

August Devotions

The Goodness of Our God

“Oh that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! ⁹ For He satisfies the longing soul And fills the hungry soul with goodness.”

Psalms 107:8-9

Goodness represents the character of God. It is an attribute of God. Has your life been touched by the goodness of God? When we go through a trial it's God's goodness that prevails. If we trust God, we will see the victory. It may not be what we wanted but God sees things with a different lens than we do. God is love and His character is demonstrated by His goodness.

God's goodness is tangible. “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him.” **(Psalm 34:8)**

“You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths drip with abundance.” **(Psalm 65:11)**

God's goodness is demonstrated abundantly in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. To know God, is to meditate on His goodness. Do you want to know God, not just know about Him? If so, meditate on God's goodness. “I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works” **(Psalm 145:5)**

Prayer: Father God, I know you are so good. Let me know you more by meditating on your goodness. Lead me to know You and Your immeasurable goodness. In Jesus name, Amen

Deuteronomy 20:4, Romans 8:28, 1 John 4:8

God Is Calling His People Back to Rest

There is a quiet invitation from the Lord in this season: **"Come closer before you go further."**

Many people are carrying heavy responsibilities, making important decisions, and navigating a world that constantly rewards speed, productivity, and performance. The temptation is to believe that doing more will produce more. Yet Jesus offers a different way.

Matthew 11:28–30 reminds us:

"Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest... For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

This is not an invitation to withdraw from purpose—it is an invitation to rediscover the source of it. Before God sends us out, He calls us to Himself. Before we lead others, He invites us to be led by Him. Before we bear fruit, He calls us to abide.

The Lord is restoring a rhythm of grace. He is teaching His people that lasting fruit is not produced by striving but by remaining connected to Christ. Rest is not the reward after faithfulness; it is the posture from which faithfulness grows.

If you have been exhausted from trying to carry what belongs to God, this is the moment to release it. If you have been measuring your worth by your accomplishments, hear the Father's voice reminding you that your identity is secure in Christ. If you have been rushing ahead, allow the Holy Spirit to slow your pace so you can recognize His presence and direction.

God is raising people who are rooted rather than rushed, peaceful rather than pressured, faithful rather than frantic. These are people whose strength comes from abiding in Christ, whose wisdom comes from listening to Him, and whose lives bear fruit because they remain connected to the true Vine.

Today, choose to begin from a place of rest. Sit with the Lord before you strive for results. Listen before you speak. Trust before you try to control. The God who calls you is also the God who sustains you.

Your greatest effectiveness will not come from doing more for Christ—it will come from living more deeply in Christ.

Rest is not a pause from God's work; it is the place where His work in you becomes the source of everything He does through you.

"Today I choose to abide rather than strive. I receive the rest of Christ, trust the leading of the Holy Spirit, and believe that God will accomplish through me what I could never accomplish on my own."

Prayer: Our Lifeline to the Father's Heart

Prayer is not meant to be an emergency number we dial only when life begins to unravel. It is the lifeline that keeps our hearts connected to the Father every moment of every day. Before the pressures come, before decisions need to be made, before fear tries to take hold, God invites us into His presence. He desires that prayer would be our first defense, not our last desperate SOS call.

Our Heavenly Father delights in spending time with His children. He is faithful to speak, faithful to lead, and faithful to reveal His heart to those who seek Him. **Jeremiah 33:3** gives this beautiful invitation: "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." God never intended prayer to be a one-sided conversation. True prayer is a holy dialogue—it is speaking, listening, and responding to the One who knows us better than we know ourselves.

Too often we come into God's presence with a long list of requests and leave before giving Him the opportunity to speak. Yet some of the greatest breakthroughs in our lives are found not in what we say, but in what we hear. The Lord gently reminds us, "Be still, and know that I am God" (**Psalms 46:10**). In the quietness of His presence, He brings peace to anxious hearts, wisdom to uncertain minds, healing to wounded souls, and direction for every step ahead.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (**John 10:27**). Hearing His voice is only the beginning. Following His voice is where transformation takes place. Sometimes God's answer to our prayers requires a response from us—to forgive, to trust, to surrender, to step out in faith, or simply to wait with confidence. As **James 1:22** reminds us, we are called to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

Prayer is not measured by the number of words we speak but by the depth of our relationship with the Father. When we choose to live in continual communion with Him, our faith grows stronger, our hearts become more sensitive to His leading, and our lives begin to reflect His purposes. Prayer is where battles are won before they are ever fought, where strength is renewed, and where heaven shapes the course of our lives.

Today, linger a little longer in His presence. Speak honestly, listen expectantly, and obey willingly. The Father is waiting—not simply to answer your prayers, but to deepen your relationship with Him. His heart has always been for His children, and His voice still speaks to those who make room to listen.

Prayer Points:

Heavenly Father, teach me to seek Your face before I seek Your hand. Let prayer become my daily lifeline, my first response in every circumstance, and deepen my relationship with You as I learn to hear Your voice.

Lord, give me a heart that is still enough to listen and courageous enough to obey. Help me to trust Your leading, respond with faith, and walk in the breakthrough that comes through faithful communion with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Precious Lamb

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” **John 1:29**

I was baptized when I was 12 years old. I had a praying grandmother who led me to Jesus Christ at a young age. But...sadly somewhere between the ages of 12 and 18 a spirit of rebellion rested upon me and became an influence. I rebelled and declared that I was 18 and didn't have to go to church anymore. REBELLION! So, I started down that wide road that led to destruction that Jesus told us about. He said, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” **(Matthew 7:13-14 NIV)** But God didn't let me stay in the wilderness of sin.

Like so many others, I was that lost sheep that Jesus talked about in a parable. “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will He do? Won't He leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost?” **(Matthew 18:12 NLT)** Thank God, I wasn't left to wander in a life of sin and misery. After many years, I was rescued by the precious Lamb of God. Jesus who died a cruel death with such excruciating pain paid the penalty for my sin and yours. A debt I could not pay. Jesus rose from the dead victorious over sin, death and the grave and He is alive forever more. “...Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” **(John 1:29)** All glory to God that He sent His son, Jesus, to break the chains of bondage in my life. He will do the same for all who call upon His name.

Prayer: Father, I thank You for Your continued mercy and grace over my life, I thank You for the gift of Christ Jesus and His unending sacrificial love for me. Thank you for saving me from myself and drawing me closer to You. Thank You for drawing me out of rebellion and moving my heart back into respect, honor, and obedience to You. Thank you, O Merciful Father for chasing after Your beloved. In Jesus Name. Amen.

The Threefold Witness: An Invitation into the Heart of God

"For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three are in agreement." — **1 John 5:7–8**

God has never left us searching for Him without direction. In His love, He has given us a threefold witness that continually points us to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit, the water, and the blood all testify with one voice: Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior, and the One through whom we are invited into intimate fellowship with the Father.

The Spirit lovingly draws us into God's presence, revealing Christ and assuring our hearts that we belong to Him. "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (**Romans 8:16**). He is not a distant force but the abiding presence of God, leading us deeper into truth and communion (**John 16:13–14**).

The water reminds us of Jesus' baptism, where the Father's voice declared, "This is my beloved Son" (**Matthew 3:16–17**). It also speaks of cleansing and new life. God promises, "I will sprinkle clean water on you... and I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you" (**Ezekiel 36:25–27**). In Christ, we are washed, renewed, and welcomed into the family of God.

The blood proclaims the greatest expression of divine love. Through Jesus' sacrifice, we receive forgiveness, redemption, and bold access to the Father's presence. "The blood of Jesus... cleanses us from all sin" (**1 John 1:7**), and "we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus" (**Hebrews 10:19**).

Together, these witnesses invite us into the life of the Trinity. The Father loves us, the Son redeems us, and the Holy Spirit dwells within us. This is far more than a theological truth—it is a daily invitation to walk closely with the God who knows us completely and loves us perfectly.

Today, receive God's testimony as greater than every fear, failure, or doubt. Draw near to Him, and you will discover that the heart of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit are already reaching toward you (**2 Corinthians 13:14**).

Prayer Points:

Father, awaken my heart to know You more intimately. Let Your Spirit continually reveal Jesus to me, cleanse me by Your truth, and establish me in the confidence of Your redeeming love.

Lord, help me to live each day in the fellowship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so that my life becomes a faithful witness of Your grace, truth, and transforming power to everyone around me.

Part 1: From Striving to Abiding — The Invitation to Rest

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." — **Matthew 11:28–30**

There is a call from the Holy Spirit in this season—a call away from striving and into abiding. We live in a culture that celebrates constant activity, endless achievement, and relentless productivity. The world measures success by performance, but the Kingdom of God operates by a different standard.

Jesus does not begin with demands; He begins with an invitation: **"Come to Me."**

Before He sends us, He calls us to Himself. Before He asks us to carry anything, He promises to carry what has been weighing us down. The Lord is reminding His Church that true Kingdom fruit is never produced by human effort alone. It flows from a life deeply rooted in His presence.

Many have been exhausted trying to produce what only intimacy with God can create. We have mistaken busyness for faithfulness and activity for effectiveness. Yet Jesus reminds us that rest is not the reward after the work—it is the place from which the work begins.

Kingdom wisdom, supernatural strength, clear purpose, and lasting fruit all emerge from abiding in Christ.

The Father is calling His people to move from striving to abiding, from proving to trusting, from laboring in their own strength to living from His sufficiency. Identity must always come before activity. Communion must always come before calling.

This invitation to rest is not laziness or passivity. It is the confidence of sons and daughters who know where they are seated.

Paul writes: *"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* — **Ephesians 2:6**

Notice that before we accomplish anything for God, He has already seated us with Christ. A seated position is one of finished work, authority, confidence, and security. Jesus completed the work of redemption, and because we are united with Him, we minister from victory—not for victory.

We do not have to earn God's approval because we already have His acceptance in Christ. We do not labor to obtain His presence; we labor from His presence. We are seated before we are sent.

When we understand where we are seated, we stop living from anxiety and begin living from faith.

The Lord is restoring weary hearts. He is breaking cycles of burnout, comparison, self-effort, and performance. He is teaching His people that their identity is rooted in being beloved sons and daughters before they are servants. Peace replaces pressure as we learn to abide in Christ.

Reflection

- Where have I been striving instead of abiding?
- Am I allowing my identity in Christ to shape my activity, or am I trying to earn what God has already given?
- What would it look like to begin each day from a place of rest in His presence?

Prayer

Father, thank You for inviting me to come to You instead of striving in my own strength. Help me lay down every burden of performance, comparison, and self-effort. Teach me to live from the finished work of Christ and to remember that I am already seated with Him. Let my identity as Your beloved child become the foundation of everything I do. Fill my heart with Your peace and teach me to abide in Your presence each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Part 2: Living From His Presence

"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner." — John 5:19

The revelation of abiding is meant to transform every area of life.

For individuals, God restores weary hearts and replaces pressure with peace. For families, He desires homes built upon His presence rather than constant stress and endless demands. As His peace fills our homes, relationships flourish through grace, prayer, forgiveness, and love.

For the Church, God is calling His people back to minister from His presence instead of merely maintaining programs. Programs cannot produce revival, and strategies cannot replace intimacy. Revival is born where hearts rest before the Lord, hear His voice, and faithfully obey His leading.

For business leaders and those in the workplace, God is raising leaders who reflect His Kingdom through wisdom instead of fear, stewardship instead of greed, generosity instead of selfish ambition, and trust instead of anxiety. As we abide in Christ, our influence becomes a testimony of His faithfulness.

Jesus Himself demonstrated this lifestyle perfectly.

Though He possessed all power and authority, He chose complete dependence upon His Father. Every miracle, every message, and every decision flowed from intimacy. He did not strive to accomplish the Father's will; He remained so closely connected to the Father that obedience became the natural overflow of relationship.

Jesus is our greatest example.

- He withdrew to pray.
- He listened before He acted.
- He rested in the Father's love.
- He moved only as He saw the Father moving.

If the Son of God lived from intimacy rather than independence, how much more should we?

The invitation before the Church today is not to do more—it is to abide more deeply.

The Lord is saying:

"Come back to My presence. Lay down the weight of self-effort. Stop measuring yourself by productivity. Receive My rest. Live from your seat in heavenly places. Let intimacy become the source of everything you build. From that place, your family will flourish, your ministry will bear fruit, your work will reflect My wisdom, and your life will reveal My glory."

The season ahead will not belong to those who strive the hardest, but to those who remain closest to Jesus. Those who learn to rest in Him will hear His voice clearly, move in His timing confidently, and bear fruit that remains.

The call of Heaven is simple:

Come to Jesus.

Abide in His presence.

Live from your seated position in Christ.

Follow the example of the Son, whose intimate fellowship with the Father became the source of everything He did.

For in His presence there is rest for weary souls, strength for every assignment, and grace to fulfill every purpose He has ordained.

Reflection

- Am I listening for the Father's voice before I act?
- Is intimacy with Jesus the source of my decisions, relationships, and service?
- What practical step can I take today to cultivate a deeper life of abiding?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing me what a life of complete dependence on the Father looks like. Help me to seek Your presence before I seek productivity. Teach me to hear Your voice, trust Your timing, and follow Your leading. May my family, my work, my ministry, and every part of my life flow from intimacy with You. Let my life bear lasting fruit because I remain close to You. In Your precious name, Amen.

Part 1: Guarding Faith and Taking Sin Seriously

Text: **Mark 9:42–50**

Jesus' words in Mark 9:42–50 are among the strongest warnings found in Scripture. His message is clear: God places immense value on the faith of His people, especially those who are spiritually vulnerable. Jesus said that anyone who causes "one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble" faces severe judgment (**Mark 9:42**). While this includes children, it also speaks to young believers and those whose faith is still growing. Our words, actions, attitudes, and example should encourage others to trust Christ rather than weaken their faith.

The Apostle Paul echoed this principle when he wrote, "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification" (**Romans 14:19**). As believers, we are called to build others up, demonstrating Christ's love through humility, patience, and integrity.

Jesus then shifts to an equally serious subject—our personal battle against sin. Using vivid imagery about the hand, foot, and eye, He emphasizes that sin is not something to tolerate or excuse. He is not advocating self-harm but using deliberate exaggeration to show that anything leading us away from God must be dealt with decisively. No habit, relationship, ambition, or possession is worth losing intimacy with God.

Hebrews 12:1 urges believers to "throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles." Likewise, **Psalms 139:23–24** invites God to search our hearts and reveal anything offensive within us. Spiritual growth requires honest self-examination and willing repentance.

In today's culture, sin is often minimized or justified, but Scripture reminds us that "the wages of sin is death" (**Romans 6:23**). Yet God's grace provides both forgiveness and power to overcome through Jesus Christ. As we submit ourselves to Him daily, the Holy Spirit strengthens us to reject temptation and pursue holiness.

Following Jesus requires intentional choices. Protecting the faith of others and confronting sin in our own lives are essential marks of mature discipleship. God calls us to live in a way that points others toward Christ while refusing to allow anything to separate us from His presence.

Prayer Points:

Lord, help me to be an example that strengthens the faith of others, never becoming a stumbling block through my words or actions.

Father, reveal every area of my life that draws me away from You, and give me the courage and strength to remove it through the power of Your Holy Spirit.

Part 2: Refined by God to Live in Peace

Text: **Mark 9:49–50**

Jesus concludes this passage by saying, "Everyone will be salted with fire... Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other." These words remind us that God uses refining experiences to shape our character and deepen our faith. Just as fire purifies precious metals, God allows trials to remove pride, selfishness, and spiritual complacency so that Christ is more clearly seen in us.

James 1:2–4 teaches believers to consider trials as opportunities for growth because testing produces perseverance and maturity. Similarly, **1 Peter 1:6–7** explains that the testing of our faith is more precious than gold refined by fire. While refinement is rarely comfortable, it is always purposeful when entrusted to God's hands.

Jesus also speaks about salt, a symbol of preservation, purity, and influence. Believers are called to preserve godly values in a world that is morally decaying. Jesus declared in **Matthew 5:13**, "You are the salt of the earth." Salt that loses its effectiveness is no longer useful. Likewise, our lives should consistently reflect integrity, humility, and obedience to God.

Integrity means living the same before God and people. **Proverbs 10:9** says, "Whoever walks in integrity walks securely." Humility keeps us dependent on God's grace rather than our own strength. **Philippians 2:3–5** calls us to value others above ourselves and adopt the attitude of Christ. Peace flows from hearts surrendered to God. **Romans 12:18** encourages us, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

The refining work of God prepares us not only to endure hardship but also to become effective witnesses for Christ. Every challenge becomes an opportunity to trust Him more deeply and display His transforming power. Rather than resisting God's refining hand, we can embrace it, knowing He is producing holiness, wisdom, and lasting fruit.

May our lives remain "salty"—filled with grace, truth, compassion, and unwavering devotion to Christ. As we walk in integrity, humility, and peace, we reflect the character of our Savior and become a blessing to those around us.

Prayer Points:

Father, refine my heart through every season of life, producing holiness, steadfast faith, and Christlike character within me.

Lord, help me to live each day with integrity, humility, and peace so that my life points others to Jesus and brings glory to Your name.

The City of God

“Blessed are you, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is your shield and helper and your glorious sword. Your enemies will cower before you, and you will tread on their heights.” **(Deuteronomy 33:29 NIV)**

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, is the City of God. “Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people, Israel.” **(2 Chronicles 6:6)** Jerusalem is still the City of God where He placed His name centuries ago, when David was king.

Israel is constantly in the news. When you hear the news about Israel, have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in a land where rockets, at times, blast over-head on an endless daily basis? What about the trauma the children face from constantly being ushered into a bomb shelter? This is the harsh reality of life in Israel. No wonder, God in His infinite wisdom instructed us to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you.” **(Psalm 122:6)** Clearly God, will protect Israel. “For He said, “Anyone who harms you harms my most precious possession.” **(Zechariah 2:8 NLT)** Israel is in a spiritual battle and as God’s children we need to stand with Israel as her friend. God gave an amazing promise that He has honored since the day He gave it to Abraham. “I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” **(Genesis 12:3)** I am so thankful for all the ministries who support Israel in these times of turmoil that Israel and the entire region is facing. The Bible instructs us in **Isaiah 40:1** “Comfort, yes, comfort My people, says your God.”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we lift up your people to You and we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. We pray for protection for Israel and for those men and women on the front lines of defense. I ask that You bring comfort to all the families that lost a loved one on October 7, 2023, and restore the health of those hostages that were released alive. Thank you for the beautiful city of Jerusalem, where you have put Your name. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Rest. Prayer. Rhythm. - Living in the Father's Daily Pattern

In the Hebrew tradition, the day begins at **sunset**. This rhythm reflects the pattern we see in creation:

“And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.” — **Genesis 1:5**

Before the day begins with activity, it begins with rest. This is a beautiful reminder that God's desire is not for us to operate first from striving, pressure, or exhaustion, but from **the place of His presence**.

The Lord invites us to begin from what He has already provided. We do not rest because everything is finished; we rest because God is faithful. We enter the day knowing we are loved, sustained, and guided by the Father.

Evening: Rest in the Father - As the day closes, return to God. Release the burdens, unfinished tasks, and worries you carried. Let His presence be the final place your heart rests.

“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” — **Matthew 11:28**

Spend time in Scripture and prayer. Fall asleep with the Father on your mind, inviting Him to speak, restore, and recalibrate your soul and body as you rest.

“I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.” — **Psalms 3:5**

Morning: Receive His Direction - Wake with a simple prayer:

“Father, how do You want to lead me today? You already know what is ahead. Order my steps and teach me to walk with You.”

The steps of a [good and righteous] man are directed *and* established by the LORD,
And He delights in his way [and blesses his path].— **Psalms 37:23 AMP**

The day is not yours to carry alone. It is an invitation to walk with the One who already knows the way.

Midday: Return and Be Refreshed - In the middle of responsibilities, pause and reconnect. Let prayer become your reset — a moment to receive strength, wisdom, and peace.

“Remain in Me, as I also remain in you.” — **John 15:4**

The Father refreshes us so we can continue from His presence, not from exhaustion.

The Rhythm

Rest with the Father.

Pray through the day.

Return to Him in the evening.

This is the rhythm God designed — a life that begins in rest, flows through prayer, and returns to His presence.

The world teaches us to work first and rest when we are finished. The Father invites us into a better way: **rest first, then work from the strength, peace, and identity we receive from Him.**

“He restores my soul; He guides me along the right paths.” — **Psalms 23:3**