

HSU  
DEVOTIONAL

Two overlapping circles with diagonal hatching. The top circle is red and the bottom circle is blue. They overlap in the center, creating a cross-hatched effect.

# GOD IS: PRESENT

NAME:

# Jesus, I want more of You

*Tim Litovchenko*

**Passage:** Exodus 33:12-20

**Parallel Passage:** Acts 3:20-21

In the midst of storms, it's often hard to understand or draw closer to the presence of God. To fully embrace the holiness of who God is and who He has called us to be. What would happen if we fully sought after the fullness of God and His presence in the everyday? To have a satisfying relationship where the only response was, "Jesus, I want more of you."

Personally, my journey with Jesus has been seasons of up and down. Finding a consistent rhythm with God has always been the second thing on my agenda because of constant excuses rooted by doubt. I have struggled to acknowledge what God has called me to be and do. The bottom line is I have felt unqualified. I have felt unqualified to climb what feels like a mountain.

The truth is that scripture is filled with broken people who thought they were unqualified. The trend that we see in the midst of all the storms is that God shows up and qualifies the unqualified through the Holy Spirit. He has called YOU by name and placed a unique purpose **on** your life - to seek after HIS presence and to lead others to the fullness of Him. When we understand the loving Father we have in heaven is drawing close to us - we must respond with a simple response....

**"Jesus, I want more of you."**

## Prayer:

Lord,

we thank you today that you are all-powerful, all-knowing and always perfectly good. Thank you for your daily mercies to us as we struggle through such challenging times. Father, we confess that we do not seek your presence as we ought. We confess that we have settled for lesser things, when we know you desire us to have a personal, close relationship with you. Lord, revive our love for you. Draw close, let us know your presence in our lives, and help us to in turn share your love with our neighbors. Lord, we put our hope in your unfailing love. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## Questions:

Take a moment to reflect on the mountain you find yourself climbing. Has uncertainty made you feel unqualified?

Has doubt paralyzed your ability to pursue your calling and unique purpose? How?

What can you do now to seek the presence of God in the midst of storms?

How can you invite someone to help you seek the fullness of Jesus?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Jesus Sets Us Free

*Logan Nelson*

**Passage:** Acts 12:5-7

**Parallel Passage:** John 8:36

In your day to day life, do you ever feel stuck by some sort of hurt, habit, hang-up, or just boring routine? Perhaps it feels like you are simply going through the motions, checking off the boxes each day and doing your best to make it to the weekend so you can find “rest,” even though it still leaves you feeling tired. Being chained down by the things that drain us is all too common, and is a struggle that all people go through at some point. We can try and try to break ourselves free, but we have all sorts of fears and insecurities that guard the way out of our cell even if we try to take a step out the door.

This is where we are in luck. Because try and try again, we can't rely on our own strength and willpower. You might think, “If I can't figure this out, how am I supposed to follow Jesus with my whole heart?” The beautiful thing is, admitting you can't figure it out is exactly how you follow Jesus. Admitting that you can't break your own chains and free yourself. Because Jesus is the only one who can set us free, and He loves to set God's children free; and as written in John 8:36, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

For Peter, God was able to not only break Peter's chains so he could walk, but God also led Peter past the four guards who held him in his cell, two of which were so close to him they were touching. God never wants to see you imprisoned by the sin and brokenness in this world and in our own hearts. His will is to see you freed and made whole through relationship with Him. Jesus has made a way for us to find freedom in Him through His death on the cross, and His heart breaks to see us in chains. There is no chain or prison that He can't bring us out of.

## **Prayer:**

Dear Jesus,

bring us freedom from the chains that damage our health, relationships, and beyond. From what we can see coming and what we would never expect, protect and deliver us from anything that threatens to throw us off Your course for our lives.

Give us strength to love people that are seemingly unlovable without compromising our character as Christians. Build a confidence in us that is unstoppable and immovable but guard our hearts from pride. Deliver us from our distorted thoughts, sickness, debt, sadness, struggles, hunger, pain, fear, oppression, conflict, and unbelief, for we proclaim Your Peace over our lives through prayer today. Amen.

## **Questions:**

Is there anything in your life that you feel stuck in or chained to?  
Sin, routine, hurt, relational hang-up?

What would it look like to seek freedom in Jesus instead of acting out of your own strength?

Who around you can you ask to fight for you to find freedom in Christ?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Waiting on God's Timing

*Ashley Nikonchuk*

**Passage:** John 11:1-44

**Parallel Passage:** Isaiah 55:8

Have you ever asked God to do something in a certain amount of time only to be left wondering if your prayers ever arrived? Maybe your prayers have gone like this, "fix my family today ... change my school this year ... bring me good friends soon ... heal our world immediately", but the time comes and the time goes and suddenly it feels like God has gone on a vacation and forgotten about you.

Our tendency is to look around at our circumstances, our lives, the world and say - I know exactly how to fix this and I know exactly when it needs to happen. We think we know best and so we tell God what to and when to do it. But we forget that God says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." (Isaiah 55:8).

Simply put - God is different than we are and His timing is always perfect. Mary and Martha knew they needed Jesus and they wanted Him to come immediately. But by the time Jesus arrived back in Judea, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days and I can only imagine all of the grief that Mary and Martha were experiencing. They say repeatedly, "Jesus if you would have been here then..." Essentially - if you would have done what I asked when I asked it then this would not have happened.

But they had no idea what was about to come. Can you imagine the shock, joy and celebration that they experienced when they witnessed Lazarus return from the dead after FOUR DAYS? Yes, I am sure that Mary and Martha would have experienced joy if Jesus had come immediately and healed Lazarus, but nothing close to the amount of joy they experienced and the glory God received because Jesus chose to wait. And their waiting never meant that Jesus wasn't present, that He didn't hear their prayers or that He didn't love them. When we find ourselves in seasons of waiting, not understanding God's timing we must remind ourselves: Jesus is good. Jesus is present. Jesus loves you very much.

## **Prayer:**

Father in Heaven,

I come before you with my heart filled with different thoughts and feelings. Deep down I wonder, why am I here? What's happening, Lord? But most of all, I wonder, where are you? But even as I pray that, I know you are right where you've always said you would be. You've never left me and you will never forsake me. You know why I am here waiting and you have promised to use it for your glory and my good. Forgive me for all my doubts, worries, fears, and impatience. I believe, help me in my unbelief! Help me to remember that it is good to wait for you. Grant me the joy that comes from knowing you and being known by you. Help me to remain faithful in this place of waiting for as long as it takes. Amen.

## **Questions:**

Is there a situation in your life where you've been unsure about God's plan or timing?

Has God's timing ever caused you to question His presence or His love for you? Why or why not?

What would it look like for you to surrender it to Him?

How could trusting God's timing change your thoughts and attitude about your circumstance?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Spending Time With God

*Logan Nelson*

**Passage:** Psalm 16

**Parallel Passage:** Luke 10:38-42

When reading scripture, I think far too often we look at the words on the page and simply nod our heads and agree without thinking further into what is being said, and we don't engage our belief. For instance, when you read Psalm 16:11, "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand," do you truly believe that Jesus can fill you with joy when you spend time with Him? When we spend time in the Word, our mindset and how we position our hearts is super important. If we read through scripture treating it as a task that we need to mark off, reading the Bible becomes a slog of words on a page. But to spend time with Jesus takes some intentionality.

When spending time with Jesus, don't feel like it has to look a certain way. It doesn't have to be the aesthetically pleasing Instagram photo of a Bible in a coffee shop. What it does take though is making the time about Him. Like in the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42, it means that we need to let go of all the details and things we need to do, and sit in His presence. That doesn't mean that the stuff we have going on isn't important, but rather that the one who is over our lives and the one who counsels us (v7) would love to help you carry it.

So, in knowing that, I want to give you a little encouragement and permission to do something. I want to give you the permission to let go of whatever is bothering you for **15 minutes**. What I want you to do is let go and close your eyes. Pray for God to slow you down and rest. Tell Him something you are thankful for, and if you feel like you can, tell Him that you love Him. Go on, do that RIGHT NOW, I'll wait.

.....

Now, once you've done that, with a slow and open heart, read Psalm 16 again. What sticks out? What do you think of God? What does the Psalm say about God? Is there something in the Psalm you want to believe? If so, it looks like you have something else to talk to God about, and even something to ask the people you know.



