

Week 5

Acceptance and Trust



*Seeking
Serenity
Devotional Book*



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Serenity prayer

God, grant me the Serenity
To accept the things I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can,
And Wisdom to know the difference
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,

Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace.

*Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it.*

Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His will.
That I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with Him forever in the next.
Amen.

Acknowledgement:

A Prayer for Serenity, Trevor Hudson, Struik Christian Media.

MONDAY

Acceptance in relationships



Romans 15: 7 (NIV) *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*

We long for acceptance in our relationships. From childhood, we seek our parents' approval even as we wish for independence. As adults, some of us may still hear a parent's criticism ringing in our ears. We search for unconditional love in various relationships or continually strive to achieve yet more. We want somehow to earn love and acceptance.

We all delight in affirmation from others. Everyone wants to know that even with all of our faults, we are still appreciated, loved, and valued. We want others to accept us as we are, without trying to change us.

Yet only God is able to love us unconditionally all of the time. We are loved—warts and all—and will continue to be loved by God no matter what we do. As we read in

John 3:16 ***For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*** That's how God sees us.

God calls us to see others through His eyes. He calls us to accept others the way He does—as dearly loved, broken children of God who are created in his own image. God challenges us to live into a life worthy of our calling. Accepting and loving each other in spite of our faults, will benefit one another, but, more importantly, it will bring praise to God. When Christians care for one another, God is glorified.

- **Reflection:** Are you ready to praise God by seeing others the way He does?



Prayer: Dear God, as You've accepted me, You're calling me to accept others. I'll need Your grace for me to be able to love like that, for there are a lot of my brothers and sisters in Christ with whom I often disagree. So Lord, please give me Your eyes to allow me to see us all as Your precious children. Keep helping me to become a little more like Jesus, every day. AMEN.

TUESDAY

Accepting one another



John 3: 16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Remember that every time we show love, it gives glory to God. Because God is love, and glory is revealing what God is really like.

God is loving, compassionate and wants us to constantly strive to become more like Him. Quite obviously we're never going to be just like God, but He wants us to work hard at recognising and modelling His character traits. He wants us to learn to love people the way He loves us. It is for this reason that we can so rightly say "God is love".

One of the ways you love others is by accepting them. If you don't like what people do doesn't mean you can't accept them.

What is the difference between acceptance and approval? You can accept someone without

approving of everything they do. There is a big difference. So no matter what people do or who they do it with, or how they do it, you are to love them and accept them. After all, we know that God loves us, but it doesn't mean He approves of everything we do.

Love is saying I accept you in spite of what you do. As Trevor Hudson so succinctly puts it, "*Love the sinner, hate the sin*". And so, let's all be reminded of yesterday's scripture passage - Romans 15: 7 "**Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.**"

- **Reflection:** Who do you need to accept in your life, even if you don't approve of what that person believes or does?



Prayer: Father, thank You for making me just as I am and for looking beyond my faults and for loving and accepting me unconditionally. Help me to accept the nature You have given me, but also help me to be ready to change. Forgive me when I fail to love and accept others in the same way. Grant me the insight to understand others' circumstances and give me the wisdom to handle each situation in the light of Your truth. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“Well done good and faithful servant”



Matthew 25: 21 *“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’*

I am sure we have all wondered what it might be like to stand before Jesus one day and hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” Could any other affirmation be more important?

Can we be assured of receiving this affirmation from Jesus? Yes—through putting our total faith and trust in Him. Jeremiah 17: 7-8 ***“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”***

This trust is what Jesus teaches in the parable of the servants. Two servants received abundant gifts and trusted and believed their master enough invest those gifts. Any investment involves risk. Those servants took the risk

because they believed in their master. The third servant didn’t – didn’t invest his gift, and as a result lost both the gift and his job when the master returned. God—our Master—insists that we trust in Him.

God gives all of us gifts to invest in the world around us. But if you’ve ever been faced with the choice between stopping to help someone or getting to work on time, you might understand how the world doesn’t always value our desire to invest our gifts for God’s glory. Trusting Him enough to use our gifts in His way isn’t always easy. But if we want to hear him say, “Well done,” that is the choice we will have to make.

Reflection: Where do you struggle to obey God? What are you believing or not believing that is causing you to not trust God in this area of your life?



Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me to trust You and to remember You love me, even unto the cross. Give me the wisdom to be faithful with all You have given, and may I look forward to the joy of hearing You say, “Well done!” AMEN.

THURSDAY

Trust and obey



Psalm 119: 44 *I will always obey your law, for ever and ever.*

Have you ever heard the term “earworm”? It describes how the words or the tune of a catchy song can keep running through your mind. (My granddaughter and “The Unicorn Song” “unfortunately” come to mind). Another song that immediately pops into my head when I read the above words, is “Trust and Obey.”

The writer of Psalm 119 often mentions trust. God’s Word is trustworthy he says; so he trusts in God’s laws, precepts, commands, and decrees. Along with that, the psalmist eagerly commits to obeying God’s Word. He explicitly speaks of obedience again and again and again. Clearly, the call to “trust and obey” God’s Word, is at the heart of this psalm.

And there is another theme worth mentioning. The psalmist is

committed to trust and obey ***even in times of difficulty***. When the psalmist cries for God’s rescue, he affirms his desire to trust and obey, no matter what. This helps us see a further way in which Psalm 119 points us to Jesus: on the night before He died for our sins, Jesus faced one of the worst moments of anguish recorded in the Bible, an experience more challenging than any we will ever know. And yet Jesus said to the Father about the suffering that was before him, “..... ***Yet not as I will, but as you will.***” (Matthew 26: 39). Jesus trusted and obeyed. What a blessing it is to know that “while we do His good will, He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey”!

Reflection: In what area of your life do you most need to work on “trusting and obeying” God?



Prayer: Help us, Lord, to live for You, in the assurance that You love us and will never leave or forsake us. AMEN.

FRIDAY

God is already in all of our tomorrows



Proverbs 3: 5-6 *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*

If the future feels uncertain right now, with the Covid-19 pandemic destabilising all our lives, then worry and uncertainty will continue to occupy too much room in our hearts and in our minds. During these difficult days, we need to remember that **God is already in all of our tomorrows**. He knows our way, and He has a plan. And we can be assured it's always the best one for us. God never asks us to figure it all out on our own. He just asks us to trust Him and to recognize His leadership and Sovereignty in our lives. And, if we do this, He promises to make our pathways straight. We may not always be able to see what's ahead, but He does.

There's great power in trusting Him, as this clears the way for our

security and serenity to be based solely on Him, not on our circumstances, or on other people, not on ourselves, or on our own ways of thinking.

He is faithful in leading us and He always sees the big picture. He brings clarity and light in foggy times. He knows what is awaiting us around the next corner. His timing is perfect even when we start to feel like we've been forgotten. No matter how we feel or what our current situation may be, we can be confident that God's presence will go before us, paving out pathways, guiding and guarding our steps. So, keep choosing trust, let go of your worries and hold on to Him.

Reflection: What do you need to trust God with today?



Prayer: Dear Lord and Heavenly father, God of life and compassion, as crisis continues to shake our world, we turn to You with all our worries for our loved ones, for our societies and for our livelihoods and economies. Lord, transform our uncertainty and fear into love and care and give us the courage and wisdom to discern and do Your will in these troubled times. AMEN.