THE RETURN

REFLECTIONS ON LOVING GOD BACK

LACEY STURM

12/15/97 — STUDY TITLE: "Planning the Unknown"

Old Covenant: Are my plans part of God's purpose? Would God ever ask us to give up the familiar for the unknown?
Jeremiah 29:11; Genesis 12:1

New Covenant: Should I seek God's will when I make plans?
Romans 12:1–2; James 4:13–17

Poetry & Wisdom: Are my passions put in me by God? Should I pursue them?
Psalm 37:4; Proverbs 27:14

prayer:

Lord, what makes a heart beautiful to you? Faith? Trust? I don't understand your ways, but I am burning in my soul to learn them, because you are good, kind, and holy, and you, God, are love. Apart from you we can do nothing, but with you all things are possible. If trust is beautiful to you, then please, Lord, fill my heart with trust, because I want so much to make myself lovely to you in every way. You have been so much more than kind to me. I love you forever. Amen.

random acts of KINDNESS (RAK) TO-DO:

- [ ] Finish new song "Sacred"
- [ ] Clean kitchen for Granny
- [ ] Hide happy note in sister's backpack
- [ ] Make peach cobbler for neighbors
- [ ] Give Quest Study Bible to Melanie

Song: "Sacred"

Chords: G, G/A, C, G/B, G

Verse: I know it seems like there's nothing sacred anymore
and the world is dark lit up with only flames of war.
It's such an empty place when longing for human praise
they walk away; I'm left wide open and my heart bleeds
and breaks wide open.

Chorus: I hear there's a sacred place, just within heaven's gates
if only heaven's gates were open (x 2)
but all I have is a broken heart and all I do is fall apart
if only heaven's gates were open (x 2)

RECIPE:

Granny's Peach Cobbler

INGREDIENTS:

1 box of yellow cake mix
1 stick (½ cup) of melted butter (if you don't have squeeze butter)
1 (29 oz.) can of peaches in heavy syrup
Lots of sugar. Lots.

DIRECTIONS:

Pour undrained peaches into an 8 or 9 inch square baking pan. Take a butter knife and cut the peaches into bite-sized pieces. Put more sugar in.

Cover peaches with a thin layer of cake mix. Take your knife and push some of the cake mix into the syrup. Cover with another layer of cake mix. You'll only use about half of the box. Cover cake mix with melted butter. (If you can get your hands on some squeeze butter, then use that.) Bake at 375°F until it's golden brown and smells delicious, about 30–45 min., depending on your oven. Granny says, "Call your momma and tell her you love her, and if you don't straighten up, I'm gonna poke your eyes out."

PM Through the Bible Reading:

Old Covenant: Deuteronomy 30
New Covenant: Matthew 6
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 139

Time

Time is a measure
Abstract, it's a number
Created to measure the will
Time unrolls as humans make choices
Time holds death but it doesn't kill

The will of every human measured
Time is the great divine ledger
Our choices becoming a journal
But choices are made in freedom
Freedom, now that is eternal

Time is just a location
Time appears like a fading star
Just a galaxy in the universe of freedom
Unfolding to show who we are
Choices are always alive as
Eternal moments of freedom
The free choice of man will rest or strive
To destroy or restore Eden

But time just measures the will
And when it's done giving its gift
Time will be rolled up and put away
The mere measuring tape that it is

Freedom of choice
Terrifying responsibility and right
Our choices of death are only erased
By the blood of Jesus Christ
He set before us life and death
And pleads for us to choose life
He honors our freedom whatever we choose
But gives us the chance to love right

He chooses the ones who will choose him
And he is both first and last
Our choices are eternal
But Christ's blood rewrites the past

We all have the opportunity
To turn our will toward his
Love him back for his mercy
Believe by his blood he forgives

So choose life or choose death

Come to light or hide in dark
And with every choice you make
Time will measure who you are

God is always speaking
Father of us all
Holy Ghost of Jesus Christ
Calling you, he calls:

"You are the parallel universe
You are the split
In your heart choose life or death
And I will honor it

I am the one
With my blood, who blots out paths of death

But you must choose if you will me to
Or will you keep running ahead?

Yes, parallel universes are possibilities
And they exist within you
And you move back and forth with ease
And enter the futures you choose

Each one is a parallel universe
Eternal souls covered in mud
Freedom is unending parallel universes
And they all intersect with my blood

When each one comes to this crossroad
All wills make a choice
And from these points on, forever
Life or death will have a voice."

6/17/98 | STUDY TITLE: "Thoughts from Heaven, Hell, or Earth"

OLD COVENANT: How can I tell where a thought is from?
Genesis 3:1–5; Judges 6:15; Job 33:14

NEW COVENANT: What do I do with unrighteous thinking? What does righteous thinking look like?
John 10:10; Revelation 12:10; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Mark 7:21–23; James 4:7; Galatians 5:22–23; Matthew 4:3–4; Ephesians 6:13–18

POETRY & WISDOM: Since eternity is my destiny, how can I keep an eternal perspective in this temporary life?
Psalm 139:23; Ecclesiastes 11–12

PRAYER

Daddy, thank you for a new day. I just want to walk around in your mind and see what you're thinking about. Thank you for the Scriptures. Thank you for how your presence fills the room when I worship you. Thank you for making yourself known to us. Thank you for giving humankind purpose—to know and love you and to be known and loved by you. Let me see others through your eyes. Help me understand your ways. I invite you to love others through me. Help me to see me the way you see me. How can I love others as I love myself if I don't love myself? In the midst of all the temporary things around me, give me eternal perspective. Your kingdom come and your will be done, in my heart as it is in heaven. Amen.

RAK & TO-DO:

- Paint my little sister's nails
- Write a love song to Jesus
- Give Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis to Michael
- Clean up my room, do laundry, dye my hair
- Babysit tonight! Make shepherd's pie for the kids

New Song Idea: "Breath of Eternity"

Verse: D, C2 (pluck verse)
Pre-chorus: D, C2
Chorus: D, C2, D, A, G, A, G, A, D, C2 (strum chorus)

Verse: Seems like I'm always waiting to come back here. When life starts to lead my mind elsewhere, the ache begins low and grows to hunger that I can't control. My soul starts to wonder, where did you go? When did I leave? I didn't mean to, but I always miss you.

Pre-chorus: Breath of Eternity, forever alive in me, hold my thoughts in your strong arms. I bring you my whole life, all I am inside.

Chorus- There's no one more beautiful, there's no love more true than you. I want my whole life to be ceaseless worship to you.

RECIPE: Mom's Shepherd's Pie

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 2 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. pepper
- 1 (15 oz.) can of corn, drained
- 9 slices American cheese
- 4-6 med. potatoes
- 1 stick (½ cup) butter
- ¼ cup milk
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Brown ground beef and drain. Add spices. Put in bottom of 9 X 13 casserole pan. Cover beef layer with corn. Cover corn with Mom's mashed potatoes.* Cover mashed potatoes with sliced cheese. Bake until heated through and cheese is melted, about 30–45 min.

*MOM'S MASHED POTATOES

Slice potatoes (peel if desired) and boil until tender (about 10-15 min.). Drain and add butter, milk, and mayo, plus salt and pepper to taste. Mash while still hot. (Use hand mixer for smooth mashed potatoes.)

PM BIBLE READING

OLD COVENANT: Jeremiah 31
NEW COVENANT: Hebrews 10
POETRY & WISDOM: Psalm 73

My Body, My Temple

The rain
On the roof
On the gravel
On the tree branches
On the orange and yellow leaves

The rain
Hitting puddles
Each drop
Its own
Melody:
Its own
Bath
For some square inch
Of earth, or creature
Its own
Calling
Assignment
Journey

Its own longitude and latitude

Rain covering
The roof
In soft melodies
And sadness

Soft sadness
Mixed
With hope
And certainty
The colors
Grey with blue
Purple hues

The pastel brown rivers
Carrying deadness to
Another place
Colorful
Soggy
Deadness

Wet black sticks
Shine bright
Against the gentle amber
All around

And I am dry inside
On my bed
Relishing
The music
Of rain
Inside my head
Feeling
The dampness
On my face
Cooling my hair
My arms
My lips
The corners of
My eyes

The drops join
Together in rivers
Tracing the curves
Of my face
Over my chin
Down my neck
Tickling my collarbone
With romantic playfulness
And adoration
Of how God sculpted me

Making me adore
The way he used
The hands of time
To rework
The lines of my features
Making me
Aware of the beauty
In his architecture

And I,
Along with
The rain
And the heavens
Am thankful
For my own temple's changing

Growing

Fading
Shifting physical beauty

Like an outdoor shower
Of thankfulness
And wonder
I lie in the dark room
Dry and warm
Feeling the music
Of the heavenly waters
Kissing my skin
Kissing
My clothes
Dotting a bright red jacket
With dark red round evidence
Of our dance
Together,
The jacket itself,
Love and hospitality

My knitted cap
Crowning my head
Gently
Kindly
A gift
Of bright orange hope
Made by a woman
Who escaped abuse in Uganda
Was paid well for her audacity
To believe that she could build a new life
One bright orange stitch at a time

And the delicate embrace she has knit for
my heavy head
Lifts the weight off me with a dizzying,
glorious, aching hope

The beauty
Of the harsh world
Can arise again
With the softest acts
Of hope

The softness hugs me when I feel
Neglected
And in need
Of physical touch

The hat and jacket hold me
They rejoice with me
As I continue
To dance
In the rain
In my mind
Warm and dry
In my bed

But here in this moment I feel the worship of heaven while we dance, and the knowledge of eternity and the truth that lives there all declaring the truth about you that I have always known. You are a beautiful representative of Heaven's Great Lover. And I represent His Beloved. And all the songs from Heaven being lavished on the King, and they fill my heart & within me I lavish them on you. That is the good pleasure of heaven. This is indeed worship & art in it's highest form. Marriage in all it's mystery and glory. There is nothing that can minister, preach, prophecy to the earth, the bride, the world, the body, the family, the soul, the spirit like Holy Marriage.

The Holiness leads us in further and the religious slave-cage around marriage disintegrated completely... and the lustful slave-cage around intimacy & worship is obliterated & disappears. Then Freedom is "lit"-up with Holiness.

הִבְשׁוֹרָה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה עַל־פִּי מַתִּי

31 בְּפִרְיוֹ נִכַּר הָעֵץ: יְלִדֵי צִפְעוֹנִים אֵיכָה תוּכְלוּ לְדַבֵּר

12/05/98 Study Title: "Miraculously Big Little Opportunities"

Old Covenant: Is what I have right in front of me enough?
Genesis 39:20–23; 2 Kings 4:2–7; Zechariah 4:10

New Covenant: What good is it to spend our energy taking care of little things?
Luke 16:10; Colossians 3:23–24; Romans 12:6–8

Poetry & Wisdom: What am I to do if the little I offer turns into greatness?
Esther 4:6–17; Revelation 4:10–11

PRAYER

Father, thank you for a new day. Thank you for a bed to sleep in. Thank you for clothes to wear. Lord, let me have a thankful heart. Let me have eyes that notice all the goodness and blessings that are right in front of me. There is always something to thank you for. Thank you for the opportunities you give us every day to learn more about you and your love. Help me to shine your love into the world however I can. Help me to keep my eyes in yours as I do. Thank you for your love that makes me brave and for how you rescued me. Thank you that from now on into eternity I can sing about your love forever. Amen.

RAK & TO-DO:

- ☐ Practice song for school club performance
- ☐ Make chicken pillows for movie night with Dee
- ☐ Give The Robe by Lloyd C. Douglas to Michael
- ☐ Help little brother with homework
- ☐ Clean car out for Gramps

New Song Idea: "Christmas Song"

Em, C, G, D (pluck for verse, strum for chorus)

Verse 1: A frightened virgin teenage girl receives a message that defies the laws of this world. All she can do is weep and nod; she's to bring into this world the Son of God.

Chorus: God's angels sound their trumpets and blow their horns. Tonight the long awaited Savior's to be born, the goodness bound by Satan has been torn. With this baby's precious brow ready for thorns.

Verse 2: A star appears fulfilling ancient prophecy; there's an ounce of fear as wise men follow faithfully. The virgin Mary brings forth a human savior, and this future king sleeps soundly in a manger. Tonight he is born, so one day he can die. To heal hearts that are torn and live a perfect life. So he can hang upon a cross and we can take his life, so we can live as sinners and he can pay the price. Tonight he is born so one day he can die... But he will rise again!

RECIPE Aunt Jacky's Chicken Pillows

INGREDIENTS:

1 (10 oz.) can of chicken
½ (10.5 oz.) can of cream of chicken soup
1 (8 oz.) can of crescent roll dough

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven according to crescent roll package instructions. Mix together canned chicken and half of the can of cream of chicken soup in a medium bowl. Unroll crescents on a baking sheet. Spoon about 1 tbsp. of chicken mixture onto each crescent triangle. Roll up and bake as directed on the crescent package. Enjoy!

PM THROUGH THE BIBLE READING:

Old Covenant: Genesis 41
New Covenant: Acts 16
Poetry & Wisdom: Job 1

Hungry

I'm awake.
I'm hungry.
So I roll over and eat.
The words are life-giving.
I'm thirsty.
The truths are living water.
I drink.
Every morning is the same.
Every morning is new.

9/4/99 Study Title: "Eternal Perspective = Purity"

Old Covenant: Do God's ways always make sense to the human mind?
1 Samuel 16:7; Isaiah 55:8–9

New Covenant: Ultimately, is our struggle in life against other people, or something else? Are Christians free to sin because of grace? What is love?
Ephesians 6:12; Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 4–6

Poetry & Wisdom: Are earthly rewards and perspectives satisfying?
Ecclesiastes 11:8–21; 12:8, 13–14

PRAYER

Daddy, you are so kind. You see everything and your love reaches everyone, and all who love truth find you. I see all these people sitting in their own hatred like there is nowhere else to go. Thank you, Lord, for being the way, the gate by which we come to life and purpose. You love all people; if only we would love you back, we would become fully alive in that love now and forever! The world only gives shallow, fleeting shadows of love, but in you is love true and everlasting. Help me never to abuse my freedom by using it to run away from you or your ways. Your ways truly are the best ways. Deliver me from all the traps of the enemy and take all the condemnation or judgment out of my heart. Let me see like you and love like you. Thank you for helping me find health in my soul and my mind. Help me find health in my body too. You're such a good Daddy. Amen.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS & TO-DO:

- ☐ Practice for coffee shop
- ☐ Make chicken pot pie for practice
- ☐ Give Till We Have Faces by C. S. Lewis to Airic
- ☐ Clean house for Mom
- ☐ Take little sister to mall

New Song Idea: "Penholder"

Verse: Em, D, C, B · Pre-chorus: C, Bm · Chorus: Em, C, G, D

Verse: I feel your eyes crawling over me, like I'm something more than me, but I don't have anything good enough to say, I just held the pen that day.

Pre-chorus: I'll show you what he did, but I won't take the credit. It's not mine anyway, I just held the pen that day.

Chorus: I don't deserve this, this time right now, it's not something for which I can take the bow. I don't deserve this, it wasn't me, I won't take glory for something that I can't be. I don't deserve this.

RECIPE

Grandma Dorothy's Chicken Pot Pie

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup (8 oz.) canned chicken
1 (10.5 oz.) can of cream of chicken soup
1 (16 oz.) can of mixed veggies
1 cup pancake mix
½ cup milk
1 egg
1 tbsp. bacon bits
shredded cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Mix chicken, soup, and veggies together in a 9-inch pie pan. In a medium bowl, mix pancake mix, milk, egg, bacon bits , and cheese together until batter is smooth. Pour batter over chicken mixture and bake for 30 min. or until top turns brown.

P.M. BIBLE READING

Old Covenant: Isaiah 6
New Covenant: Revelation 12
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 90

Numb

Being numb
Is like overheating.
Like your heart
Stopping
Because it was beating too fast.
It's all
Too much;
Eventually the tattooing,
Scraping,
Burning,
Slicing
Into your souls
Leaves scar tissue;
Unfeeling.

Numb.

But still
Uncomfortably achy.

"A man walks into a brothel looking for God."

We search
So long
For the itch to scratch
So we can rest
But we live
Blistered and bleeding,
Scratching everywhere,
Looking
For our souls
On the surface
Of our skin.

Our eyes
Pushed out by two unmerciful feet,
Unrelenting;
The pressure.

Our minds
Ooze out of our ears;
We desire
The euphoria, the eureka,
The philosophical highs
That made us feel
Above them all
Above
Our former selves.

Exhausted,
We ache all over,
And where is the soul?

Lost
Dark
Dying
Starving
Abused
Neglected
Panting for God.

7/14/02 Study Title: "No Slave to Desire"

Old Covenant: Does Jesus know what it's like to be sad? How can we guard our hearts from lust? Isaiah 53:3; Job 31:1

New Covenant: Can we make the Holy Spirit sad? Is it good to act like animals or like we are governed or enslaved by instinct? Should we relax about sin?
Ephesians 4:30; Jude 1:10; Galatians 5:1; Matthew 5:30; 1 Corinthians 15:33–34

Poetry & Wisdom: Do our souls boss us arounz, or do we parent our souls? Should we be friends with lust? Psalm 43:5; Proverbs 5:3–8

PRAYER

Thank you, Father, for the way you invite us in. The enemy says, "Do this, do this, do this," and then he says, "How could you do that? You are worthless." And you say, "Look in my eyes. I can turn this into glory if you let me clean you off and help you up. But you have to turn around, quit going that way, and look at me. I love you. Let me help." Lord, make me brave enough to come into the light and not hide in shame in the dark. Let me be brave enough to hand you everything. I trust you. Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- [ ] Make guacamole and black bean dip for band practice
- [ ] Weed Jamie's purple iris flower beds
- [ ] Give Wild at Heart to Lee
- [ ] Call little brother Phillip and check on him

New Song Idea: "Sleepwalker"

F, Am, G

Verse: My spirit is willing, but my flesh is weak; my eyelids grow heavy, and I might just fall asleep. How many times will I go and take the bait only for this hook to rip right through my face?

Chorus: How can I love you back? What can I do to show you? His piercing eyes meet mine. Please simply stay awake. Talk to me and I'll hear you. Don't fall asleep this time; gotta stay awake, gotta stay awake.

RECIPE: GUACAMOLE

INGREDIENTS:

4-6 pitted, peeled, and mashed avocados

1 cup chopped red bell pepper, 1 cup chopped orange bell pepper, ½ cup chopped green bell pepper, ½ cup quartered cherry tomatoes

1 tsp. garlic powder or 2 cloves minced garlic, ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, 1½ tsp. cumin, juice of 1 lime

DIRECTIONS:

Mix all ingredients together. (For easier guacamole, just mix mashed avocado with your favorite salsa and lime juice.)

RECIPE:

Easy Black Bean Dip

Blend equal amounts canned black beans (drained and rinsed) and salsa in blender till smooth.

(Add juice of 1 lime, 1 tsp. cumin, 1 tsp. salt, and a handful of chopped cilantro to blender if desired.)

PM Through the Bible Reading:

Old Covenant: 2 Samuel 13

New Covenant: John 8

Poetry & Wisdom: Proverbs 7

How can I take care of my soul?
I want to steward it well. But I need help.
Daddy, help.

Goal: Health

- Guard my heart from unhealthy relationships and situations
- Don't shy away from suffering for godly reasons in a way that produces perseverance, character, hope
- Be creative
- Listen to passions
- Seek peace
- Seek justice and purpose
- Repent quickly
- Speak life every time I am tempted with death
- Speak truth every time I am tempted to believe lies
- Find truth in the Scriptures
- Worship, soak, rest
- Resist soul clutter
- Don't fill up on junk so I will want to feast on the bread of life
- Think on things that are pure and lovely
- Flee sexual immorality

Emotional Wounds Won't Heal with Idolatry

Flash-forward. Today. Married. Covenanted.

Angry. Hurt. I ran away to breathe for a few hours.

I could feel the same old evil that parades around as "just part of life," but this demon had a slightly different name. Not sexual lust. Emotional.

My soul is tired. My soul is wounded. I notice that when I'm in this place emotionally and spiritually nothing else seems to matter.

Dear My Future Superman

They're gonna tell you
Men only want one thing
But I'm gonna tell you
That they don't know anything
Anything about you
But, baby, I do
Oh, I believe in you
Your breath proves God believes in you too
They're gonna tell you
You're only worth one thing
Identities in your fists or your pants
In the bank or your brains
But I'm here to tell you
Your heart's the eternal thing
What lasts is your soul
And the song that it sings

So, baby, believe me
I've seen the man you can be
Brave, powerful, beautiful soul
You're so much more than they know

They marvel at mountains
They marvel at lions and stars
They marvel at oceans
They marvel at galaxies far
But you, my child,
Hold life-giving life in your freedom
Use it for the work of God
Or you'll enslave yourself to their demons
Love doesn't trap you, my child,
Love honors freedom and choice
And you choose every day that you are given
The land of the dead or the living

You're a powerful creature, my child,
You're a powerful soul
Forever impacting God's heart
And the human race as a whole
You are a living piece of his art
And you hold a piece of his wisdom
And heaven leans in to know you
To find dormant life in you hidden

3/9/06 Study Title: "Subtlety, Religion, and Relationship"

Old Covenant: Can my ways ever be more righteous than what God is asking me to do? Can God use seemingly vain positions for more significant reasons?
Isaiah 7:10–17; Jeremiah 20:9; 1 Samuel 15:22; Esther 2:12–13

New Covenant: How can we confirm something we aren't sure of?
2 Corinthians 13:1

Poetry & Wisdom: Does a calling from God ever change?
Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

prayer... Father God, I belong to you. I am yours alone. So many people pull at me to be something for them, but I am yours alone. I see that I can be stubborn about things I think are right, but, Lord, make me soft toward whatever you say. Let me lay down my old ways of thinking so that I can pick up what you are trying to tell me. My heart is broken over the lack of light in the places where you have sent us before. Lord, send your light into those places. If you call us to be the light out there, then we will go. But teach us your ways and priorities and keep us from allowing ourselves to be enslaved to some situation that doesn't respect the priorities you have given us to honor in our family. And if you call us to stay home and shine our light right here in our home and community, then that would be awesome. Let us not deceive ourselves in disobedience but let love correct us. Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- [ ] Do 20 min. stretch, cardio
- [ ] Make spinach, apple, carrot, and ginger smoothie
- [ ] Rehearse for Carson Daly Show and pack for Germany tour with Stone Sour!
- [ ] Make vegan fajitas for rehearsal
- [ ] Pick peppers out of garden, hang towels to dry on clothesline
- [ ] Give Blue Like Jazz by Donald Miller to Mom
- [ ] Take Lori out to lunch

New Song Idea: "Dear My Closest Friend"

C, A, E, F

Dear my closest friend, I'm writing because I miss you so much. At night I always cry. The stillness still reminds me of when we first fell in love, and I miss that so much. Dear my closest friend, I remember when you asked me to stay and I just walked away. I apologize. Though my letter's sent, I lost that moment, seconds at a time . . . seconds at a time . . . I wait for your answer, but I already know . . . your hand was always mine . . . dear my closest friend, I'm writing because I miss you so much.

Recipe: Vegan Fajitas

INGREDIENTS:

tortillas

1 tbsp. or so coconut oil or olive oil

1 large sweet onion, diced

1 each red, yellow, and green bell pepper, thinly sliced

1 cup Portobello mushrooms, chopped

seasoning: 1 tsp. cumin, 1 tsp. salt, 2 cloves minced garlic or ½ tsp. garlic powder (or for lots of quick flavor just add taco seasoning packet)

black bean dip (equal parts black beans and salsa mixed together in a blender), guacamole or mashed avocado, chopped cilantro, and salsa

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 200°F. Wrap tortillas in tinfoil and put in oven to warm. Sauté onion in oil over medium-high heat until golden brown. Add seasoning. Add bell peppers and chopped mushrooms. Continue to sauté until peppers are tender (about 3-5 min.). To serve spoon black bean dip onto a warm tortilla as a bottom layer; next add guacamole, salsa, cilantro, and sautéed veggies, and fold over your fajita.

PM Through the Bible Reading:

Old Covenant: 2 Chronicles 20

New Covenant: 2 Corinthians 3

Poetry & Wisdom: Ecclesiastes 3

Stewarding for the Owner of It All

Can't God demand that I return
My life
To him
At any moment?
"Steward,
What have you done with all I've entrusted to you?"
Distinguishing between "owner" and "steward"
Seems subtle,
But living out the difference?
The two are as different as heaven and hell.
Steward parading as owner and judge?
Lost supernatural ability to manage well.
Things start caving in.
I run myself ragged,
Lost joy,
Lost motivation.
When I pretend I am the owner,
I become deathly afraid of losing.
Owner, judge,
All is sure to fail when I deceive myself with these titles.
The steward can't make just rulings
When violating her own restrictions from God
By trying to sit in God's seat,
Because I, the steward, don't know what God the owner
knows . . .
Not the future, as he does
Not the past, as he does
Not the intricacy of all creation, as he does
Not people's hearts and minds, as he does
Not how everything works together, as he does . . .
He is jealous over his throne in my mind
Out of protective love for me, his creation.
He knows that spot is made within me for him alone.

Anyone or anything else, especially myself, on his throne in my heart
Will lead to my own self-destruction.
The weight of being in this spot is too much for anyone but God to bear.
No one and nothing else belongs on the throne of God.

But when I acknowledge
Everything I have is God's,
I am free to let him be sovereign,
I am free to be empowered by his grace,
Doing what I can't do on my own.

When I acknowledge
The earth is God's planet,
I want to do all I can to care for it
And fill it with life and beauty.
When I acknowledge
Animals are all God's creatures,
Given as gifts to us,
I want to honor them
And treat them with
Compassion, respect, and diligent care.
When I acknowledge that
Humans are made in God's image,
Every human
His crowning work of art,
Each one
Worth everything to him,
When I acknowledge
God called every human
To be his sons and daughters
Through the blood
Of his only begotten Son,
Jesus,
Who died

For the sins of the world
So he could redeem everyone
Who wants to be cleansed of sins and
Empowered to overcome sins by his grace
And the Holy Spirit,
Who waits for our invitation to come live inside us,
When I acknowledge
Every single human
Gets the same opportunity
To be redeemed,
Reconciled to God,
I must look on each human
With deep reverence;
I must view them
With great respect.
Because God made each
In his image,
I must view them
As God does,
As worth dying for,
Worth forgiving,
Full of potential,
Greater than
Any other precious thing
In the world.

When I acknowledge
That freedom of the will
Is a gift from God
To every person,
I will honor each person's freedom
The way God does,
Never trying to manipulate
Or control.
When I acknowledge
My husband

As one of God's sons
And realize I am
Entrusted by God
To be the closest one to his heart,
I want to love him more,
Honor him more,
I want to encourage him
Any way I can.
When I acknowledge
My children as precious
Powerful seeds
Of the future generation
Intentionally created by God,
Adored by him,
Entrusted to me,
In all their vulnerabilities,
I want to teach
Protect
Guide
Love and honor them more.
When I acknowledge that my house is a gift from God,
I want to care for it and share it more.
When I acknowledge that my body is a gift to me from God,
And that God calls my body his temple for his Holy Spirit,
I want to take very good care of my body.
I want to treat it kindly, and with reverence,
As if he truly made every part of me with a purpose.
When I acknowledge that my mind is a gift from God,
I want to renew it, guard it, grow and learn more.
When I acknowledge that God gave me a soul and a heart,

And that this is the place where God lives when I
invite him to be Lord of my life,
I want to keep it clean more than any other place.
I want to worship, pray, rejoice, thank and love him
with all my heart and soul.
I come alive in this powerful place that is my soul,
filled with God, and this is where I truly grow.
Outwardly, I may waste away, but inwardly my
soul can grow in glory,
If I choose to steward it well.
If I acknowledge that my life belongs to God,
I will truly live.
And when he comes for his return on the investment
of life he made in me,
May I be able to praise God with a heart that cries,
"Thank you for your trust
Faith
Hope
And belief in me,
That you would give me life!
In all my ways,
My desire was to acknowledge you!
My hope is that because of your promise,
You were the one directing my path."
And may God's response to me be as Jesus's parable
made me long to hear:
"Well done, good and faithful steward . . ."

10/13/08 Study Title: "Love Is Heart Work"

Old Covenant: Why does it matter how a job gets done?
2 Samuel 6:6–7; Isaiah 1:13–14

New Covenant: Can we love with our works? Isn't belief in God enough? Does submission begin with outward effort or with making the heart beautiful?
Matthew 5:16; James 2:14–26; 1 Peter 3:3–7

Poetry & Wisdom: Is diligence important in a relationship?
Proverbs 31:10–12, 25–31

Prayer: Father, teach me about freedom. Sometimes I feel trapped. Show me what choices I have in front of me and give me the wisdom and courage to choose life over death in each situation. Thank you for trusting us to make choices. Thank you, Jesus, for your tears over us. Help me to always be willing to come to you and not run the other way. Holy Spirit, teach me about love. I see that all my deepest longings are really only ever satisfied in you. All else leaves me empty. How can it be that you long for us too? Is this why you weep over our unwilling hearts? Jesus, were your tears over an unrequited love? What a humble lover you must be, God, to give us choice so that we can love genuinely and freely. Love must be the most important thing of all if you would die for us to have a choice to freely love you back. You must love us so much more than we can imagine. Teach me about your love. I just want to love you back. Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- ☐ Write with band for new album Memento Mori
- ☐ Make brownies for everyone
- ☐ Help finish grout on brick kitchen tiles
- ☐ Give The Big Fisherman by Lloyd C. Douglas to Jared
- ☐ Get guest room ready for Eric and Sarah Patrick and kids to visit
- ☐ Do 20 min. workout, run, and swim

New Song Idea:

"TREASURE"

Verse: Em, G, A · Chorus: C, D, Am

Can I tell you a story
As we dance while the sun starts to bleed
Song of songs love is calling
Daughter, wake up from your sleep (refined)

I'll be treasured over all the earth

Bearing the gift of a new heart
Em, Bm, C, D, Am, Em

Patience ablaze, I'm slowly burning

RECIPE: I LOVE JOSH FRENCH TOAST

INGREDIENTS:

4–5 slices Ezekiel 4:9 brand cinnamon raisin bread (quarter slices in triangles or squares)

egg mixture: 2 eggs, 1 tsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp. vanilla, 2 tbsp. cream (mix with fork until bubbly)

2 tbsp. butter or coconut oil, divided

1 sliced banana

1 diced apple

2 tbsp. melted peanut butter

powdered sugar

DIRECTIONS:

Dip bread squares or triangles into egg mixture, then fry both sides in 1 tbsp. butter or coconut oil until golden brown. Set aside. Put remaining butter or coconut oil in pan and fry apple and banana until golden brown. Pile this hot, delicious mess on top of the hot French toast. Drizzle with melted peanut butter, then dust with powdered sugar and serve with a kiss.

PM THROUGH THE BIBLE READING:

Old Covenant: 1 Samuel 15
New Covenant: John 9
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 119:1–6

Like blood
Flowing back into a sleeping arm.
It's a painful,
Anxious moment.

How long
Will this discomfort last
Before I am back
To life,
Awake?

On the way to normalcy,
Restless,
Weighty pins and needles.
My chest feels
Strange,
Impatient:
I dream
I long
For the other side
Of this moment.
The more I focus
On the other side,
The more pain hammers my chest
With riddles of fear,
Discontent.
Something sounds
Like a distant wisdom.
It whispers:

"Embrace the present."
But it makes little sense
To the heart.

Like a song in the air,
But the volume is low.
All I want?
To hear the lyrics

But I only get bits
Of the melody,
The snare drum,
And the word love
Shooting up
Like spray
From a restless ocean
I'm forbidden to enter.

But I'm the one
Who's pounded a sign
Into the defenseless,
Accepting,
Lonely palm.
"No Swimming," it reads.
I blame someone I can't see
For that dastardly sign.
But I'm the one
Who keeps it up.

There are no rules
Imposed on me
By anyone
But myself.
This my heart.
This my freedom.
This my self-imposed slavery.

I'm free
To enslave myself
If I choose.
I'm free to be free
If I choose.
I am ever free
To choose.

What beauty is this?
How have I been so loved?

God's Response to Me

Dear Lacey,

Don't get caught
Tangled in the details.
Don't get sidetracked
In the language.

Be used to my presence
As a wind moving you,
Shifting you,
Playing with your hair.
For I am
Playful and free.

I have miracles
That abide within "distractions"
Received with love.
Go ahead,
Make a plan,
Then watch me
Test your heart.
Did you come here to clean house
Or love your husband?

I have miracles
Set apart
For a life
Lived in love;
Out of that love
Flows free will loving obedience.
It's better to be a servant
In the house of God
Than to be running away from his house,
Rebellious,
Claiming it is for honesty or freedom
Or following your heart.

I would rather
Have you sort through
The nuances of transitioning
From slave to bride
In the house,
Honest with me,
Without doubting me,
Because I have miracles
Only reserved
For when an act is done with love.

This is why
Love covers
A multitude of sins.

You are not a slave,
You are my bride.

I set down one rule
To do one thing,
Right beside another rule to do the opposite.
I didn't want you to get stuck
Following rules
As you grow and mature.
I frustrated the rules on purpose.

I want you
To come to me.

I want you
To talk to me.

I want you
To have a relationship with me,
Listening for me,
Striving to look in my eyes,
To know my character
And my heart.

I want you
To know
You are not my servant
Or my slave,
You are my bride.

Obedience
Is better than sacrifice.
Sacrifice is for those without relationship,
Those slaves and servants;
But obedience?
Ah!
It's the fruit of honor,
Because it is freedom.

When I say to sacrifice
Your free will, obedience—out of your love
Transforms your response into a joy-filled privilege.
Even if you are obeying something
Once considered a sacrifice.

So,
Be a bride,
Not a slave.
This is the secret
To a life of joy.
Be a friend,
Not a servant.
Go on adventures,
Not errands.
Have me for the journey,
Not just as the destination.

Love,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

11/14/11

Study Title: "Love Will Heal the World"

OLD COVENANT: Who did God commission to rule over the earth?
Genesis 1:28; Psalm 8; Ezekiel 16:49

NEW COVENANT: Does God care about what we do with the earth? What is most important to God? Shouldn't we be angry and disdain overpopulation that is "ruining" the world? Why or why not? Does Jesus condone killing animals for food? Why isn't it a sin to eat certain foods?
Revelation 11:17–19; 1 Peter 4:8; Acts 10:9–15; Mark 7:19

POETRY & WISDOM: Was God wise to put so many creatures on the earth?
Psalm 104:24

...PRAYER...

Daddy, thank you for the way you have raised me. Thank you for the way you have led me. Thank you for all you have taught me and are teaching me now. Lord, I am overwhelmed at times with the weight I feel to care for the world around me, but, Father, I recognize that you are God and I am not. Please show me what I can do. I know I can't do everything but I can do something. Please show me what that is. I know the most important miracle I can walk in that you give me to share is genuine love. Let your love be most important. And bless me to pay attention when my heart burns because I know many times that it is your heart burning within me. So if your heart is burning over these things, show me what you would want to do through me. I love you. Amen.

RAK & TO-DO

- ☐ Do 20 min. training, stretch, and cardio
- ☐ Figure out chords to go with kids' songs
- ☐ Make batch of vegan chili for Daniel fast
- ☐ Wash cloth diapers and hang to dry in sun
- ☐ Give Bonhoeffer by Eric Metaxas to Roman
- ☐ Buy Groundhog Day to watch with Jasmine tonight

New Song Idea: "Mama's Song"

Verse: D, G x 2, D, C, G, D · Pre-chorus: B, C, Em, G · Chorus: D, G, D, G

Verse 1: What makes you happy? What makes you smile? And when you smile please, is it for real? I know you're not one, one to pretend, even when I was a child.

Pre-chorus: You grew up too fast, and had to be brave, braver than most strong men that I've ever seen.

Chorus: Sing your song, Mama. Sing it out loud; I wanna hear your voice, it's the loveliest sound.

Mom's part— There's something I'm trying to tell you that I've tried to tell you before. And each time I confess it, it just leaves me wanting more. I think you are beautiful, and I'm proud of you. What I'm trying to say is, I love you, I love you.

RECIPE: VEGAN CHILI

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil or coconut oil
- 2 med. onions, chopped
- 2-4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 1½ cups green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp. ground cumin, 2 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. dried basil, 1 tsp. dried oregano, and 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 (28 oz.) can whole tomatoes, chopped, with liquid, and 1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
- 2 cups canned pinto beans and 1 cup each canned black, kidney, and cannellini beans, lightly drained
- 1 cup cooked quinoa

DIRECTIONS:

Sauté onion in oil until beginning to brown. Add garlic, celery, peppers, and spices. Sauté 1-2 min. Add tomato paste. Sauté 1-2 more min. Add tomatoes and beans. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 min. or until beans are tender. Serve over quinoa or with tortilla chips. (Also delicious over plain baked sweet potato or yam.)

PM Through the Bible Reading:

Old Covenant: Joel 2
New Covenant: James 3
Poetry & Wisdom: Job 38

Judgment and Condemnation

Judgment and condemnation,
Archenemies of the stewardess heart.
Are you doing well, steward?

Are your eyes open to what you didn't see before
When cleaning your house,
loving your spouse,
pursuing intelligence and wisdom?
Always more to do
Always more room to grow
Constantly see
places to fix.
Temptation comes:
Look at others!
What about them? They should fix that.
Judgments here.
"That's not right."
"That's not best."
Here you have moved out.
Out with the steward, in with the judge.
A steward in the judge's seat
Infects everything,
Starting at the roots.
All motivations
Are poisoned.

No pure white motivation
Only muddy gray.
The steward to judge shift
Steals your stewarding authority.
No pure black gown of authority
Only a muddy gray.

In subtle ways
Like arsenic in wine
An undetectable shift

God's gifts to steward
Become a demand for my wages.
The mentality flips.

The response to the gifts
Is no longer,
Praise God!

No.
I've worked
I've earned
It's mine.
With no God on the throne,
Why not put our wages there?
Little gold gods.
And when they don't satisfy as gods, why not
degrade them?
Damage
Misuse
Discard
No God on the throne, it's all mine to destroy if I
want.

But reality will prove you
Mistaken,
Fool.
Tremble at the revelation
All you are and have exists in God.
You. Are. Merely. The steward.
What have you done with your gifts?
What will you return to your maker?
I tremble
I have paraded around as owner
All before the eyes of the True Owner
Who trusted me with this life,
So fragile.
I'm returning to return it all,
Loving God back, for he is good and worth it all.

1/23/14 Study Title: "Prospering in a Natural and Supernatural World"

Old Covenant: Does God inspire artistic expression? Does God inspire celebrations or parties? Can dancing be worship? Is art valuable? Parties?
2 Samuel 6:14; 1 Kings 6:29; 8:65

New Covenant: Did Jesus frown on extravagant, beyond-necessity acts of love?
John 12:3–8

Poetry & Wisdom: How can we learn to be diligent? What are some benefits of diligence? Are we responsible for the earth?
Proverbs 6:6–8; 13:4

PRAYER:

Hi, Daddy.
Thank you for a new day. You are my strength and my song. Thank you for a beautiful family. What an honor to get to serve these ones you love so much and believe in. Thank you for our home. Let it be a place of peace. Help me not to tear it down with strife or offense but to build it up with prayers of hope, faith, and forgiveness. Teach me what heaven culture is like and bring that into our house. Art, music, dancing, incense, feasting, joy, celebrations, freedom, and souls growing daily! Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- Worship with my guitar
- Do kettlebell workout
- Make hummus, tabouleh, and guacamole for MAAP meeting tonight
- Clean off Josh's desk for him
- Give Surprised by Joy by C. S. Lewis to Dora
- Work on my book!
- Plan momma/son date with Jack the Brave

New Song Idea: "Impossible"

Verse: Em, D • Chorus: C, Em, G, D • Bridge: C, G

I can't fly, but I keep finding myself soaring high above this.
I have nothing left, but I keep on pouring out like I am endless.
Impossible . . .
I don't run too fast, but I'm looking back and miles and miles have passed.
I can barely breathe, but I'm singing out like this is nothing to me.
Impossible. . .

Chorus: Every morning I see another miracle, I can't believe I'm living the impossible. You are the sign and we are the wonder, another day of living the impossible. . .

Recipe: Tabouleh

INGREDIENTS:

1½ cups boiling water
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup lemon juice (2 lemons)
1 tbsp. salt
1 cup bulgur wheat
1 cup celery, finely chopped
1 cup mint leaves, chopped
1 cup flat leaf parsley, chopped
1 cup cucumber, chopped
2 cups cherry tomatoes, quartered

DIRECTIONS:

In a large glass or metal bowl, combine boiling water, olive oil, lemon juice, and salt. Add bulgur and stir to combine. Let sit for one hour. Add cucumber, celery, mint, parsley, and tomatoes. Serve room temp or cover and keep in fridge till ready to eat. It's also good cold, straight from the fridge.

Recipe: Hummus

INGREDIENTS:

1 can (15 oz.) chickpeas
1 tsp. cumin, 2 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tbsp. lemon juice, and 1 garlic clove or 1 tsp. garlic powder
salt to taste

Blend everything in a food processor till smooth.

PM Through the Bible Reading:

Old Covenant: Jonah 4
New Covenant: Romans 14
Poetry & Wisdom: Job 39

1/20/15 Study Title: "Eat with Love"

Old Covenant: Are animals valuable to God?
Numbers 22:21; 2 Samuel 12:1–6

New Covenant: Can a Christian survive being poisoned? Should we test God? How do we impact creation?
Mark 16:17–18; Acts 28:3–6; Luke 4:9–12

Poetry & Wisdom: Can we learn about God's love in caring for animals?
Psalm 23

Prayer:

Father,
you're so beautiful. You have given us so many gifts. Thank you for creating a world for us to live in with such thoughtfulness and love. Thank you for giving us life to steward. Your trust in us is astounding. Let me trust people with the hope and faith in them that you have. Let me see through your eyes.
I long to.
Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- ◯ Record for new album
- ◯ Do 20 min. run, 20 min. kettlebell swings
- ◯ Make brownies for studio
- ◯ Give The Neverending Story to Josh
- ◯ Help clean out Mom's fridge

New Song Idea: "Feels Like Forever"

Verse: Em, D, C, D, Em · Pre-chorus: C, D · Chorus: C, D, Em, G

Verse:

My hands are burning again tonight
My heart's awake but I don't feel right
Oh, I can feel the heat rise
If I could stand up and face this light
Tearing apart my old disguise
But I can't open my eyes, still I see you

Chorus:

My mouth is cold, my body whole
I may explode but you feel like forever
And I'm temporal, your temple
I may explode but you feel like forever
I'm falling over and into you
I am consumed and you feel like forever

RECIPE: BROWNIES

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. butter (4 sticks)
- 6 oz. unsweetened chocolate
- 1 lb. (16 oz.) semisweet chocolate chips
- 6 extra large eggs
- 3 tbsp. instant coffee
- 3 tbsp. pure vanilla
- 2 cups sugar
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 12 oz. chocolate chips
- 1 cup smooth peanut butter

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a 12 x 18 x 1½ inch baking sheet. Melt butter, unsweetened chocolate, and 1 lb. semisweet chocolate chips together in a large glass bowl. Let mixture cool a bit. In a medium bowl, mix eggs, instant coffee, vanilla, and sugar till frothy. Pour this egg mixture into your slightly cooled chocolate mixture. In a separate bowl, sift together 1 cup flour, baking powder, and salt. Slowly stir into the chocolate mixture.

In a small bowl, toss remaining ¼ cup flour with 12 oz. chocolate chips. Gently fold this into the batter. Pour batter into prepared pan. Spoon peanut butter on top and swirl with a butter knife. Bake 25 min.

PM THROUGH THE BIBLE READING:

Old Covenant: Job 39
New Covenant: Romans 14; 1 Timothy 4
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 8

Aching Nothing

No running to food today
I'm fasting.
No running to movies or theatre
There aren't any on.
No running to small talk
No one to talk with.
No running to business or work
No way to work.
No running to friends or family
No friends or family around.
No running to my role as a wife for identity or purpose
No husband to care.
No running to my role as a mom
The kids are safe and sleeping.
No running to chores
They are all done.
And I feel so empty I could implode.
Like an itch I have to scratch
A sore muscle I must rub
A wound I have to cover
My soul wants to be turned inside out so I can massage the ache that is so persistent and distracting.
My soul is being pulled into the nothing, a black hole.
What does the nothing look like?
It looks like being blind.[1]
Like I can smell an orange but can't taste it or see its color.
Like I can feel the warmth of the fire but can't see it light up the darkness.
Oh, persistent ache

1. Michael Ende, *The Neverending Story*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Puffin Books, 1993).

Achy discipline of God my Father who
Backs me into corners and lets me get caught in my own pursuit of
False, dead-end idols.
Like Edwin Abbot's Flatland he says, "You must come up."
But I'm only two-dimensional and want with all my heart to come "up"
But instead all I do is go forward.
I don't know how to explore height.
I get caught in the duties in front of me and never learn to rise
Because I keep moving forward.
Make me still, God, so I might rise.
Help me find the place to stop.

2/17/16

STUDY TITLE: "ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"

Old Covenant: Are celebrations important? Why?
Esther 9:27–28; 2 Chronicles 29:31; Deuteronomy 11:19

New Covenant: Who is our provider? Why do I have to rest?
John 6:1–14; Matthew 6:26–28

Poetry & Wisdom: What does God say that I must do to know him?
Psalm 46:10

PRAYER

Father, thank you for teaching us how to pray. Jesus, your words are life and glory and power. I pray like you said to pray, Lord, that your kingdom would come and your will would be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Let us know what heaven is like and let us live like that here. Thank you that there is no striving in your presence but there is the fullness of joy! And it's your joy that is our strength. You're our provider, so let us rest and be still so we can know you. Amen.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS AND TO-DO:

- ☐ Put on hour-long audio book, sermon, or worship set from YouTube and stretch 10 min., do kettlebell workout 20 min., run 20 min. with dog
- ☐ Worship with guitar
- ☐ Make roast, chicken soup, salmon, quinoa and roasted veggies, apple crumble, and sweet tea; buy challah; invite family and friends over for Shabbat!
- ☐ Clean out closet and make an office in there
- ☐ Give The Barbarian Way to Joelene

New Song Idea: "Life Screams"

Bm, A, G, Bm, F#, G • Chorus: G, D, A, B, A, G, A, B, G, A

Grand speeches pour out with the rain
On streets where no one's listening
You curse the cold wind on your face
But she's trying to tell you something
A song unfolds in the distance, somehow you feel it in your soul
Somehow you carry on with your business like you didn't hear
This melody that calls you home

Life sings out, it's calling you by name
Life screams out that all of this will change
Your lungs are only flesh and everything that dies will fade away
Life calls for her lover, you will live forever

Sturm Shabbat Chicken Soup

1 whole chicken, 3-4 lbs. (Or use boneless, skinless chicken breast if you don't want to pull out bones. They're a tad less flavorful and tender but lots easier, in my opinion.)
4 qt. (4 32 oz. boxes) of chicken broth (or use the equivalent in Better Than Bouillon)
6 lg. carrots, sliced
6 celery stalks, including leaves, sliced
1 lg. sweet onion, whole
handful of fresh parsley, handful of fresh dill
2 tsp. black pepper, ½ tsp. cloves, salt to taste
cooked brown rice or quinoa

Cover chicken with broth in a large pot. Bring to boil. When foamy scum rises to top, pull pot off burner and skim it off. Add vegetables, herbs, and spices and bring to boil again. Then turn down heat and continue to simmer for at least 25 min. Chicken is done when its internal temperature is 165°F; carefully take the whole chicken from pot and put on a large sheet pan. Pull meat from the bones carefully. I use rubber gloves when I do this because it can be very hot. Discard the bones and skin and put meat back into pot. Continue to simmer up to two hours, if desired. Serve over rice or quinoa.

P.M. BIBLE READING

Old Covenant: Isaiah 58
New Covenant: Hebrews 4
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 62

Everyday Heaven

Weight in my soul
Light in your eyes
Wake me up and show me life
Hold back tears
Lay down rights
Give up years to eternal life
Worth it all
Worth the fight
Writing Truth on my soul tonight
Lies are loud
Truth will stand
Freedom lives in every man
Fighting a battle that's already won
Lay down arms
Rival the sun
Burning bright in future past
Play for the Father
Make him laugh
Inside I rest with present eyes
Watch life unfold
The great surprise
Love never ends
So don't stop exploring
Hope isn't passive
Heaven isn't boring

3/12/17 Study Title: "Learning from God in Your Circumstances and God in Others"

Old Covenant: What does the Lord require of people?
Micah 6:8

New Covenant: Why are other perspectives important?
Hebrews 5:8–9; Matthew 7:5; Ephesians 5:21

Poetry & Wisdom:
Proverbs 27:17

PRAYER

Father, thank you for another day. Thank you for all the ways you've shaped me and all the ways you've let me shape the world around me. I ask for grace to cover my space and grace to fulfill your purpose. Let me be humbler and always listen to how you're speaking through other people who have a different perspective than I do. Help me to hang on to the pearls of wisdom that you've given me and help me to be careful not to let them be stolen or trampled by others who don't understand what you've taken me through. I love you, Daddy. Amen.

RAK & To-Do:

- run 20 min. with dog, do kettlebells
- Make fruit salad for family game night
- Clean out the bus for tour
- Work on book
- Read Ender's Game

New Song Idea: "Seed Sown in Tears"

Verse: Am, F, C, B • Chorus: Am, F, C, G

Verse: I'm the one holding you in suffering
And I am with you in the sorrow.
I'll be your strength when you're struggling
And turn today into tomorrow.
There's more to overcome
More light to shine, more love.
There's hope for you to bring
So stand up in the pain and sing.

Chorus: You are my song, my poetry
Beloved, precious humanity . . .

RECIPE:

Sturm Family Favorite Fruit Salad

SAUCE:
- juice of one lemon or ¼ cup
- juice of two oranges or ½ cup
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. vanilla

FRUIT:
- 1 chopped apple, 1 chopped pear
- 2 cups chopped strawberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup pineapple chunks
- 5 mandarin oranges, sections sliced into halves
- 2 bananas, sliced

Combine all sauce ingredients and bring to a boil, then simmer 5 min. Remove from heat and let cool. Mix all fruit together, pour cooled sauce over salad, toss gently, cover, and put in the fridge. Serve chilled.

PM THROUGH THE BIBLE READING:

Old Covenant: Isaiah 60
New Covenant: Revelation 21
Poetry & Wisdom: Psalm 27

Prophetic Joy and Sorrow

If I could see the way you stood beside me for fifty years,
The way we grew together, sorrow laughter tears
If I could see you stand up in your purpose seizing time
Assured that nothing ever stolen was ever yours or mine
Flipping all around for glory, testifying with faith
I could champion you every moment of every single day
I could love you in a way that gently passes through the storms
Knowing love endures forever while heaven's glory comes
Lord, let me see those things, have mercy let me see
You said blessed are those who don't see and yet still believe.
If this is a better way, I will write it on my wrist
So long as I don't waste these moments of uncertainty with fits
Worry distance seeing weeds, don't let that be the way I wait
If all it takes for me to love with gracious hope and faith
Is to see a glimpse of the futures and then hope for the most glory.
Then let me have the glimpse for peace, and I'll ever share the story.
I want a glimpse but I want you most. I want to touch your heart.
I'm choosing the forever life and forever is where I'll start.