

## Prepared for Our Purpose

**[John the Baptist said,] “I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit’” (John 1:33).**

Scripture: John 1:29–36

**Song:** “Have Thine Own Way, Lord”

Once I went for a job interview at a senior living facility. While I waited, I sat in the lobby chatting with a woman who appeared to be well over 70. She told me about the facility and the wonderful staff. She was a great advocate for the place. I asked how long she had lived there. “I don’t live here,” she replied. “I work in the office. The director asked me to talk to you until she was free. It shouldn’t be long now.” I had totally misconstrued her role!

John the Baptist always knew that his primary task was to prepare the way of the Lord, but the today’s passage reveals that he didn’t immediately know Jesus’ identity. When the truth was revealed to him, John was prepared to do what he was called to do: testify that Jesus is the Christ.

God has assignments for each one of us. Whatever these may be, we can prepare ourselves by entrusting ourselves to Him and walking in His ways.

**Father,** guide me to use my time and talents to do what You would have me do. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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April 21–27. **Diana Walters** lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with her husband. She enjoys writing and working with seniors.

## Life Goes On

**When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; he brought me into a spacious place. The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The Lord is with me; he is my helper** (Psalm 118:5–7).

**Scripture:** Psalm 118:1–14

**Song:** “Fear Not to Tread Life’s Road”

While serving a tour of duty in Kuwait, Don began experiencing seizures. He reported that just before a seizure would begin, he’d hear words from the Beatles song “Life Goes On.”

Many years earlier as Don was boarding a plane to go to Vietnam, someone handed him a tract. He read it and received Christ as his Savior. Suddenly his fear evaporated; he was certain the Lord would be there with him. When Don came home to the States and found out that he needed brain surgery, his confidence in the Lord remained unwavering. He believed that whether he lived or died, his life would go on. He quoted Revelation 21:4: “‘There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain.”

Don, my little brother, came through his surgery. He has endured other medical problems since, but his faith remains steadfast. He tells me and whoever is willing to listen, “I’ve confessed my sins and know what my future holds. I can thankfully and fearlessly say that whatever happens, my life will go on forever.” His testimony often leads people to ask important questions about eternity.

**Father,** thank You for Your gift of everlasting life. Help me be prepared and unafraid to share my faith. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Unlikely Hero

**The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone** (Psalm 118:22).

**Scripture:** Psalm 118:15–29

**Song:** “Christ Is Our Cornerstone”

Desmond Doss (1919–2006) joined the US military in 1942. He could have taken a deferment as a shipyard worker and also due to his religious convictions (which did not allow him to kill another human), but instead, he became a combat medic. He was mocked and rejected by his fellow servicemen for being unwilling to fight. But then one day in 1945, he spent several hours single-handedly retrieving and lowering dozens of wounded soldiers to safety down the edge of a cliff at Hacksaw Ridge. On that day he became a hero to the 96th Division. His presence was vital to those soldiers' lives. If not for Doss, most of the soldiers he helped would have perished.

Although Doss was a hero who saved many lives, Jesus, our Cornerstone—rejected by the religious leaders of His day—came to earth to overcome sin, death, and the grave. His victory provides salvation to *anyone* who will trust in Him.

Jesus was often rejected and mocked, but in the end He demonstrated His true power as God's Son. We may be rejected by those around us as we walk in ways that are different from the world's, but we will never be rejected by the Lord. When we receive His gift of salvation and welcome Him into our lives, we can know victory over sin and death through Him. That beats being popular, hands down.

**Father,** I praise You for being the cornerstone of my life and for showing me the path to victory. In Jesus' name, amen.

## His Strength Carries Us

**“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall”** (1 Peter 1:24).

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 1:13–25

**Song:** “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

As we age, our bones shrink in density and size. I once stood at a little more than 5 feet, 1 inch in height. I’m not quite 5 feet tall now. I’ve also lost strength and flexibility in my muscles. I’m not as coordinated as I was a few years ago. My hair is mostly gray, my hands look like my mother’s did, and let’s not talk about my chicken neck! I don’t like the changes I see and feel in my body, but we humans wither just as flowers do.

It’s good to know that even though time changes us, our Heavenly Father doesn’t change. “The word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Peter 1:25). Yes, our Lord and His Word remain the same yesterday, today, and always (Hebrews 13:8).

We can look in the mirror and bemoan our changed appearance, which I sometimes do. Or we can look to the Scriptures and be reminded that He who made these bones and muscles will not desert us in old age. We can take comfort in knowing He will continue to carry us through this life until He calls us home to be with Him in the next.

**Father,** thank You for the many years You’ve carried me through good times and bad. Please help me faithfully look to You and serve You whatever my age. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Keep Calling on Him

**They [Moses, Aaron, and Samuel] called on the LORD and he answered them** (Psalm 99:6).

**Scripture:** Psalm 99

**Song:** “Moment by Moment”

Frank Laubach (1884–1970) was a missionary and educator. He was called an “apostle to the illiterates” because his “Each One Teach One” program has been used to teach nearly 60 million people to read in their own language. He was passionate about literacy but even more passionate about walking closely with Christ. He urged Christians to continually turn their thoughts toward the Lord throughout the day—once every minute was his goal—and to remain prayerful.

Today’s passage reminds us that God is attentive to His servants when they call on Him. In Jeremiah 33:3, we read God’s invitation to the prophet: “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” We too are invited to call on the Lord, to seek Him with all our hearts, and to find Him faithful (Luke 11:9–10). He is ready to answer those who call on Him from hearts that trust Him.

I strongly believe in prayer. Although I will probably never achieve Laubach’s goal of thinking about God every minute, I am prayerful throughout the day—even small prayers, such as “Thank You, Lord” in a grateful moment or “Help me, please” when I’m in need can show my reliance on Him. As we make our way through this day, let’s be quick to look to our Father and call on Him.

**Father,** thank You for always being available to me and inviting me to call on You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Out of Darkness

**On no day will [the Holy City's] gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there** (Revelation 21:25).

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:9–16, 21–27

**Song:** “Christ, Be Our Light!”

The different seasons are caused by the tilt of earth’s axis in relation to the sun as the earth makes its circuit each year. In Arctic regions, this tilting away from the sun in winter leaves residents in continuous darkness for months. Under artificial lights, people go to work and school, enjoy recreation, and go shopping. They simply go about their daily business despite the unending darkness. I don’t know how I’d handle it! In northern Norway, people cope by attending numerous festivals and nightspots or by taking to the slopes, where ski runs are illuminated.

When I was a child and afraid of the dark, I would quote Psalm 23:1: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want” (*KJV*). Now as an adult, there are other things that seem more threatening than darkness—things like surgery, the high cost of living, the state of the world. But, as in my youth, I look to the Lord to light my path.

No matter what seems to threaten us in this life, we can find comfort in knowing that when our time comes to be with the Lord in Heaven, there will be no more night—neither literal darkness nor spiritual darkness. The glory of God will shine constantly because the Lord *is* our light.

**Father**, thank You for bringing me Your comfort in the night and Your help in the day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Worthy of All Honor

**I [John] saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”** (Revelation 5:2).

**Scripture:** Revelation 5:1–10

**Song:** “Thou Art Worthy”

An average IQ hovers right around 100. It’s reported that William James Sidis (1898–1944), who entered Harvard at age 11, had the highest IQ on record, scoring well over 200 on standardized tests. By comparison, Albert Einstein’s IQ is estimated to have been around 160, similar to that of Bill Gates and the late Stephen Hawking, with Elon Musk’s IQ reported to be somewhere between 150 and 155.

While geniuses may amaze us with their intellectual ability and receive accolades for making important contributions to science and technology, true significance is not found in a high IQ. Making a difference for eternity in God’s kingdom is how our lives can be truly significant. Einstein and the others have helped change life as we know it in this world, but no one will ever do more for humanity than Jesus Christ. His sinless life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection have provided salvation for all who will receive it.

Our IQ doesn’t matter in the overall scheme of things. What matters is recognizing who Jesus is and, by faith, receiving His gift of salvation. Jesus alone is worthy of our reverence and adoration. He alone is deserving of all honor and glory.

**Father,** You are the only one worthy of my worship. Lead me today in making a difference for eternity as I seek to honor You and make You known to those around me. In Jesus’ name, amen.