

As Jesus Would Do

The Lord . . . sent them two by two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come (Luke 10:1, *KJV*).

Scripture: Luke 10:1-9

Song: “O to Be Like Thee”

Feral dogs abound on the Navajo Nation reservation. Two of these dogs lived around the Tsehootsooi Medical Center. They were fluffy, black-and-white, and probably littermates. Scrounging for food together, keeping each other warm, and protecting each other from danger, they were best friends. Then, as often happens, one was killed by a car. For days the bereaved one slept on the side of the road with her friend’s body. She didn’t eat or drink. She wouldn’t leave at all until someone came and removed the remains. Only then, with her friend physically gone, did she disappear.

Sadly, sometimes we treat our relationships with contempt instead of cherishing them. But whether in a marriage, family, or friendship, we can be more conscientious to recognize relationships in our lives as opportunities to love and serve one another as Jesus would love and serve.

Our words must be kind because we represent Him. Our actions must put the other person first because that is what His love is like. Our thoughts must be pure toward them because those thoughts are reflective of our attitude toward God (Matthew 5:43-45; 25:40).

Father, when I go out today as one sent by You, I’ll aim to be a blessing, a reflection of Your love. In Jesus’ name, amen.

May 8–14. **Alisha Plummer** is an emergency-department physician assistant. She lives in New Mexico with her family and is always on the lookout for God’s adventures.

Party!

Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20, *KJV*).

Scripture: Luke 10:10-24

Song: “From the Day”

According to Sport-Net, the Stanley Cup is valued at \$23,000. Whether or not that number is accurate, it is the most valuable trophy in North American sports. It stands just over 35 inches tall and weighs 34.5 pounds. Unlike the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl trophy, it is not recast each year. However, neither its value, size, nor rarity stops people from attempting to celebrate with it. In 1962, during the Toronto Maple Leafs’ after-party, the trophy ended up in a bonfire and, not surprisingly, suffered significant damage. In 2021, during the Tampa Bay Lightning’s festivities—with the help of a rainstorm—one side of the cup at the top was flattened.

If a hockey team can get so worked up about winning a towering hunk of metal, we’ve got every reason to be excited about our priceless salvation. Our salvation was purchased with Jesus’ blood, by His death in our place. Forgiveness of sins is available to all who will receive His atoning work by faith.

The Stanley Cup has endured several injuries as the result of “excessive celebration,” but we can rejoice in our salvation all we want. We are God’s children, and our adoption cannot burn up in a bonfire. We are free from sin, and the Holy Spirit never leaves us. That won’t change—even if we slip on the asphalt in the rain. Our salvation is secure because it is guaranteed by God.

Father, today I rejoice in my salvation because it’s worth celebrating more than anything. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Will It Scar?

I said, LORD, . . . heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee (Psalm 41:4, *KJV*).

Scripture: Psalm 41

Song: “Draw Me Nearer”

It was a serious and jagged gash, even by emergency-department standards. Everyone else in the car accident was fine, but the elementary-age boy hadn't been properly belted in. He had a large, crooked cut down the middle of his forehead.

“Will it scar?” his father asked anxiously.

“Yes, but kids heal well,” the doctor reassured him as he prepared to sew it up.

“But you'll be able to see it?” The distressed dad clearly felt responsible for what had happened.

The doctor nodded, knowing that once an injury reaches a certain level in the skin, scarring is inevitable. “The stitches will help,” he added, “and the sooner we can put them in, the better.”

And so it is also with us and the Lord and our wounded souls. We may not like the healing process. It may be slow or painful or humbling. But our God, the greatest physician, knows exactly what He is doing. No time is wasted. No pain unnecessary. Any sacrifice that He requires is for our best. The sooner we realize our need and seek His aid, the better our souls heal from our sins.

Father, You know all things, and You know where I need healing today. Please repair my soul and let the healing begin. In Jesus' name, amen.

The Story of the Lost Remote

My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? (Psalm 42:3, *KJV*).

Scripture: Psalm 42

Song: “Be Still, My Soul”

“If you find Papa’s remote, I’ll pay you five dollars,” my grandfather said to me. My 5-year-old eyes grew wide, and I scampered off to find the treasured remote.

“I’ve scoured the house,” my grandma explained to my parents. “I have no idea where it could be.” Well, neither could anyone else. We tore the house apart. No remote. And that remained the case until we were moving my grandparents’ white couch from Pennsylvania to Arizona. In the process of bouncing it to get a better grip—*clunk*—out fell that remote. It had been literally within arm’s reach for almost a decade, except no one knew it was there.

God, too, is always within reach. But He’s not hiding like some lost remote. Whether it feels like it or not, He’s present with us, desiring to provide what we need in that moment. When others mock our faith or belittle our godly choices, He protects and teaches us to be courageous. When sorrow or depression threatens to ruin us, He surrounds us with His comfort and hope. God invites us to seek and find Him every day, but whether we search for Him or not . . . well, that is our choice.

Father, help me seek You in Your Word. Help me be attentive to Your presence in my circumstances and as I serve others in Your name. In Jesus’ name, amen.

God Has Come

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come (Isaiah 35:4, *KJV*).

Scripture: Isaiah 35

Song: “No Longer Slaves”

Thunder was a brown horse with a white blaze. At 16 hands tall, he was the biggest animal the teenage girl had ever consistently ridden. And though he was “green broke”—just recently trained—he was so mellow that she’d never had a problem with him . . . until that one day. The destination wasn’t far off, when he decided he was done and the rider should be too. Two rodeo bucks later, the girl was flat on her back with the wind knocked out of her, watching as hooves the size of dessert plates flew overhead.

Three inches: that was the distance between my face and where Thunder’s hoof landed. Three inches between life and death. I say that God showed up that day in spectacular fashion. Of course, it’s easy to feel God’s presence when we see miracles. But more often His work is harder to recognize—like those days when we are provided extra strength, inexplicable peace or comfort, or desperately needed self-control. And who knows how often it’s impossible to recognize His intervention—like the car accident we weren’t in because we spilled our coffee.

But regardless of how visible God is, the truth is, He shows up every single day in innumerable ways. That’s why we can be strong and courageous: our God has indeed come to us and is with us every moment.

Father, whatever my circumstances today, I don’t serve fear; I serve You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Expecting Something?

[The lame man] gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them (Acts 3:5, *KJV*).

Scripture: Acts 3:1-11

Song: “I Surrender All”

After hiking 10 miles into the Grand Canyon, I thought the crowd would thin out, but that September there were people everywhere. At Mooney Falls we actually had to wait in line to climb down the ladder-and-chain path there. Trying to escape the hordes, we abandoned the swimming hole and trekked deeper into the canyon until we found a track that led into a slot canyon. At last, the noise of the people faded, and the crystal-clear, blue-green waters were surrounded by red cliffs that weren't speckled with tourists.

The last time we made this journey, the entire hike had been a reprieve from the world. This time the world was there with us for 95 percent of the trek. I struggled to enjoy the beautiful moments of refreshing because I was so busy comparing to last time.

I have a bad habit of doing that with God too—assuming that He will work a particular way because that's how He did it last time. I run a constant risk of overlooking God's refreshing, or disobeying His directions, because I want the same experience as last time. But God is not tethered to “last time.” He is free to keep His promises in any and every way possible. He isn't confined to my expectations.

Father, I'm sorry for those times when I've tried to put You into a box. Help me to rejoice in Your ingenuity as You intervene in my life. In Jesus' name, amen.

Something Old, Something New

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19, *KJV*).

Scripture: Acts 3:12-26

Song: “Come Away”

There are many expectations around traditions in life, but weddings tend to highlight this. In North America we’ve traditionally expected the bride to arrive in a white gown. Somewhere on her person should be something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue. Custom dictates that she hurl her stunning flower bouquet into a sea of waiting young women, some of whom will jockey and wrestle to catch it. Then the couple will leave through a shower of grain tossed by guests and depart to a honeymoon the groom was expected to plan.

Many of us approach God with a checklist of expectations about how things should go in our relationship with Him. We desire refreshing, but we don’t like the repenting part. We want to be free from an addiction, but we don’t want to change our lifestyle. We say we’d like to have restored relationships, but we refuse to humble ourselves to ask for forgiveness. We crave feeling God’s love—but not enough to return that love to Him in obedience. We desire the blessings from God while we skirt our responsibility to honor Him.

What we often fail to understand is that learning to obey is itself part of the gift. The abundant life is realized only by accepting God’s full authority in our lives.

Father, I recognize today that my expectations need to yield to Your call to obedience. In Jesus’ name, amen.