

# Lord, Teach Us to Live

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## *Lord, Teach Us to Live*

Christ's disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray," and as He taught them the Lord's Prayer, He taught us how to live.

These writings are intended to encourage those of us who follow Christ and seek a closer relationship with Him. Our Lord's words as He taught His disciples to pray give great insight into how we can live in this evil world and yet be separate from it.

First, let us look at the Lord's Prayer in its entirety. While researching the prayer, I found this beautiful translation from the Biblical Hermeneutics Stack Exchange. It claims to be a literal translation. Whether it is or isn't I do not know. What I do know is that it draws me deeply into the prayer, and I hope it touches you as well.

**Father of ours who's in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name of yours,  
come thy kingdom of yours,  
arise thy will of yours,  
as in heaven, also on earth.**

**This bread of ours that's for the coming day  
give us this day.**

**And free us from these debts of ours  
as also we have freed those debtors of ours.**

**And do not lead us into trial,  
but draw us to you, away from that which is grievous.**

There are a variety of translations of the Lord's Prayer. Many of us memorized the King James Version of Matthew 6:9-13 when we were young. It goes like this:

**Our Father, which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive them that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom,  
The power, and the glory, Forever. Amen.**  
(Some versions use the words "forgive us our debts as we  
forgive our debtors")

According to Andrew Brown, the religious affairs correspondent for the UK-based Independent News, there are two other versions used by the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> One is the modernized version of 1662 which, at the end, says, "the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

The other from the 1980 American Standard Bible goes like this:

**Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,**

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1 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lords-prayer-to-be-given-in-three-versions-1411325.html>

**Your will be done on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
Now and forever. Amen.**

The Lord's prayer is listed twice in the Bible, once in the gospel of Matthew and once in the gospel of Luke. They are similar but vary for reasons which we don't need to go into except to say just a little about Luke and Matthew.

It is accepted that Luke (a doctor) was a Gentile and wrote His narrative of Christ's life and teaching 60 to 69 years after Christ's death and resurrection. He investigated and researched Christ's life and the creation of the church and wrote accordingly.

Matthew was one of the twelve disciples of our Lord. Matthew was writing his personal recollection of the life and words of Christ.

Here is Luke's version:

**"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of His disciples said unto him Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said unto them, 'When ye pray, say,**

*'Our Father, which art in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
as in heaven, so on earth.  
Give us day by day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our sins,*

*for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.  
And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.”*  
(Luke 11:1-4 KJV)

It is not important that the versions vary slightly or that there are many translations. They teach us to begin with praise, to ask for God's will, to ask for forgiveness, and to ask for His help to forgive others. We are taught to continue by asking for God's protection and deliverance and to end our prayer with praise again. This is a very unselfish prayer unlike those that we often hear today.

The value that we find in the Lord's Prayer is not just that it shows us a better way to speak to the God of creation, but that it shows us a better way to live our lives as Christ's followers. It speaks of God as our Father. It shows us a picture of Heaven and Holiness. It encourages us to look forward to His Kingdom and, while we wait, to do His will. It shows us about *needs* versus *wants* in our prayers and in our lives and reminds us to forgive as we have been forgiven by Him. It speaks of the evil that we face daily and how much we need His protection and guidance. And it reminds us how great is our God.

My prayer is that *Lord, Teach Us to Live* will encourage and strengthen the reader as I break down the parts of the prayer and write about the difficulties we face in our daily lives. May we always allow God to teach us through His word.

Jennifer

# Chapter One

## *Our Father*

### **The Truth about Fathers**

*But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand (Isaiah 64:8).*

God our Father is the perfect example of what an earthly father should be. He loves us unconditionally. He does not hold a grudge or remind us of what we have done in the past. He gives us what we need but not always what we want. He knows what is best for us but allows us to make our own choices. He comforts us when bad things happen, teaches us, guides us, and directs our paths if we listen to Him.

Some earthly fathers are good examples of God, loving and kind and willing to do anything for their children. Some never raise a hand in anger. They teach their children the difference between right and wrong.

Some fathers are the opposite and do not represent God. All over the world, there are fathers who are not in their children's lives at all due to divorce or abandonment. The

type of father we have or had can color the view we have of our Heavenly Father. It is important for us to know who our Heavenly Father truly is and how much He loves us.

A father in the biological sense does not necessarily mean a father who cares for us. A biological father may not have any of the above listed good traits and often a non-biological father will. Depending on which type of father we have—one who is loving or one who is not—when we begin to form a relationship with God and His son Jesus, our earthly father's attributes may come to mind and cause us to think that He is like the father we have known in our lives.

If we have a loving earthly father, it is easier to see God as loving. If not, we struggle with the term 'God the Father,' remembering only the anger and cruelty of our own. We may think of God as one who punishes, a God of all *no's* who wants to spoil our fun or wants to beat us into submission. If we did not have a father growing up, we may not know what a father is supposed to be like and have difficulty developing a strong personal relationship with God.

If we have a negative view of fathers, we must put that away and know that God is loving and kind and wants only to give good gifts to His children.

***The original Greek in the Bible pater - father; means one who imparts life and is committed to it; a progenitor, bringing into being to pass on the potential for likeness.***

This definition says more than we might see at first reading. A father is one who **imparts life** whether biologically, spiritually, or emotionally. An adoptive, foster, stepfather, or grandfather can impart life in our hearts. Feeling loved and cared for by a father or mother figure can bring life to those who feel dead inside.

A good father is **committed** to the life of the one he loves and can cause that child to **become like** him. An evil father can do the same. We can become like either of them or we can



become like our Father God, the one who truly **imparted life**. We can choose.

God created us and is committed to guiding us into becoming **more like Him**. When we were lost, He sent His son to redeem us and bring us back to Him. If we don't have a loving father here on earth, we always have a loving Father with us. He is **committed** to bringing about the best in our lives when we accept Him as our Father.

*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change (James 1:17).*

Though God created all of us, many are separated from Him. There is one way to call God Father and that is by accepting the sacrifice of His Son Jesus and asking for His forgiveness of our bad choices, evil actions, and crimes – all of which are called sin. Turning away from them permanently and turning to God is how we allow God to truly be our Father.

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).*

Believing in His Son Jesus is the way to eternal life with the Father. We read John 3:16 but focus our attention mostly on the last part. Believing is what brings us life eternal with God but what about the first part of the verse? Our Father loved the WORLD so much. He continues to love His creation, the world. The verse doesn't say that He loved US so much or CHRISTIANS so much. It says He loved the WORLD. He is the Father of the whole world which He created (**imparted life to**) and is **committed** to. He wants the whole world to become like Him as we were created in His image. He is the

perfect Father.

*One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Ephesians 4:6).*

## **A Father's Love Has No Bounds**

Jesus Christ, God's Son, is also God just as the Holy Spirit is God. This is called the trinity. God is the Father. God is the Son, and God is the Holy Spirit. They are three in one just as we are body, soul, and spirit. We are created in His image in this way.

*Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works (John 14:10).*

When we create something good like a work of art, it has value to us. We might even say we love it. The artist or creator wants to protect it because we know it intimately with all its strengths and weaknesses. We know what the best use of it would be and how best to handle it. We know how to pack it for mailing or as a gift. We want people to love it as much as we do.

God our Father created us. He knows everything about us. He knows our strengths and weaknesses and how we should be handled. He knows who we need in our lives and He knows what will make us stronger so that we can deal with this life. He created us and we are living creatures with the God-given capacity to love. He wants us to love Him just as He loves us.

*The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he*

*will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing (Zephaniah 3:17).*

God our Father never leaves us, and He never stops loving us no matter what we do. Even if we turn our backs on Him, He is there waiting for us to come back. When life causes us to stumble or we are hurting, He is there to pick up our pieces and put them together again. He is constantly trying to bring us into a close relationship with Him. We only need to call out to our Father.

*For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).*

It is not our Father who has caused the discord and evil in this world. The powers of darkness that currently rule over the earth try to draw God's creations away from Him and are working in every possible way to turn us from our true path. They lie to us about God, but still, He allows us to choose our own path because He has given us free will.

God has always wanted sinful man to have a loving beautiful relationship with Him as it was in the beginning. To bring us back into that relationship, He made the ultimate sacrifice by sending His son to die in our place. All we need to do is accept that He is our God and Father and that His son died in our place. All we need do is to ask for His forgiveness and His love will enfold us. He is waiting as a loving Father does for us to draw closer.

*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).*

We don't have to be anything the world deems as special.

We are special to God because He made us. To return to Him, we don't have to be good enough or better in any way than we are right now. We only need to accept His gift and His love which is limitless and unconditional.

We show our gratitude and love back to God by the way we live in our songs, in our hearts, in our actions, and in our speech.

## He is Always Here

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).*

God is always with us. Every person on earth, under the earth, in the sky, on the moon, or wherever they happen to be at any given moment, has God with them. This concept is challenging to grasp even for those who know the majesty and the omnipotence of God. For unbelievers it is impossible.

We may find it hard to believe that God the Creator of the universe would want to spend every minute standing by our sides, living in our hearts and loving us as though we never did anything wrong. We struggle to understand this love even knowing that the blood that was shed by Christ has cleansed us from our sins and redeemed us in His eyes. Believe!

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Corinthians 13:14).*

We are encouraged by the knowledge of His presence. We can be comforted to know we are not alone. It is difficult to understand how those who don't know God as Father get through their daily lives without being emotionally destroyed

by the evil around them. Knowing He is here to help direct us and keep us out of troublesome situations lets us breathe in His peace.

Though many of us know He is here, we often don't behave as such. If Christ were physically with us, our actions would most certainly be different. Our speech would be kind and thoughtful and our pace unhurried so that we could stop and be helpful to those in need. Our diet might even change along with our sleep patterns, our rising, and our retiring for the night. The movies and the television shows we watch along with the music we listen to and the conversations we have with others might change drastically. We need to always be the person God wants us to be because He IS here with us.

*Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).*

God wants His consistent guardianship and friendship to be a comfort, not a punishment and not a judgment. He loves us so much that He greatly desires our company. He wants to commune with us and have a relationship with us that is more than just one day a week. He instructs us, guides us, and gives us spiritual gifts and talents to use for His glory. He rejoices when we walk and talk with Him. He desires unceasing prayer. That means we can talk to Him constantly throughout our day.

If we view His attentiveness and persistence as negative, we need to rethink our values. What a comfort it is to know that God stands beside us when things are bad, not just when things are good. He is also seeking and speaking to those who don't know Him yet. He never gives up on anyone no matter where they are, what they have done, or what they are doing.

His Holy Spirit is with us. We have access to the King of Kings and all that He has to offer just for the asking. He is

standing right here right now. We are strong with His might. We are fearless with His courage.

Today, we cannot count on anything in this world and this world gives us nothing, yet we seek everything it appears to offer. All we can truly count on is God our Father to be with us until the end of the age. Let us seek Him and acknowledge His loving care each minute, knowing that He is always here.

*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).*

## Hearing the Father

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come (John 16:13).*

God speaks to us, but do we hear? His ways of communicating are varied and many. Hearing Him can be a challenge and takes practice. To hear God, we normally would have a close personal relationship with Him. We must be in conversation regularly with Him and avoid doing all the talking (or asking). We must patiently wait for God to speak. We must listen with our spiritual ears and hearts.

If we are only approaching our Father with our needs and wants and if we are never still or listening for His voice, we will miss it. Though our Father could speak to us through very clear and miraculous ways, that is generally not how we hear from Him.

God speaks to us through His Holy Spirit to our intellect

(our mind), whom some call our soul (as in body, soul, and spirit). Whatever we call it, the more communication time we have with Him, the more we will learn to recognize His voice. Since He is always with us, we should always be ready to hear what He has to say.

The Holy Spirit also speaks to our spirit. We might call it intuition, conscience, or a gut feeling. We may feel led by the Spirit of God and this is another way that we 'hear' Him. If any of these 'feelings' are contrary to God's word, then we are not hearing Him but another voice. We can practice and learn to discern God's voice.

***Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God (1 John 4:1a).***

*"At the deepest level our spirit gives us meaning and purpose and our spirit enables us to love one another, our self and God. It's through our spirit that we have communion and fellowship with God. Our spirit gives us intuition between right and wrong" (Faith and Health Connection).*

***My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (John 10:27).***

There are no tricks to hearing from God. He is our Father. He hears us when we talk to Him and He speaks plainly to us. However, when God does not talk back immediately or what we hear is not what we wanted, we may become frustrated and disregard it as not coming from Him.

We all hear from God, though we may not be aware that He is speaking. Sometimes He speaks through our conscience or through a song or through a message at church. Sometimes He speaks through others to confirm what we think we have already heard but are unsure.

Sometimes He speaks to us when we can't sleep, recalling

people who need prayer or revealing a message that He would like us to take to them. He doesn't only speak to us when we pray but when we listen.

*And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left (Isaiah 30:21).*

Reading our Father's messages in the Bible and communicating with Him about every aspect of our lives will determine how easily we recognize His voice over others. God's voice will never contradict His word. That is key. Other's voices will be worldly, unkind, contradictory, angry, or manipulative.

God is not sneaky. God is love. When the voice we hear is not filled with love, it is not God. In reading or listening to God's word, we will know the mind of our Father. When He speaks, we will know it is Him if it aligns with His word.

We often talk about asking God for wisdom and knowledge and yet have no idea how to recognize when those are given to us. We can be confident that God is giving us what He promised, but it is our responsibility to be able to discern His voice above the rest.

*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (Romans 10:17).*

Let us consider Romans 10:17, which is a verse some struggle with. Our faith is made stronger and our relationship with the Father becomes greater when we **hear** from Him. Faith comes from hearing. We hear from Him because we **read His word** and follow it (hearing through the word of Christ). The more we read, the more we hear and the greater our faith becomes. This life cycle brings both knowledge and wisdom, helps us recognize the voice of God, and fills us with His peace.



The accuser of this world the devil will try to speak but God will overpower that voice. Listen only to the goodness of the Father, the Creator of us all. His voice is only good. When good thoughts come, repeatedly pray about them and God will confirm them in your heart.

If He speaks a word for us to give to someone else that is encouraging and uplifting, we cannot be afraid to pass it on. An encouraging word will not do harm if we do not share it in pride as if we were special. If we go around telling people we heard from God, we are probably not hearing from God.

Hearing from God should make us humble. Our focus is on a stronger relationship with Him. We will hear from God in His time, not ours. As we become more mature spiritually, we will hear Him more clearly.

The fruit of His Holy Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, will all come to us as we read His word, seek these fruit, and listen for His voice.

## He Hears Us

*And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him (1 John 5:14-15).*

It is important for us to hear God, but it is also very important to know that He hears us. Asking for things from our Father is not difficult, but careful thought should be put into how we pray and for what. Nevertheless, our Father hears us when we pray no matter what words we use, even if our request is not in His will.

We are used to asking for things. We are greedy and selfish

in our old human nature. We go to the Father and we know He hears us, but still, some of our prayers are answered with 'no,' 'not yet,' or 'not this way,' and that does not make us happy. Sometimes we begin to think He doesn't hear us at all.

Prayer is a big topic in the Bible. We are told how and when to pray, where and why to pray, and what to pray for. There are so many scriptures that *appear* to give us the magic key to answered prayer. We just need to do it right, right? Here are some parts of scripture that are often mistaken as a sure-fire way to get what we want. These are all parts of scripture taken out of context (This is sarcasm).

*Prayers of the righteous will be answered; pray for forgiveness; pray for daily needs; ask and it will be given you; believe and you will receive; call and I will answer; pray with thanksgiving; pray for each other; pray without ceasing; pray in secret; ask according to His will; don't use many and big words; pray for your enemies and those who hate you; pray for the government and the leaders; pray humbly; ask in my name and it will be given to you; pray with lifted Holy hands; pray that we won't be tempted; pray with faith and you will receive; and if two or more agree you will have what you ask.*

So, (facetiously) this is easy; we just need to be righteous, humble, forgiven, thankful, constantly in prayer in secret with small words but with at least two people with our hands up praying for each other, government, and our enemies with faith in accordance with His will and be sure to say "in Jesus name" before the Amen. Then we will have everything we want. No problem.

God hears prayers of all types and from everyone, not just those that follow what we sometimes perceive as the prescribed format. He loves for us to bring our needs to Him in any way

we can. He wants us to fellowship with Him as any father would. God is listening to our hearts. The scriptures about prayer are to encourage us **to** pray, not to give us a magic formula for getting our prayers answered. For example:

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Philippians 4:6).*

God doesn't want us to be **anxious**, so we are encouraged to bring our needs to Him in prayer. Sometimes it seems that prayer is seen as money for a vending machine of blessings. But prayer is communication with our Father, our God, and our Lord. We should be in constant contact with Him throughout the day telling Him the good and the bad and asking for His will and guidance along the way. We should spend as much time in prayer as we do on our cell phones. *Ohhhh, that hurts.*

Our prayers become cries of desperation when we are in pain, worried, broke, or sick, and that is okay with God. He understands that we want the pain to end, the worry to be solved, finances to be provided, and health to be restored. He even understands when we are angry at Him. God is listening, and He cares.

The problem with prayer is ours, not His. When prayers are not answered in the way that we want, we feel let down by God. We may even be upset with ourselves for not having enough faith to bring the answer about in the way we prayed for it. We followed the formula, but we didn't get what we wanted. Didn't we have even a mustard seed of faith in us? Faith is strong and God does bless faith, but He also wants us to have what we need and those around us to have what they need. In sports, both teams don't win even when all the mothers on both sides have faith.

*Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (Mark 11:24).*

In this scripture, it's all about the word "whatever." Word usage in the Bible needs to be understood in the context of the language of the day and how the people would have understood it. When writing their letters, the apostles knew their audience and what they would understand the word "whatever" to mean.

The word "whatever," when referred to in prayer to the newly formed churches of Christ, meant "whatever we ask for in accordance with God's will." The same goes for believing and faith. It doesn't matter how much we believe if what we are asking for is not in accordance with God's word and His will. The answer will be "no" if it is not in our best interest or in God's great plan for our lives.

Today, we use words in the same way. Meanings of some words are implied because we are familiar with the speaker or the subject. If our spouse is drinking a soda, and we ask, "May I have a drink?" He or she will not go get us water because they understand that we are asking for a drink of their soda. If they are eating and we ask for a "bite," they will not offer their arm for us to bite into; they will offer us a bite of their food. We do not have to be specific because we know they will understand what we are saying.

It is not necessarily our lack of faith or a lack of humbleness that makes or breaks our answer from the Father. God is not turning away because we prayed in the wrong way. His love for us is unending and unconditional. We are free to come before Him with every concern and desire. **John Piper** says it beautifully:

*"We do not purchase answers to prayer by anything we say or do; we only plead for the overflow of mercy*

*already purchased by the sacrifice of our Lord.”<sup>2</sup>*

*Pray without ceasing, (1 Thessalonians 5:17)*

## **Father, I Want It Now**

We live in a fast-paced world where immediacy is key to our existence. A seeming lack of faith is a byproduct of the speed at which we expect things to happen. We struggle with patiently waiting for our Father in Heaven to work out our situation or answer our prayer. We have become so used to instant gratification; we feel that God is very slow-moving. Scripture says He will deliver us, not that He will deliver us immediately. God is not a fairy godmother with a magic wand.

God is not slow nor is He fast. He is perfect. He is a loving Father who is working in the lives of every child He created. His desire is for all His children to return to fellowship with Him. If He were to work out our situation quickly, what would that do to the problems, prayers, and concerns of the person next to us?

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance (2 Peter 3:9).*

If we have human fathers that love us and are good to us, we trust them. We might not always agree with them, but we trust that they have our best interest at heart. How much more should we trust and have faith in our Heavenly Father? Impatience does not necessarily show a lack of faith but is a

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<sup>2</sup> John Piper, “What Do Answers to Prayer Depend on? Part 2. God’s Will.” <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-do-answers-to-prayer-depend-on-part-2>.

negative attribute for which we should seek His help. He will give us more patience and faith without judgment.

He understands the world we live in. He understands the pain we feel during difficult times, and He knows that we wish they would be over sooner. Christ suffered all that we suffer and more and left His Holy Spirit to comfort us during these times. Rely on Him and watch for His next move.

Let us look at our pasts and see what God has done in times when we were impatient for Him to work. We need to remember the times we called out to God, "Why are you so slow?" and look at what He did in that situation. If we make ourselves aware of the times God worked out our situation, it will build our trust and faith in Him for the next time.

God doesn't promise that He will strengthen us right this minute or that He will help us in our desired way. He promises to strengthen us when we need strength and to deal with us in the way that is best, just as loving human fathers do.

God's truth is truth whether we like it or not. God's way is perfect even if it seems slow in coming. We can have hope, which is the assurance that God is working for our good. We might still expect immediate results from the world but, from Christ's teaching, we know that not all good things come to us quickly.

***Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12).***

When we are in the middle of waiting for an answer from God or for Him to act on our behalf, we can focus our minds and actions on doing good for those around us. In that way, not only will we be an instrument used of God in someone else's life, we will also turn our thoughts and concerns from focusing on ourselves. We can have confidence that God is constantly moving and acting on our behalf even if we don't

see the results immediately.

*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9).*

We can rest in faith accepting that our Father loves us more than we know, and His ways and His will are better than ours. Lack of faith, anxiety, fear, impatience, and worry do nothing for our emotional or physical well-being. They do nothing to help our situation. They bring only pain and suffering.

Let us work for God in the lives of those around us, showing His great love. Let us breathe and smile, laugh and pray, even if our hearts are breaking, knowing that God only gives good gifts to His children. He will provide what we need when we need it.

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).*