

DAY 1

“KEEP STRIKING THE GROUND”

“Then he said, ‘Take the arrows,’ and the king took them. Elisha told him, ‘Strike the ground.’ He struck it three times and stopped. The man of God was angry with him and said, ‘You should have struck the ground five or six times, then you would have defeated Aram and completely destroyed it.’” 2 Kings 13:18-19 NIV

2 Kings 13, describes the events at the end of the Prophet Elisha's life. Jehoash, King of Israel, was going to war with the Arameans. Elisha exhorted King Jehoash to take a handful of arrows and strike the ground with them to secure victory. However, Jehoash only struck the ground three times and angered Elisha. Jehoash struck the ground with apathy and did not secure the victory to destroy his enemy. Jehoash failed.

I believe as we go into 2021, we are not to give up or shrink back in our prayers. We need to pray with perseverance and with passion so we do not fail. I believe we need to keep striking the ground for the election. Keep striking the ground for exposure of fraud and for the truth to be declared. Keep striking the ground for an infusion of hope and strike down fear. Keep striking the ground for the prodigals to come home. Keep striking the ground for your healing and freedom. Keep striking the ground for clarity in this season of uncertainty. Keep striking the ground for REVIVAL & REFORMATION! It is not a time to shrink back and let mediocrity creep back into our lives. It is time to stand our ground in the Spirit and see the Lord fight our battle. It is a time to join in with what God is doing and say what God is saying. We know He is fighting for us and the enemy is defeated once and for all. We can have surety in this truth. Our God is victorious.

As we start this new year, let the Lord lead you into His triumph no matter what you might be facing. Be strengthened in the fight, link arm in arm in agreement with Him, and stand shoulder to shoulder with your brothers and sisters.

PRAYER: Lord Almighty, give me strength to continue to strike the ground until I see the victory of the Lord. I declare the battle belongs to the Lord and You are victorious.

DAY 2

“APPROACHING A DEEP DIVE”

”...He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.
He reveals deep and hidden things...” Daniel 2:21

When diving into a pool, a person has a completely different posture and approach if they are doing a shallow dive to skim across the top of the water or if they plan to go deep. When you are swimming laps you dive shallowly, trying to stay on the surface so you are not slowed by going too far down into the water. A deep dive takes an entirely different approach. You intend to go to the depths. You take in more air, knowing you will not have a chance to come up for air as quickly. You approach the dive, launch into the air, and then try to get your body straight up and down with your arms stretched above your head, hands touching, so you can cut through the water with as little resistance from the water as possible. If you want to go deep you need the right approach.

It is the same with the Spirit. Some of our prayer times or times with the Lord skim across the surface of the waters. We have a prayer list to get through and things to get done. We have a certain amount of time for the service, worship, or prayer gathering, so things have to be done in a certain way. But if we want to receive wisdom and knowledge; if we want Him to reveal the deep and hidden things, we need a different approach. We need to breathe deeply of the spirit with the intention of not coming up for a while. Our approach must have the proper alignment of our spirit, soul, and bodies, to cut through all the resistance that pushes back on us trying to slow our descent to the deep things of the Lord. The Lord has wisdom, knowledge, and hidden things to reveal to those who are willing to go deep! Who wants to take a dive with me?

PRAYER: Lord, teach us to breathe deeply of Your Spirit and to position ourselves to cut through the resistance so we go deeper into You. Reveal to us Your wisdom and knowledge. Show us the things You have hidden for us in the depths. Take us deeper, Lord!

DAY 3

“POSITIVITY”

“I know when I am in need. I know when I have plenty. I have learned to be content in any situation. And the reason I know this, I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me.” Paraphrase of Philippians 4, especially verses 11-13.

I had a person ask me one time, “Why are you such a positive person? Why do you always view the glass as being half full instead of half empty?”

My younger years in college were very formative and set me on the path I am on today. My dad gave me a book written by Arthur Pink, which was his views on the book of Philippians. Several verses in Chapter 4 of Philippians were imprinted on my mind, and became guide marks for my life. Verse 4: “Rejoice in the Lord always.” Verse 6: “Do not be anxious about anything”. Verse 7: “..the peace of God, will guard your hearts.” Especially verses 11-13: “I have learned the secret of being content, God is capable of doing anything.”

It is so easy to get mesmerized by all the negativity in the world. Negative press, negative politicians, negative television, rising crime, and changing gender identifications, can cause us to dwell on the bad things we see in the world. I have heard some say, “I am glad I am at the end of my life”, or “Take me to Heaven now”, or such things as “I fear for my grandchildren and what they have to grow up living in”. We as Christians need to rise above this “faithless chatter.” We need to live in the realm of what God can do, of what God is doing, and what God will miraculously bring forth in these challenging times. Paul, the writer of Philippians says it well, I will be content for I have a God in Heaven who is in charge and working things out in His time. I know He can do all things! Philippians 4:11-12

DECLARATION: Despite the negativity we see, the Kingdom of Heaven is coming to earth, and I believe the best is yet to come, “on earth as it is in Heaven.” I believe the good is happening now. It is here!

DAY 4

“DEEPER DEVOTION: PURE AND SIMPLE”

“But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:3 (NASB)

In Paul's second letter to the church of Corinth, he expressed concern and warned them of the warfare being waged against their devotion to Jesus.

There is nothing wrong with gaining knowledge. Our Lord wants us to develop our minds! But our devotion to Christ isn't based on our intellect or knowledge about Him, rather it's based on a personal relationship. Spiritual warfare is waged against us to keep us from intimate personal time with our Father. Sometimes the strategy is to complicate or sophisticate things in a religious ritual. But God longs for us to come before Him with a child-like purity and simplicity. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Spending time with Him, talking to Him, enjoying Him, and being present with Him.

Having a set time for devotions is a great discipline to have. However, random connection with our Lord, throughout the day, can bring a deeper and more endearing intimacy. The scriptures record 47 accounts of Jesus pulling away to spend time with our Father.

PRAYER CHALLENGE: Ask Holy Spirit to nudge you throughout the day to say thanks, give praise, take a moment and rest in His presence, share what is currently weighing on your heart. Obey Him when he begins to nudge you!

DAY 5

“DRAWING NEAR”

“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.” James 4:8

We can be as close to God as we choose to be. At any point, we can draw an imaginary line and stop pursuing Him. Or, we can take time to seek to know Him more.

In the wilderness, Moses went up into Mount Sinai to be in the presence of the Lord. He was invited. He chose to respond. Meanwhile, the people of Israel remained at the bottom of the mountain. Later, the Lord invited all of the people to come closer to Him just as Moses had done. However, the people “*remained at a distance*” (Exodus 20:21). They preferred to have Moses tell them what God said, rather than have a face-to-face encounter with Him.

Such choices have consequences. David would later write in *Psalms* 103:7 that Israel knew the “*deeds*” of the Lord, but Moses knew His “*ways*.” From a distance, Israel saw the miraculous activity of the Lord. But up close and personal, Moses discovered why God did what He did. They observed what happened, while Moses experienced His heart.

Psalms 75:1 describes the heart of God this way: “*Your name is near.*” His “name,” who He is at the heart level, is One who longs to be close to us. To draw us into the secret place where He loves to share His deepest thoughts with us.

Close relationships take time. They require vulnerability. As we hunger for more of Jesus, we will be filled with more of Him. For Jesus drew near to us—to draw us close to Him!

PRAYER: Today, let the prayer of David be your heart’s cry, too:
“*Show me Your ways, Lord.
Teach me your paths.*” *Psalms* 25:4 NIV
“*Reveal the life-paths that are pleasing to You...
I have wrapped my heart into Yours.*” *Psalms* 25:4-5 TPT

DAY 6

“EVERYDAY FATHER”

“But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all, His Kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and all these things taken together will be given you besides.” Matthew 6:33 AMP

In an effort to grow deeper in the things of God, it would be wise to know God’s perspective on, well, everything. Is that even possible? Where can you find it? One place is God’s word. God’s word is His will!

I remember the first time I heard the scripture in Hebrews chapter 4 about entering God’s rest. What could that mean? Aren’t we supposed to be doers and not hearers only? I began to pray and ask God to help me find out what the scripture meant. I went back over the scriptures in Hebrews 4 and had an “AHA” moment. What the Father wants is for us to stop being doers on our own. God isn’t looking for us to impress Him with our own efforts. He wants us to know the solution is in Him.

Entering into God’s rest isn’t laziness. It’s honoring the Father; it’s about acknowledging Him first, yielding and trusting Him. This is God issuing an invitation to know Him. Sadly this was an invitation the children of Israel failed to accept and failed to enter into a deeper relationship and the rest of God.

These scriptures further bring to mind the scripture, Come unto me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. God’s rest doesn’t mean you won’t be doing anything, but it means you are walking through situations with His presence, His guidance.

Let’s go deeper into relationship with God by seeking Him out, seeking His way of doing and being right. Press into the Father, grow closer to hear Him. He’s waiting to share His ways with you.

DAY 7

“TEND TO YOUR HEART LIKE A GARDEN”

“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.” Proverbs 4:23

A few years back, we were given a small pot of bamboo. Against our better judgement, we planted the bamboo close to the garden. Initially it grew neatly, and we trimmed it. About a year later, we noticed a new shoot randomly growing a few feet away from the original plant. It became imperative that the bamboo be pulled up by the roots in order to cut off every bit of the plant to prevent it from choking out the vegetables in the garden.

Unknown to us, bamboo is one of the fastest growing plants and very invasive. Against our better judgement, we can allow things into our lives that quickly take over and absorb our time and affection for the Lord. Busy-ness, social media, and materialism are things that can creep in and absorb our thoughts and time that are essential in our everyday walk with the Lord. They are like the bamboo that crept into the garden and absorbed the soil, space, and nutrients from the vegetables.

PRAYER: Lord, reveal anything that has crept into my life that chokes out my time with you. I want to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit speaking to me about areas that I should avoid or not be involved in. Prepare my heart so that I can minister to the great harvest of souls in the coming days.

DAY 8

“CREATING MONUMENTS”

“When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.”

“And he said to the people of Israel, ‘When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ then you shall let your children know,’ ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’” Joshua 4:7; 21 & 22 ESV

There were times in my past that I felt like I was at my wit’s end. But it’s in those times that God can work His supernatural splendor. It’s at these times that we need to “mark” or construct a “monument” to remind us of His past and expected future involvement in our lives. While this may seem trivial to some, years ago as a 19 year old sophomore in college, I was reminded by my father that you will probably date a girl for at least two years before you marry her. Here I was with two years left in college. I was desperate! So, on a cold January night in 1972, I walked outside and spoke out loud to God and told him, “I am getting old and need a future spouse”. God answers prayer. Within a week, I met this girl at a Campus Crusade for Christ meeting, asked her out for a first date (to watch me play basketball). Within a week I knew I was going to marry her! It took her a bit longer to realize that I was the answer to her prayers. We’ve been married 47 years.

I tell this story because I constructed a “marker and monument” that I will always remember, in tough times, God comes through!

More time could allow me to tell of additional markers in my life. Stories of how God came through in miraculous and unforeseen ways. The time I was healed of headaches. Another time when God gave me the courage and a clear sign I was to accept an administrative position. The miracle when our twin daughters were born prematurely. And still another, in a time of financial difficulty, a phone call (out of the blue) that realigned and strengthened our finances. I remember all of these and recall and fall back on them.

I constantly remind myself.....If then, then NOW!

REFLECTION: Is there a need for you to go back through your history and reconstruct some “monuments” that will remind and restore your faith and expectations in Him?

DAY 9

“HEARING HIS VOICE IN THE NOISE”

“...And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.” I Kings 19:12-13 NIV

After Elijah killed the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he fled for his life. He arrived at Mount Horeb and went into a cave to rest. In the morning, the Lord came to him and told him to go to the mouth of the cave and stand in the presence of the Lord. As he went to the mouth of the cave, the Lord sent a great wind that tore apart the mountains, an earthquake that shook the mountains, and then a fire that consumed everything. However powerful, chaotic, or spectacular these were, God was not in these things. Then there was a quiet whisper containing the voice and presence of the Lord. Elijah recognized the voice and reverently covered his face.

In these days, our life is filled with the chaotic, dramatic, and sensualized from so many sources. It is hard to know what we should be listening to. It is hard to find the voice that is truth among the noise. So, many times we look for God in the spectacular. Sometimes we expect God to express himself at least as loudly as the noise around us because we get use to the noise. But God has His ways of communicating to us and it is different than what we would expect. Even in the storms of life, He comes to us in quietness and in peace. It reminds me of the story of Missionary Count Ludwig Von Zinzendorf.

It was February 14, 1743 and the ship carrying missionary leader, Count Ludwig Von Zinzendorf was aboard. A huge storm arose and the Captain had resigned himself to the inevitable and said to a passenger, “Within hours we will be at the bottom of this ocean, this ship will not survive a crash against that rocky shore.” Count Zinzendorf looked at the Captain and responded, “within two hours this storm will be abated, and we will be sailing calm seas once again.” In two hours, they watched as the winds abated, the storm clouds went away, and beautiful blue skies and placid seas surrounded the ship. After the storm abated, this captain turned to Count Zinzendorf and said, “How did you know the storm would be gone in two hours?” Zinzendorf responded with these words, “I have had a trusting relationship with Jesus Christ for nearly forty years and He speaks to me in the quiet of my soul when I pray to Him.” This time, he said, Jesus assured that the storm would end in two hours.” And it did.

Even in the noise and the storms of life, we must know that the Lord will hear our prayers and He will speak to us in His gentle way. No matter what the situation looks like, we can have confidence that He will speak to us and we will know His voice.

PRAYER: Lord, teach us to quiet our hearts and minds so that we can hear your voice amid the noise of this life.

DAY 10

“DEEPER TOGETHER”

“What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.” I Corinthians 14:26

When going on excursions deep into the jungle, or scuba diving deep into the ocean, or spelunking deep into a cave, have you ever noticed that the experts says to never go in alone? There is safety and comfort in having others around to help. Yes, there are times to go into your prayer closet, close the door, and pray in solitude, but our Christian walk is mainly to be done in the presence of others.

David’s most vulnerable and weakest times in his life were expressed in the Psalms and sung in the temple as worship songs allowing everyone to learn from his mistakes and to share in his triumphs. It is together where we can encourage one another, where we can evaluate what the Lord is speaking, where we can learn from each other, and can hold one another accountable. If you are trying to do this alone, or as a spectator, you won’t have the “iron sharpening iron” effect (see Prov. 27:17). True depths require close, trusting relationships with others.

So, if you are wanting to go deeper in your walk with the Lord, to learn to use the gifts God has given you, and to be more fruitful in your Christian walk, get into a close, accountable relationship with brothers and sisters in the Lord and take a deep dive knowing others will be around you to help no matter what need arises.

DAY 11

“FEAR NOT FOR GOD IS YOUR ANCHOR”

“Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10

In March of 2020 when COVID reared its ugly head, I was on a cruise ship in the middle of the Indian Ocean not knowing if or how or when I would be able to get back to America. One morning I was sitting in a lounge by myself at the top of the ship, and all I could see around me was water from one horizon to another horizon. There were no other ships around us. I could see that we were sailing into a storm as the clouds were getting darker in the distance, and the white caps were getting bigger and stronger. It made me realize how big and how vast this world was in which we live and just how far away from home I really was. As the boat continued into the stormy area, I felt this spirit of fear want to rise up within me. But then, I heard the Lord say to me, “there is a storm coming that you can’t see just yet, but I am with you and I will never leave you.” (Deuteronomy 31:8)

The rain began to pelt the windows of the ship and the winds were rocking the waves more intensely. I happened to look down through the large windows and noticed that the mast at the front of the ship was shaped in the form of a cross. As much as the boat was rocking and the winds were howling and thunder and lightning were all around me, the mast held firm and didn’t bend or sway as it was anchored to the boat. This reminded me that we are always at home in Christ when we carry the Lord in our hearts. He is at the helm of whatever boat we are in. The crew and captain of the ship may have thought they were steering the ship, but I knew God was really in control. This song came to mind, “It is Well With My Soul.” We all are going through storms of various kinds. If God is at the helm of your ship, He will be your anchor and He will hold you fast and it will be well with your soul.

REFLECTION: Are you able to sing the words to the song, “It is Well With My Soul”?

DAY 12

“THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS PRESENCE”

“Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere.” 2 Corinthians 2:14 ESV

My son recently spent some time filming bees in a bee colony. The beekeeper told him that the colony is held together by their proximity to the queen bee. The queen produces chemical scents that actually keep the colony united. The bees won't settle for an imposter. Their regular contact with her fragrance keeps them buzzing and causes the hive to be productive.

In similar ways, our connection with Jesus causes His triumph over sin, sickness, separation, and all the power of the enemy to become reality to us! The fragrance of His presence unites us. It also ignites us with faith and perseverance. Ultimately, it enables others to encounter Him as we interact with them!

To spread His fragrance, we need to stay close to Jesus. Here are some ways I've found helpful:

- Know that Jesus wants to meet you authentically—whether you're at your worst or your best.
- Being with Him is not a duty to be endured, but an encounter to be experienced.
- As we seek Him with our whole heart, we won't miss a thing He has for us.
- He “speaks our language” (i.e., He fully understands how He “wired” us—how we think, feel, and process).
- Enjoy the rhythm of focused time with Him. Even in quiet moments, He's ministering to us. He's teaching us to rest in Him. To deepen our trust in Him. Interactive dialogue—both speaking and listening—is a natural component of learning to follow Him and getting to know Him.

The Old Testament prophet Samuel had to learn how to recognize the voice of God as he learned to follow Him. Initially, it was awkward and confusing for Samuel. But over time, Samuel came to know His voice as he connected with His heart. Samuel became a man who spread God's fragrance—as he spent time in His presence.

PRAYER: Let's start today with the prayer of invitation Samuel often prayed, “Speak to my heart, Lord. For Your servant is listening.” (1 Samuel 3:9)

DAY 13

“DRAW CLOSE”

“Move your heart closer and closer to God, and He will come even closer to you.” James 4:8 TPT

The Lord is purposeful in the way He deepens our connection with Him. James reminds us in this scripture that our relationship with Jesus is two-sided—we move and He moves. He is fully invested in our connection with Him.

When I first joined the staff at CCC in my twenties, my parents went through a difficult divorce. It blindsided me and knocked me off my feet. It was a struggle for our family with ripple effects and stirred up unhealed wounds in all of us. Two months after the loss, we gathered to celebrate Christmas. When I woke up that morning I asked Jesus to be close to me. It was the hardest holiday full of grief, anger, sorrow and anxiety. At one point my large family was mingling around the living room. I was smiling on the outside yet grieving on the inside. While talking to someone, I felt another person’s hand on my shoulder. You need to know...my family was not touchy so the hand on my shoulder surprised me. When I looked to see who it was, they had quickly removed their hand and moved on. A few minutes later it happened again with nobody behind me when I looked. I was puzzled. The third time, I looked back and nobody was there yet the presence of the hand remained. It was strong, it gripped my shoulder and gave me security. I felt Jesus say, “It’s Me!”. The hand lingered throughout the day.

This forever changed me knowing He really is close to us in time of need and knowing as we draw close to Him, He makes His presence known to us in various ways. You may not feel a hand on your shoulder, but He will show up to you in real ways as you pull close to Him. Whatever is happening at this moment...move your heart closer and closer to Him. He will show Himself. Look for Him. He’s there.

PRAYER: Today I draw my heart away from other people and circumstances to be near You. Show me where You are and make me aware of Your close presence in tangible ways today.

DAY 14

“SEARCH MY HEART”

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24 NIV

Self-help books continue to rise in sales each year with people hoping to find the top three things that they can do to be successful. While many of these books are helpful for self-reflection, they don't challenge you to evaluate your hearts purpose. But God can!

In Psalms, David asks God, “Search me”. If nothing can be hidden from God, why is David asking this question? David is placing himself in a vulnerable place asking God to explore and expose his thoughts, motives, character and unhealthy habits; the things that are not transparent to others. God knows you perfectly. To ensure a deeper connection with Him, we are called to be transparent and allow our thoughts and motives to align with His. Sometimes correction can be uncomfortable, but have confidence knowing that God's counsel is filled with love and grace! His desire is that you would be a humble, teachable servant that reflects His heart.

Every day:

- Know that God loves and wants the best for you
- Invite God to explore and examine your character and motives daily
- Follow His lead
- Obey His guidance

DAY 15

“HEARING GOD’S VOICE”

“The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic.” Psalm 29:4 NKJV

Early in my prayer life, the only voice I recall hearing was my own. In desperation and with many words, I prayed a laundry list of requests focusing only on what I wanted God to do for me. As my walk with the Lord became more intimate, I learned prayer wasn’t about only hearing my voice, but it was about hearing His voice.

The voice of God is a necessity in the life of every believer. Psalm 29:4 says, “The voice of the Lord is powerful and majestic.” His voice is powerful and breaks through the noise of discouragement, depression, and disappointment. His voice reveals His redemptive love, restoration, and forgiveness in our lives. We need His voice to help us navigate through life, and without it we risk missing out on the divine plans He has for us.

I encourage you to make room for the voice of God in your life. I declare, as you pray and read His word, your spiritual ears and heart will be open to hearing what He has to say regarding who you are and what He has called you to do in this new season. I declare, you will know the unique voice of the Father and will ignore every strange voice that attempts to lead you away from His protection, love and care.

God’s voice leads us to victory!

DAY 16

“BREAK UP YOUR GROUND”

“Sow with the view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you.” Hosea 10:12

Back in the spring I decided to reseed a part of my yard that had developed a lot of crabgrass. We put down the topsoil and grass seed, followed the instructions to water it for 14 days. About a month later, the grass began to sprout. About three months later, the crabgrass returned, hum? We skipped the step to break up the ground.

Hosea 10:12 and Jeremiah 4:3 give us the instruction to break up the fallow ground. Jesus shared the parable of the sower in three of the gospels, to help us see we need fertile soil for plants to grow. Paul reminds us we reap what we sow in Galatians 6. Jesus said “apart from Me you can do nothing” John 15:5

It is time to invite the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit to root out weeds of bitterness, unforgiveness, unbelief, and apathy so that seeds of righteousness sown in plowed soil of our hearts can take root as we grow to display his mercy and grace.

DAY 17

“OUR UNCHANGING GOD”

“Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end.” Psalms 102:25-27

If there is one thing, we have experienced over the past year, it is how to deal with uncertainty. It seems at every turn there is change, ambiguity, and a shaking. Nothing is constant or assured. The places people have anchored their lives to have let loose and many have been set adrift in the sea of insecurity.

But we, as believers, have a hope and an anchor that holds even in the ragging storm. Our God has been described in Scripture as our Rock, our Bulwark, our Solid Foundation, our Mountain, our Refuge, and our Strong Tower. All these pictures of our God tell us we have a strong and unchanging God. He is constant. He is unmoved. He is unchanging. He is forever eternal in His existence. Even creation declares He changes not.

When God created the physical world, He reflected his consistency of unchanging in everything. Scientists have discovered what is called the “Golden Ratio” that is used when mathematically observing the created world. It used to be called the “Divine Portion” because the ratio is so constant that no matter what part of the created physical world you would observe it remains unmovable. There is this unchanging rule that reflects our God who does not change in the creation. The Unchanging God is evident in all that we see. In Colossians 1: 15-17, Paul tells us that God created all things, and He is the constant that holds it all together.

Even in the chaos of our life we have an unchanging, unmovable, and never-ending God that is reflected in everything we see. We can put our trust in God knowing that He will keep us secure no matter what the circumstances may be in our life. His character is always true and the same. He never changes! He is always the same.

DECLARATION: Today, no matter how chaotic my world is right now, I will put my trust in You, oh Lord, the Unchanging God. My life is secure in You forever.

DAY 18

“FOLLOWING HIS LEAD”

“Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I call to You, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” Psalms 61:1-2

The words “2020” may evoke negative feelings, emotions or experiences. Crashing waves. That is the picture I use; it seemed like the moment I steadied my feet, another wave crashed down, threatening to pull me under as I searched for solid ground to steady my posture.

Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. This was the cry of my heart with each crashing wave. I was desperate to be heard.

From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint. Is your heart overwhelmed? Many appear to be welcoming the new year with a hope that may feel foreign or out of reach. Do you still feel like a shipwrecked survivor trying to bravely smile through the trials of the past?

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. There is a difference between knowledge and experience. We can know that God is with us, that He is our rock, our strength and safety. But when we are experiencing grief over such loss and devastation, how do we move from the point of mere knowledge? David prayed “Lead me...”. He was aware of his inability to get to the rock but at the same time knew that was the needed destination.

Who answers the cry to lead us? The Holy Spirit, our comforter, will lead and guide us when we call on Him. He will answer us and steady our posture, restoring our feet to solid ground. **He will lead us to the rock that is higher.**

How do we know? Continue reading the Psalms. David gives testimony to what God has done - combining his knowledge and life experience. This builds our faith and reminds us of God’s faithfulness in ALL circumstances.

PRAYER: Let us follow David's example as we pray. Though our hearts may feel faint or weary, we ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us for He is faithful.

DAY 19

“JESUS WANTS TO TALK TO YOU”

“The sheep listen to (the Shepherd’s) voice and heed it, and He calls His own sheep by name and brings them out. ” John 10:3 AMP

Jesus is known as the “Good Shepherd”. A shepherd cares for the welfare of his flock. He protects them from danger, and he cares for their health. Because he cares for the sheep, the sheep know the shepherd’s voice. Because Jesus, our “Good Shepherd”, cares for us, we can know and hear His voice too. You may not hear an audible voice, but God will communicate with you in a language you understand.

Many years ago, I was considering assisting in a Sunday school class. My concern was that I would miss out on some good sermons. As I was vacuuming my bedroom one Saturday, I heard a voice on the inside say to me, “Teach Sunday school.” I stopped vacuuming and got still. As I pondered this, my first thought was that I was considering being an assistant, not teaching the class. I started vacuuming again. Again, I clearly heard, “Teach Sunday school.” The next day, I applied to assist in a Sunday school class. (Yes, I was not obedient.) Within a month, the person I was assisting resigned and I became the Sunday school teacher. I continued teaching the class for about ten years.

Jesus wants to answer your questions, bring peace to your mind and even just make you smile. Ask Him anything, spend time waiting on Him to answer. You will get better and better at recognizing His voice and getting direction for your life. After all, you are His sheep and He has given you ears to hear.

DAY 20

“HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE”

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9

In the Disney Pixar short film called “Piper”, a tiny sandpiper is quite comfortable sitting back in his safe nest being fed by his mother. That is until he opens his mouth, expecting food, and instead sees his mother out by the waves waiting for him to come find his own food on the shore. The little bird reluctantly has to face his fear of the waves. After some apprehension and failed attempts, he learns he can do it! The sandpiper discovers, as he opens his eyes in the middle of the wave, that there is a huge buffet of oysters just waiting for him. In excitement and pride, he begins snatching up those oysters for the other sandpipers as well.

We can choose to see life’s challenges as opportunities to grow, learn and discover all that we are capable of achieving. With a heavenly perspective, challenges give opportunities for empowerment.

When faced with a problem, fear or difficult situation, it is easy to simply see it for what it is, from our limited perspective. It may be scary and uncomfortable. We may want to avoid it completely. But when we draw close to the heart of our Father, we can then open our eyes and see with a whole new perspective. The challenge becomes a victory that now empowers us to operate in our true identity and purpose.

PRAYER: Jesus, give us your eyes to see each “wave of life” as an opportunity to grow, learn and discover our true identity in You.