



▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

Monday, 4/27/20

Author: Laurie Price

Isaiah 25:4 (CEB)

*You have been a refuge for the poor,
a refuge for the needy in distress,
a hiding place from the storm,
a shade from the heat.*

One of my favorite songs to listen to when I need to calm my spirit and remember God's goodness is "Defender" by Francesca Battistelli. You can watch the music video with lyrics at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzkRjangfp8>.

In the song, Francesca sings about how God works. She says "you go before I know that you've even gone to win my war. Your love becomes my greatest defense. It leads me from the dry wilderness." What a wonderful description of God's love and provision for us. The song goes on to say, "And all I did was praise, all I did was worship, all I did was bow down, all I did was stay still." Friends, that is our perfect response to God's love! All we need to do is praise and worship Him. In the midst of the craziness of life, when all we want to do is take control and fix things, all we are required to do is bow down to God and stay still. We need to stop and watch Him work.

I don't know about you, but this is difficult for me. It's hard to stay still and let God work. But singing this song and reminding myself that God's way is the best way, lifts my spirit. Even when I fail to stay still or fail to praise the way I should, this song is a hopeful reminder that we can always start again. We can always start again by praising God, worshipping Him, bowing down and watching Him work.

Prayer: God, thank you for being our greatest defense, our shelter from the storm and our living water in the wilderness. We praise you God for who you are. Thank you for loving us! Amen.

Tuesday, 4/28/20

Author: Sara DeVoto

Proverbs 16:9 (CEB)

*People plan their path,
but the LORD secures their steps.*

January is the time of year when everyone sets their intentions. I'm going to do all the diets, work on my marriage. There is so much motivation and good intentions that time of year. But we all know the gym machines will be a little less busy by February. So why is it we can start out so strong willed and then determined and then berate ourselves into frustration and ultimately give up?

For me I realized I was trying to do too many things. I was trying to keep up with it all and it was robbing me of my motivation that I had started with. I had made everything important, and therefore nothing was important. I didn't have a funneled focused. Focus requires finding one goal.

I know this was hard for an achiever/helper personality that wants to be doing all of the things for all of my people. What I realized was when I did one thing and ultimately achieved it, it improved the other areas around it. A rising tide really does raise all ships.

Prayer: God, search my heart and reveal any offensive motives in me. Guide me to your will for my motivation. Allow me to funnel my focus and guide me to your will.

Wednesday, 4/29/20

Worship Wednesday

“My Lighthouse”

Every Wednesday we look at a modern worship song or traditional hymn as a community. We hope this song will add an element of worship to your devotion life. Songs have a way of getting into your bones and giving words to a situation you may be facing or a mountaintop moment you are experiencing. There will be a link to the song and some of the scripture references used in the song as well as the lyrics. We hope you will listen to the song with the lyrics in front of you. If there is a part that sticks out to you, read that part aloud. Let that part of the song be your prayer for the morning.

Matthew 14:22-33 (CEB)

Right then, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead to the other side of the lake while he dismissed the crowds. When he sent them away, he went up onto a mountain by himself to pray. Evening came and he was alone. Meanwhile, the boat, fighting a strong headwind, was being battered by the waves and was already far away from land. Very early in the morning he came to his disciples, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified and said, “It’s a ghost!” They were so frightened they screamed.

Just then Jesus spoke to them, “Be encouraged! It’s me. Don’t be afraid.”

Peter replied, “Lord, if it’s you, order me to come to you on the water.”

And Jesus said, “Come.”

Then Peter got out of the boat and was walking on the water toward Jesus. But when Peter saw the strong wind, he became frightened. As he began to sink, he shouted, “Lord, rescue me!”

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him, saying, “You man of weak faith! Why did you begin to have doubts?” When they got into the boat, the wind settled down.

Then those in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, “You must be God’s Son!”

My Lighthouse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reAlJKv7ptU>

In my wrestling and in my doubts, In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through, You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea
In the silence, You won't let go, In the questions, Your truth will hold

Your great love will lead me through, You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse, Shining in the darkness. I will follow You
My lighthouse, my lighthouse I will trust the promise You will carry me safe to shore
Safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh), Safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh), Safe to shore

I won't fear what tomorrow brings, With each morning I'll rise and sing
My God's love will lead me through, You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

Fire before us, You're the brightest, You will lead us through the storms

My Lighthouse lyrics © Capitol Christian Music Group

Thursday, 4/30/20

Author: Susan Mason

Jeremiah 29:11 (CEB)

I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the LORD; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope.

Recently, Kurt's father, Bill, had major surgery that required an extended hospital stay. While various family members took turns visiting him, our 10-year-old nephew, Drew, came down with a stomach virus and was unable to go see his grandpa. Not wanting to miss his turn for a visit, he created an impromptu video and sent it for Bill to see. After a brief greeting and traditional well-wishes, Drew went on to say, "And Grandpa, I have a verse I'd like to share with you," quoting Jeremiah 29:11, and saying, "See Grandpa, God has plans for you – a future filled with hope. Hope AND a future, Grandpa. That's what God has for you. See you soon when I feel better."

Drew recalled this verse on the fly and found a unique way to transmit it to Bill, even when he, himself, didn't feel well. We were all touched by Drew's resourcefulness, faith and thoughtfulness.

Prayer: Thank you, God, that children are listening and absorbing our words, actions, prayers and intentions. Forgive us when we don't set a good example for them, for each other, or for you. Help us to be open to kids' questions, insights and ideas, even as You listen to our questions and interpretations, gently guiding us along our faith journey. Amen.

Friday, 5/1/20

Scripture Fridays

"Hebrews 8"

Every Friday, we read a section of scripture together. There is a larger section of reading for these days. We believe immersion in scripture changes people from the inside out. On Fridays we hope you spend your time reading the section, knowing that our entire community is reading scripture together. If you cannot get through the whole section, that is totally fine! Read it in one sitting, read it throughout the week, read it any time you have free time. Any reading will be a gift to your spiritual life. Each week you will receive the next chapter of the scripture for your personal reading. We will provide you with the CEB translation. We hope you will continue to ask the questions: What? What is the scripture saying? No, really, what did it actually say? So what? Why is this important? What does it reveal about God? Now what? The Bible is a book of action. What is your action? May God bless this reading each week.

Hebrews 8 (CEB)

Meeting tents, sacrifices, and covenants

Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We have this kind of high priest. He sat down at the right side of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. ² He's serving as a priest in the holy place, which is the true meeting tent that God, not any human being, set up. ³ Every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. So it's necessary for this high priest also to have something to offer. ⁴ If he was located on earth, he wouldn't be a priest because there are already others who offer gifts based on the Law. ⁵ They serve in a place that is a copy and shadow of the heavenly meeting tent. This is indicated when Moses was warned by God when he was about to set up the meeting tent: See that you follow the pattern that I showed you on the mountain in every detail. ⁶ But now, Jesus has received a superior priestly service just as he arranged a better covenant that is enacted with better promises.

⁷ If the first covenant had been without fault, it wouldn't have made sense to expect a second. ⁸ But God did find fault with them, since he says,

Look, the days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will make a covenant with the house of Israel,
and I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah.

⁹ It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors
on the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt,
because they did not continue to keep my covenant,
and I lost interest in them, says the Lord.

¹⁰ This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, says the Lord.

I will place my laws in their minds,
and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

¹¹ And each person won't ever teach a neighbor
or their brother or sister, saying, "Know the Lord,"
because they will all know me,
from the least important of them to the most important;

¹² because I will be lenient toward their unjust actions,
and I won't remember their sins anymore.

¹³ When it says new, it makes the first obsolete. And if something is old and outdated, it's close to disappearing.