

# A Walk in the Word

## Small Bites

### Day 1: YOU MATTER (b5-314-052924)

Scripture: Psalms 8:4 - What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

Observation: David is praising God as our Creator and praising him that he cares for us amongst all things he created.

Application/Analysis: You absolutely matter!! Know this, Accept this as fact regardless of any feeling or mood and regardless of whatever you may have done. God says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps 139:14 ). He says that he knew us before we were formed in the womb ( Jer 1:5 ). He says even though today we rate slightly below the angels, one day we will be judge over them. If that is the case, You and I must internalize that you matter, I matter, all humans matter. We are God's treasure and as Jesus said, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matt 6:21 )." So knowing all this means we know God loves us and we know he loved us first (1 John 4:19 ). Therefore, we need also love one another without condition or qualification or status or earning. Yes, the parent, the sibling, the spouse, the addict, the homeless, the rich, the poor, the other race, the LGBTQ+, the sinner, the saint ... all get our love above pets, possessions, and the planet. Lives matter above all else and love is the nexus, the binder that connects us all. We need to allow God's love to flow through us to each other in action and in deeds.

Prayer: Father in Heaven, thank you for creating us and loving us first. Teach us to love as you do and may we serve you and others with the priority that you set as you demonstrate your love to us in action. In Jesus Name - AMEN!

Takeaway: Love is an action word. Be a Christ-like example and lead with love and kindness in all that you do.

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Day 2: SAY IT WITH YOUR CHEST (b5-315-053024)

Scripture: Esther 7:6 - Esther said, "An adversary and enemy! This vile human!"

Observation: Esther screams at King Xerxes, who is the source of the great injustice being done to the people of Israel.

Application/Analysis: Such a valuable and powerful exclamation from someone who considered herself and her voice insignificant. Yet, when prompted she screamed and was heard because she spoke the sincere truth about a big wrong being done to an entire nation of people. God hates injustice and it engenders his anger and judgement and of course, as only he can, he delivers timely justice. What are you angry about? Are you witness to injustice? Are you screaming to be heard so as to invoke change as God would want it? We are not here to be meek as believers in the face of wrong. We are to take a shout at abortion, poverty, homelessness, LGBTQ+ laws, school curriculums, etc. because if policy is successful against God's obvious will, word, and desire and we do not shout, then the blame falls on us who knew "right" in the first place. Evil will thrive if Christians stay silent. Scripture says to resist the devil and he will flee (Jam 4:7 ). It's time to shout back at evil and see how fast it can run away!

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the examples of your people doing right any you supporting them by producing an outcome according to your will. Father, it takes courage to do the right thing, for the right reasons, at the right time. Fill us with holy boldness n our Christian walk, Lord. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: As believers, God calls us to make a stand for Christian principles when we see clear injustices done. We are called to be holy, which is set apart, and willing to accept whatever comes with it knowing with all faith and confidence that God will see us through.

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### Day 3: THE TWO KINGDOMS (b6-1-111924)

Scripture: Matthew 6:10 - Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

Observation: Jesus is teaching and/or reminding everyone how to pray.

Application/Analysis: As we pray for the kingdom to come it is important to realize that there are two kingdoms for which we must pray. The obvious one is when Jesus returns to begin the Millennial Reign and Satan is bound and we finally get the peace that our heart instinctively longs for. God places in our nature the desire to seek love, peace, kindness, joy as these are the only things that give us true satisfaction. We fight like crazy to get them but only when God is the source of them, do we have true and meaningful peace, etc. The second kingdom that we must pray for is the kingdom in our own heart. This is where we place Jesus on our inward throne and allow his gift of grace to be released through us. This is the source of our light from within that shines for the world to see who Jesus is through us (2 Cor 4). God's grace is synonymous with his earthly kingdom that he wants to establish, which is why we don't look for a kingdom in the sense of physical location; but rather, we own the fact that we are God's kingdom and He is in our midst at all times (Luke 17:21) Hallelujah! So this is why we pray - To maintain grace flowing through us. And this is how we pray - asking God to release his wonderful light through us for all the world to see Him and be thankful that He is God.

Prayer: Father, thank you for both kingdoms. Thank you that you rule now in us and over the world on earth and also in times to come. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: Pray God's grace shines through you today for others to see and encounter and pray Jesus returns quickly that we may share eternity in his presence and enjoy everlasting peace and joy.

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### Day 4: PROVE IT (b6-2-112024)

Scripture: Acts 17:24 - The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of Heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.

Observation: Paul is stating emphatically that there is only one true God.

Application/Analysis: As a believer, If you did not say one word out loud, would it be apparent to others that you live for God? People that do not know God ask this question both directly and indirectly. They also ask 1) Exactly, who is God? 2) What is God like? 3) Can I really have a personal relationship with him? At the end of the day, our lives should reflect these answers and we should also be able to verbalize them based on scripture. So here goes... God is our creator (Gen 1) and he created the world through Jesus Christ (Col 1). He does not need anything from you or me like false gods, rather, he looks to gift us eternal life and all that we need while living on earth. God is compassionate, merciful, kind, and a God of justice (Ex 34). He is available to his people and desires that all his people come to know him so that they do not perish (2 Pet 3 + many others). Knowing God isn't like knowing where the mall is or just saying that he is a being up in Heaven. Knowing him is relational, that is why he sent his son to die for us all (1 Cor 15). He gave his best and his everything by giving Jesus just so that we could receive grace and a path to know Him, enter into sonship, and spend our days on earth in peace and our eternity with Him in Glory.

Prayer: Father, thank you that you are who you are and so willing to share who you are with us. May we come to know you more each day and may our lives reflect that we know you well that others may see and desire the same. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: Make an intentional decision to know God for yourself and be able to explain who God is according to the scriptures for anyone who might be curious. Also, let your non-verbal behavior show that God lives in you through Jesus Christ.

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### Day 5: WHY ME (310125)

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:8 - Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Observation: Peter is warning about the plans and tactics of satan and what he will do if he is successful.

Application/Analysis: Do you ever stop and wonder why bad things are happening to you? Do you ever think that life is not fair, or God is picking on you, or simply that you just cannot catch a break? Quite frankly, all of us do and it makes sense. However, I offer that we should take a step back and consider the before and after. Ephesians 6 tells us that we are caught up in spiritual warfare which means that satan knows some things that we do not and because of this he declares war on us. You see, if the enemy is attacking that means that he has peaked into your future of faith and service and sees what and how God plans to use you so he is literally trying to destroy you before you can realize and accomplish what God has planned for you. It is just like when Pharoah killed all the babies because of fear and when King Herod killed all the babies because of a similar fear. They both knew that if the babies were allowed to grow and develop that they would likely destroy all they had built. And clearly that did happen through Moses and Jesus. So as you experience the suffering know two things; 1) Satan is attacking because he wants you to fail before you can get started. 2) God will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast (1 Pet 5:10). So rejoice, my friend, the suffering will make you and me strong in the long run and we will be all the more equipped when God reveals his plans for our life.

Prayer: Father, thank you for growing us through our pains and sufferings. Help us to remember that you are stronger and wiser than the enemy and that you have never lost a battle. We love and trust you, Lord. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: As you face challenges in your life, know that they serve a purpose and use them to let God grow you closer to Him. Thank Him for your experiences, good or bad, and ask him how you can use your experiences to serve the kingdom.

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### Day 6: SMILING FACES (030225)

Scripture: Acts 27:30 - In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow.

Observation - In the midst of a huge storm, Paul and 275 others were hoping to survive. Those without faith pretended to lower anchor but really lowered lifeboats.

Application/Analysis: Fear is something else. It leads us all to make decisions that in a calm rational moment we would likely not make. And it brings out the worst in our character in the sense of lies, deception, cheating, stealing or whatever else we think we need to in order to survive the situation. Smiling faces is a phrase from the 1970s which describes a person in such a dilemma. It literally means that someone like you or me would pretend to be or do something all the while deceiving others in order to get our desired outcome. How often do we do smiling faces with God? We tell him what we think he wants to hear or we act like we are walking according to his will all the while knowing that we are in submission to something else. C'mon, He is God. He already knows...the smile doesn't fool him and we cannot escape reality by pretending. Just like those on the ship, we would fail if we pretend to the Lord. He said to cast your cares on Him(1 Pet 5:7), He said to give Him your burdens, fears, pain, trouble, tribulations, fully knowing that we would have them. He wants this in pure honesty and sincerity so that He can get you through it by his grace, love, and mercy. Notice I said, "get you through" not "remove" it. This is because it is how God grows us and moves us closer to Him. So I do encourage you to smile in the face of challenges because we have a God who cares and will deliver us through the storm. Trust Him, He will hear you and He will answer you.

Prayer: Father, thank you that you hear us when we call you and you answer us and meet our needs according to your will. Help us to be honest and confident with our needs and not be fearful or embarrassed because we have them. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: TRUST, TRUST, TRUST!!! That is the key. Tell God the truth, and trust in His solution to your problems. He will not let you down.

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## Small Bites

Day 7: HE AINT HEAVY (040225)

Scripture: James 5:20 - remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Observation: James is counseling believers to be available to help others who may have slipped or fallen along the way and need help back to living a Christian life.

Application/Analysis: What is our job as Christians? Well clearly we have many but much if not all of what God wants us to do is to help others either find Him or stay on the path with Him. Paul counsels us to consider the needs of others before our own (Rom 12:10 ). Jesus said that no greater love than a man lay down his life for his brother (John 15:13 ). We are supposed to pray together, play together, mourn together, rejoice together as we are all part of the same body of Christ. So if we notice someone lost along the way, we should literally drop everything and help them find their way back to the Lord and in doing so, we can help them avoid additional challenges that they might otherwise face. In the same way, you and I should also seek prayer and counsel from our brothers and sisters in Christ as we face our own challenges because Satan loves to catch us isolated as he will attempt to deceive, discourage, and distract us from doing the will of God. We are here to work together and as such we are so much stronger as Christ works through us to accomplish God's purpose. Let us look to help our fellow believers. They are not heavy.

Prayer: Father, we thank you that you made us to support one another. Help us to look constantly at those around us and be available to them as you are always available to us. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: I am very fond of saying that love is an action word. Be intentional about looking to serve others in the name of the Lord in whatever way from sorrow to celebration.

# A Walk in the Word

## Small Bites

### Day 8: STRENGTH IN THE STRUGGLE (060225)

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - Rejoice always, **17** pray continually, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Observation: Paul is counseling the believers to follow this formula in order to not fall in difficult times and situations

Application/Analysis: I heard recently that over the course of a person's life, only 3% of the time is spent without some significant need, worry, or concern. So if you are 60 years old that's less than 2 years without issues and a 30 year old doesn't even have a good years worth of a problem free life. So why would God direct us like this? I mean if life is this tough, why am I rejoicing and giving thanks constantly? Well, my friend, it is because we live in the light meaning that Jesus lives in us and therefore we have his strength in our struggle. We do not worry about the darkness and when it will come or what it will bring or how long it will last. And when it does come, and trust me that it will, we thank the Lord for our circumstances. We release it all to him in constant and continual prayer, and we rejoice because nothing can separate us from the love of God through Jesus who lives in us (Rom 8:38-39). It is often said that the struggle is real and I have no argument against that truth, scripture supports that over 150 times with almost 100 of them in the New Testament so I will and I hope you will do as James and count it all joy(Jam 1:2) and do as Peter and cast all your cares on the Lord (1 Pet 5:7) and be confident in the strength that only He can provide.

Prayer: Father, thank you for our landing spot. Thank you that we know exactly where to go and exactly what to do as the struggles of this world challenge us. May we remember to leave it all at your feet and be thankful for your deliverance. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: Know this!! Don't think, wish, or wonder. Know that God is with you in EVERY situation and circumstance and that you have already won so remain prayerful, thank Him, rejoice, and praise Him for all He has done.



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### Day 9: THERE IS NO PLAN 'B' (070225)

Scripture: Joshua 24:15 - But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

Observation: Joshua is making it plain with no wiggle room that we have only one choice to make and which one we should choose.

Application/Analysis: Let's face it. Our society and culture today affords us all lots of options and if we don't like something, we simply just choose another. There are no more absolutes and if anyone dare declare that something is absolute they instantly become a villain because again - I demand choices! If I'm tired of my spouse; divorce and get another. If I don't like my sex; I can change it. I dictate to my employers my working terms and conditions. I decide what I will take from Jesus, Gandhi, Buddha, Mohammad, John Smith and others and make myself spiritual. Well folks, this was tried long ago by the Israelites and Joshua told them, just as I am telling you, there is no plan B. There are no other opinions, no other choices except God and no other way to heaven and salvation except through Jesus. Yes, you and I do get to make a choice as to whom we will serve but if our desire is everlasting life with our creator, we must choose to give our life to the one who gave us life in the first place. Beyond that, He constantly provides, protects, heals, forgives, guides and directs those who serve and obey Him. That's it and that's all. From here the choice is yours.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for showing who you are and what you do and then offering us a choice to join you. Father, I pray we all make the only choice that will last. In Jesus name - AMEN!

Takeaway: Please realize that though the world is pluralistic, God is not. We only get one choice and it is Him and eternity or not Him and Hell. That's it and that's all.