can have its ups and downs, but nothing great is worth having without having some challenges!

You can't be a great leader with no courage! An orange won't produce orange juice until it is squeezed, and that is how the Lord uses the Leader that the Leader will be great and will take the Church higher and forward when God squeezes us to make great juice!



Exodus 18:21-22 ESV

Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. [22] And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.

NBA Legend Michael Jordan once said this: "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."

I believe this hits the nail on the head, because as we serve in Ministry it is a team effort not a single person effort. Ministry and doing the work of the church involves the CHURCH!!!! Everybody plays a role and part in the work of the Church, because it is important for us all to realize how much we need each other.

It is important to follow leadership and the vision God gives the Pastor, and also to help make the job easier for the Pastor! Everybody has a role in the Church, and it doesn't have to be seen or broadcasted but pray to the Lord and when the Lord reveals that niche to you, don't be afraid to do it but walk in it and grow in it! When we do what the Lord is telling us to do, the Lord can use us all to do major things!

We have to always make sure that we are serving the Lord, and we should always be speaking life into each other and pushing each other to excellence. As a Church we should always be a Church that is about excelling in excellence, because we should always give the Lord our best, and not give God minor work and minor commitment!

The Church has the opportunity to do great things, so it is on the people to not sit down when we all can rise up and do something great! Let us be great as we serve God!



Acts 14:8-10 ESV

Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. [9] He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, [10] said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.

Disney Creator Walt Disney said this: "All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

Don't ever think that you won't have some forms of obstacles, but as we look at our lives when we have the word of the Lord in our lives we are able to overcome things that we have to deal with in various challenges. We all have some challenges, and when you face some challenges you have to be willing to stand firm, stand strong, and stand still with the Lord!

We have to understand that the word of the Lord is what will keep us, and not only will the word of the Lord keep us but we have to make sure that we are staying in the word of the Lord. The word of the Lord gives us power, it gives us hope, and it gives us a sense of power and dignity to not stay down in the midst of problems, because we can overcome!

The Lord is speaking to us today to get up, and when we have the word of the Lord in our lives, and when the Lord is speaking in our lives through His word we can make it and we can get back up! You can get up from whatever is hurting you, bothering you, and bringing you pain. The word of the Lord is still powerful to allow you to overcome!

It is time to get up..... Stop staying down but rise up and get up b following the Lord!



Joshua 3:9 ESV

And Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God."

<u>Pastor Steven Furtick said this: "The voice you believe will determine the future you experience"</u>

As we walk with the Lord during this week, we have to make sure that we are following the Lord and that we are allowing the word of the Lord to lead us and guide us! We have to make sure that when we are following the word of the Lord, and are listening to the Lord we realize and understand that we are following the Lord to make sure that we are doing what is right!

As you serve the Lord make sure that you are keeping the Lord first, as you are staying with the Lord make sure that you are keeping the Lord first, and life is not completely lived or fulfilled without the Lord We need the Lord every day, and we have to have the Lord every day because as we follow Him the Lord gives us direction, the Lord gives us guidance, the Lord gives us the strength we need in order to live in life.

Stop trying to do everything by yourself because you can't!! There is nothing that you can do without some help, and there are those who don't believe in the power of the Lord but for us that do we should know that it is because of the Lord that we have gotten to where we are, and for us to continue to grow we will need the Lord to keep us there as well!

Let us always have the spirit of walking with the Lord, and serving the Lord because without the Lord we can't have real freedom, real joy, real peace, real confidence, and real assurance! We need the Lord, and when we have the Lord we know what is right and what isn't right but we know that we can always make it with God on our side!



Joshua 23:2-3 ESV

Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders and heads, its judges and officers, and said to them,
"I am now old and well advanced in years. [3] And you have seen all that the LORD your
God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is the LORD your God who has
fought for you.

Poet Nikki Giovanni said this: "A lot of people resist transition and therefore never allow themselves to enjoy who they are. Embrace the change, no matter what it is; once you do, you can learn about the new world you're in and take advantage of it."

Transition never happens without the Lord, but there are always times that the Lord will make transitions and the Lord knows what to do in transition! We all face some type of change, but have you noticed that some people are never happy with change but they miss out on the blessings that change can bring!

God is the one that will make changes in our lives, but as we walk with the Lord we have to always understand that the Lord will always do something new! There will always be something new, God will remove people but when the word is there and imprinted people can come and go but the word of God never changes!

It is important for us to always make sure we are following the word of the Lord, and not our word but following the word of God! So that when things happen that are changes, because they are going to come but if you are following the word and know the word, you know that you are in good company with the Lord!

Don't miss what the Lord is doing, because it isn't what you pictured but when you follow the Lord, and when you trust the Lord you'll see that the Lord always does what is best and what we need for a fruitful and impactful life!



Genesis 3:1 ESV

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair said this: "Sometimes it is better to lose and do the right thing than to win and do the wrong thing."

Watch the conversations that you have! Watch yourself, and don't engage in snake talk because when you start engaging with snakes that is then that you will start to take on their nature and you will start to act just like them! How often do people get in trouble by entertaining the wrong stuff!

We are seeing this snake talk rip apart so many things, and it would be better in life and for people in general to not engage in snake talk because a snake is very cold, crude, and deceptive. Many people are being tricked into thinking that some people care about them, when they don't but people will set you up just so you can take a fall, and people will set you up to have a bad name!

Don't allow yourself to be tricked or used by people, because when snakes show up they want all of your energy and when they see you on the right path they will do their best to mess you up because they can't stand what the Lord is doing in your life. When the Lord is blessing you, be prepared for the snakes to come, but that doesn't mean you have to allow them to take over your life!

Follow the Lord, and when you follow the Lord that will be when you don't succumb to the snake but the word of God will kill the snake to where you don't have to worry about the poison!



Psalm 92:1-2 ESV

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; [2] to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night,

Shawnee Chief & Warrior Tecumseh said this: "When you arise in the morning give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself."

We are in the Thanksgiving season, and as we reflect on Thanksgiving that is something we indeed should remember and reflect on about how the Lord has been good to you this year! The Lord has kept you this year, and you know that whenever you reflect on the goodness of the Lord it will make you thankful!

As we walk with the Lord today and as we walk with the Lord every day, that is something that we should never stop doing is praising the Lord! Life has been tough for us all, and even with all that we have faced and gone through but the Lord has still allowed us to survive! We are the products of the grace of God that has allowed us to survive, and because we have survived so many things because the Lord did it!

The Lord is the reason for us being here, and because the Lord is the reason for all that we have experienced we have so many reasons to rejoice and praise the Lord for all that He has done for us! God did it, and because the Lord did it make sure that you praise the Lord because the Lord has always been good and right there for you!

Thank the Lord for all that you have, and thank the Lord for what He has done for you and because of what the Lord has done for you don't limit your praise to Him! Always rejoice for what the Lord has done, and praise Him because He is worthy to be praised!



Luke 1:31 ESV

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

The Late Great Preacher & Theologian Charles Spurgeon said this: "My evidence that I am saved does not lie in the fact that I preach, or that I do this or that. All my hope lies in this: that Jesus Christ came to save sinners. I am a sinner, I trust Him, then He came to save me, and I am saved."

I believe that to be true, and it is good to know that Jesus Christ is our Savior and that we have been redeemed because of Jesus Christ! We should never forget that Jesus did it for us, and as we enter into this Advent/Christmas season, that is something that we can't forget or neglect that we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

It doesn't matter if you get gifts or not, don't forget that the best gift that we have ever gotten with Jesus Christ. There will be plenty of people flocking to the mall, online shopping, and restaurants and we shall enjoy that time, but whatever we do we shall never forget that Jesus is the reason for our lives. Jesus is the reason for all of us being here, and because of Jesus we can always have joy!

We live in a time where we can always have joy, and when we have joy in Jesus we are secure, we are upbeat, we are in a period of hope, and we can always keep the faith because we know that Jesus is real! Jesus is our everything, Jesus will keep us, and Jesus is going to keep us every day of our lives! As you live with the Lord, everyday is a day to praise the Lord and to worship the Lord because we have Jesus, and let us always be glad that the Lord has helped us and guided us along the way!



Matthew 1:19-20 ESV

And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. [20] But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

NBA Hall of Famer Alonzo Mourning said this: "I think in every lesson there's a blessing, and there's so many blessings from all the lessons I've had to go through in life."

As we look at this Christian life, and this Christmas story we see that the Lord has and will do things that nobody else can do. It is amazing how Joseph wanted to divorce Mary, because looking at this historically there was a level of embarrassment, shame, and even humiliation that came to Joseph!

Yet, the angel of the Lord came to Joseph and said don't leave her because this was done by the Holy Spirit. Yet, it is something that people will want to leave you before they know everything about you, just because I have something going on that doesn't look like it is presentable or special doesn't mean you leave me. There's a reason that I am in this condition, because the Lord has blessed me with something unique!

Some people miss their blessings because they want to leave too quick, some people walk away from their blessings because they want to leave too quick, and some people never recover because they want to leave too quick! Don't you allow yourself to lose and miss out on your blessings because you don't like how it is presented, just because it isn't presented the way you want it to be doesn't mean that it won't become something special!

However God blesses me, as long as He is doing it and it's His name attached to it then that makes me glad, thankful, and grateful because I know He's in control!



Psalm 22:8 ESV

"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

Pastor Max Lucado said this: "No matter what the storm clouds bring, you can face your pain with courage and hope. For two thousand years ago-six hours, one Friday-Christ firmly planted in bedrock three solid anchor points that we can all cling to. For the heart scarred with futility, that Friday holds purpose. For the life blackened with failure, that Friday holds forgiveness. And for the soul looking into the tunnel of death, that Friday holds deliverance."

The Lord is good, the Lord is real, and the Lord will deliver! As we look at our lives, and as we focus on this Christmas season we should never lose sight of who we should be looking to! We should always keep our focus on the Lord, and remember that the Lord is with us every day and that we are not alone!

We are not alone and we should never feel alone, because as we live for the Lord there should be a reminder that the Lord will make a way for us! The Lord will make a way for you, and because the Lord will make a way we should stay in the race, we should stay encouraged, and we should stay with the right mindset that we know that the Lord is always on our side!

God is always on our side, and don't forget that even with stuff that you can't control there is something you can control and that is your faith in the Lord! Your faith in the Lord should be strong, firm, and stable so that even though you are faced with different challenges or your own feelings God will make a way for you!

As we celebrate Christmas, we should never neglect our faith in God and knowing that the Lord is real, powerful, strong, mighty, and that the Lord will provide for you all of the time!



Luke 2:27-31 ESV

And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, [28] he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, [29] "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; [30] for my eyes have seen your salvation [31] that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

The Late Preacher & Christian Author Ravi Zacharias said this: "Outside of the cross of Jesus Christ, there is no hope in this world. That cross and resurrection at the core of the Gospel is the only hope for humanity. Wherever you go, ask God for wisdom on how to get that Gospel in, even in the toughest situations of life."

Jesus is the one that has and will always be the centerpiece of everything we have and everything we are. It is not us, but it is Jesus Christ and because it is Jesus Christ that should be good news for us today that the world belongs to Jesus, the Church belongs to us, and we belong to Jesus!

Don't forget Jesus, and as we move into 2024 by the grace of God while celebrating this season of Christmas we need to always make sure that we are keeping Jesus at the front end of our lives. It is about Jesus, and we should never get tired of Jesus, but in order to have a healthy life, healthy Church, healthy spirit, healthy mind, and healthy heart you need to make sure that you are connected to Jesus!

Jesus is the best water supply that will always keep you hydrated and never thirsty! You don't need to crave the world's water when you have the Holy water, and as long as we have Jesus we have the right base and knowledge to make sure that we are always living with joy, peace, and commitment because He is our lifeline!