

## Saturday, June 6

Galatians 3:23—4:11 *During the time before you knew God, you were slaves to powers that are not gods at all. But now, when you are just beginning to know the one True God—actually, He is showing how completely He knows you—how can you turn back to weak and worthless idols made by men, icons of these spiritual powers? Haven't you endured enough bondage to these breathless idols?* (vv.8-9 The Voice)

Prior to giving my life to Jesus, I was an alcoholic and a drug addict. My entire life, all my friends, and all my time revolved around alcohol and cocaine. I worshipped them. They were my gods.

When I became a Christian, I stopped drinking and using drugs. None of my new friends drank alcohol or used cocaine. They were completely focused on worshipping Jesus. So, there was no temptation to return to my old ways.

Then came the day when I ran into my ex-fiancé. It took all of thirty minutes for him to offer me alcohol. I froze. Did I really want to go back to worshipping those puny “gods” again? Did I want my life to be controlled by “breathless idols?”

I wasted my entire young adult life in bondage to alcohol and cocaine. Now that I had tasted the freedom offered by Jesus, I did not want to turn back to weak worthless idols. I have not picked up a bottle of alcohol in twenty-two years. Jesus is my God, not alcohol or cocaine.

Ecclesiastes 5:8-20; Psalm 55; Matthew 15:1-20

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## Good News Daily

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## Sunday, May 31

Psalm 63 *I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely.* (v.8 NLT)

As a young child, I was extremely scared of people wearing masks or dressed up in costumes. When we went as a family to Disney World, I dreaded the characters coming out to visit. As soon as a character headed our way, I would dive towards my mom clinging to her legs and hands. My parents would try talking to me, explaining that they were just people dressed up in costumes. But that brought me no comfort, I would just cling harder to my mom. I knew that she would protect me from the big bad characters.

As a Christian, I have that same confidence (even more so) that Jesus will protect me from any “bad character” or situation. If I start to worry, get fearful, or am uncomfortable in a relationship or circumstance, I cling to the Lord. Knowing that He will keep me safe. He will hold me securely. While my relationship/circumstance might not change immediately clinging to Him will bring me peace in the midst of what is going on.

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11; Psalm 98; Acts 8:26-40; Luke 11:1-13

## Monday, June 1

Psalm 52 *You love to destroy others with your words, you liar!* (v.4)

We live in a social media driven world. At least for my generation. While there are people who use social media to spread love and truth, they unfortunately seem to be in the minority. Whereas our enemy, the liar, is having a field day flooding social media with hate, lies, and gossip.

Have you ever taken a moment to read through the comments on popular posts? I normally, don't. But the other day, I did. I was appalled at the way commenters were ripping each other to shreds. That might sound overdramatic, but it was truly that bad. I think the anonymity of sitting behind a computer screen, typing whatever pops into a person's mind, has created a toxic environment that the enemy uses to destroy others.

Words have the power to build up or tear down. I don't know about you, but I don't want the enemy to be able to tear people down using my words. So, each morning I pray this simple prayer, “Lord, please let my words build people up not tear them down today.”

Ecclesiastes 2:1-15; Psalm 41; Galatians 1:1-17; Matthew 13:44-52

## **Tuesday, June 2**

Galatians 1:18—2:10 *There was only this report: “That man who once persecuted us is now preaching the very message he used to try to destroy.” Their response was to recognize and worship God because of me!* (v.4 MSG)

I met my best friend, Joshua, right after he had been saved. He was in a Christian Regeneration program (Open Homes Fellowship (OHF)) for recovering addicts.

Joshua grew up in a Christian home, but he turned his back on his roots and Jesus as a teenager. He was addicted to drugs. And he went to prison for counterfeiting money.

When he got out of prison, he went to the program at OHF. He gave his life to Jesus while in this program. Joshua graduated from the program, but felt called to continue living at OHF. He ended up becoming the Director of Phase One. He introduced men to Jesus through his own testimony of healing and freedom. Joshua pointed hundreds of men towards Jesus, towards their salvation, and towards freedom from addictions during his time at OHF.

While Joshua once stood for everything opposite of a Christian life, Jesus transformed him into a man who preached the message of salvation and freedom from addictions found only in a relationship with Jesus. His testimony led other men to worship God.

Ecclesiastes 2:16-26; Psalm 45; Matthew 13:53-58

## **Wednesday, June 3**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 *A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance.* (v.4 NLT)

Most of the time we think of crying and laughing and grieving and dancing happening in different moments. But sometimes they can happen in the same space and time.

The Lord has blessed me with several of these shared “time” moments since my dad died earlier this year. While I have been grieving the loss of my dad, the Lord has reminded me of times I stood on my dad’s feet as we spun and danced around our family room. Another moment was when my aunt and I drove my dad’s ashes down to Pass-A-Grille, FL (where we had sailed as a family). As we looked over the water, sharing memories of my dad, we had tears streaming down our faces, but laughter bursting forth from our mouths as we both remembered my dad’s crazy humor.

Yes, there is “a time” for everything, but sometimes they can happen in the same space and time. Those times are gifts that Jesus gives us to treasure and cherish in our hearts for eternity.

Psalm 119:49-72; Galatians 2:11-21; Matthew 14:1-12

## **Thursday, June 4**

Psalm 50 *But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors me.* (v.23)

On December 2, 1987, I was sitting in the office of Children’s Home Society signing adoption papers for my daughter. I was an eighteen-year-old unwed mom. If I kept my daughter, we would have had no roof over our heads, no food to eat, and no hope in life.

Needless to say, I was not feeling very thankful at that moment. I was angry at God, angry at my daughter’s father, and just plain angry. But I knew that I was doing the right thing for my daughter.

As, I look back at that moment I have tears in my eyes and a heart overflowing with thankfulness to Jesus for giving me the strength to do what needed to be done. It cost me a lot emotionally to sign my name on those papers. But I will always praise God and thank Him for the way He honored that sacrifice by giving me peace that my daughter has a good life. Sometimes, giving thanks when we least feel like giving thanks is when we need to give thanks the most.

Ecclesiastes 3:16—4:3; Galatians 3:1-14; Matthew 14:13-21

## **Friday, June 5**

Matthew 14:22-36 *But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”* (vv.30-31)

Recently, God called me out of my comfortable living arrangement of fifteen years. I had just finished packing up my dad’s house and now God was calling me to pack again. And I was leaving during a time when my roommate was experiencing a major emotional crisis.

I felt surrounded by strong winds and waves of emotional upheaval. I kept trying to walk in faith eyes focused only on Jesus, but I began to sink. I spoke with a pastor, my family and friends. They all told me that it was clear that God was calling me out of the situation, but I just couldn’t seem to let go. I sank faster into the stormy emotional waves.

Then Jesus stuck out his hand grabbing me out of the waves. He showed me that He was providing exactly who my roommate needed during her crisis. That He was getting the glory for taking care of her. As I watched the circumstances play out, I knew that I should have never doubted Jesus. His plan is always perfect.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7; Psalms 40, 54; Galatians 3:15-22