



FAITHFUL

**THE TESTIMONY  
OF  
FAITHFUL WITNESSES**

## **THE SILENT MOMENT**

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**Roderick D. Belin**  
President/Publisher

**Tiffany Gregory**  
Chief of Operations

**O. Dotson**  
Cover design

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# The Silent Moment

It will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness  
in the sky. — Psalm 89:37



June-August 2026

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## The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses

In a trial, the testimony of one witness can make or break a case. The jury, the prosecution, the defense, and the judge all rely on each witness to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, “so help you God.” If a person is found to be inconsistent, unreliable, or vague, their testimony is worthless.

In Psalm 89:37, David refers to the moon as a “faithful witness”—reliable, constant, drawing our eyes toward heaven and bringing light to a dark world. And as Christ-followers, that’s what each of us is called to be, testifying to the truth of our Lord alongside the likes of Hannah, Jonathan and David, Mary, Stephen, and Paul, to name a few. Intimidating? Sometimes. Overwhelming? Yep. Difficult? Certainly. An incredible, mind blowing, humbling, inconceivable privilege? Absolutely.

As you read this collection of devotions and the Scriptures that accompany them, may you be inspired by the testimonies you read and challenged to examine your own. May you desire to bring more to the table—to be a bolder, more passionate witness in the “court” where God has called you to testify. May you stand ready, willing, and able to share both the truth and the love of Christ with confidence, clarity, and consistency. May your light shine brightly in a dark world, pointing to the One who hung the moon and then hung upon a cross.

So help you God.

Grace and peace,  
**Karen**

### ***Approach Each Day with a Heavenly Perspective***

Using these devotions, you'll read the recommended text of the Bible, consider how its message applies to your life, then use the brief prayer to begin a conversation with God.

If you follow the ISSL Series, you'll likely notice that these devotions align with the ISSL Home Daily Bible Readings. Every day you pick up this devotional, countless people around the world are reading and studying the same verses as you. Opening the Bible each day invites us to a deeper fellowship with Christ as we apply God's Word to our lives.

June 1

## A Leadership Example

**Now the overseer is to be above reproach.** (1 Timothy 3:2)

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 3:1–7

**Song: “Yield Not to Temptation”**

My friend’s son was attending school in another country where cheating was rampant and often overlooked. He was in a rough spot and had a difficult choice to make. Should he cheat to pass the class? Should he do his own work and bear the consequences? His classmates may have wondered why he would not take the easy way out, but perhaps some of them saw his example and felt led to examine their own behavior. Perhaps the Holy Spirit’s convicting power was at work in their hearts.

Today’s Scripture highlights several character traits that Christian leaders must possess. At first glance, it seems impossible to find all these wrapped up in one person. But Jesus Christ is that one, an example for Christian leaders everywhere. Scripture tells us Jesus was tempted in every way we are, and yet He didn’t sin.

I’ve proven repeatedly that I am not above reproach, as we all have. The key is to focus on Jesus and His character. Through His power, our lives can be forever changed.

**Father,** let Your character traits become mine so that others may see and seek their source. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## A Leader Who Cares

**At Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor.** (Acts 9:36)

**Scripture:** Acts 9:36–42

**Song:** “Make Me a Blessing”

Anyone married to a seamstress is familiar with the saying “She who dies with the most fabric wins.” During our recent move, I thought *I* would be the one dying after carrying box after box downstairs. My wife loves collecting discarded fabric, repurposing it into clothing for dolls, and sending the dolls overseas. Every piece of my wife’s doll clothing goes on its way with the understanding that the greater gift is Jesus.

You might wonder how dolls and their clothes could help spread the Gospel. Some may have wondered how Tabitha’s generosity helped spread the Gospel. But her gifts of clothing—and obviously of her time and friendship—made an impact on those around her. Because Tabitha cared (and because Peter did too) “many people believed in the Lord” (v. 42).

Tabitha’s story caused quite a stir in Joppa, resulting in many believers. I can imagine doll clothes causing quite a stir in Mexico, in Cambodia, or in Ukraine. The smallest gift, given in Jesus’ name, can become a miracle and help spread the Gospel.

**Father**, please take any gift I give in Your name and use it to allow people to hear Your Word and respond to Your love. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

June 3

## A Leader Who Teaches

**When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him into their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.** (Acts 18:26)

**Scripture:** Acts 18:24–28

**Song:** “Pentecostal Power”

I am rich in Bibles. I also have commentaries, concordances, and books on church teachings. However, many people in third-world countries have no access to even a page from a Bible. I know two people working in different areas of Africa training pastors and church planters. The work is hard. Terrible roads, dilapidated infrastructure, and opposition from non-Christians hamper the spread of the message. Scripture is scarce, and false teachers take advantage of the situation to deceive many. Sort of sounds like the challenges of the first-century church.

Apollos was “a learned man. . . . instructed in the way of the Lord” (vv. 24–25). He taught accurately about Jesus, but he was missing a key element. Priscilla and Aquila took time to invite Apollos into their home and fill in his “knowledge gap,” explaining in detail the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Rather than publicly correcting him and moving on, they took the time to teach. Apollos went on to become a great leader, one who could effectively explain the whole Gospel and refute its opponents.

May we take the time not only to learn and grow for our own sake but for the sake of others, so that together we may grow in our walk with Christ.

**Father,** may I be “a great help” to others as they grow in their faith and as I also grow in mine. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## A Leader Who Listens

**The king said to me, “What is it you want?”** (Nehemiah 2:4)

**Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:1–8

**Song:** “I Must Tell Jesus”

I was a poor college student when my church called for us to pray and to give up food as part of a fast. When it was over, my friends ordered pizza. Rather than admit I was broke, I excused myself. The next morning, I overslept and missed breakfast. Then lunchtime passed at work. By midafternoon, hungry and irritated, I reminded God that I loved Him, that I loved pizza, and that I’d settle for anything I could get. As I yanked the mail out of my box, I found a coupon for free pizza. Obviously God heard my (somewhat frustrated) prayer.

It irritates me when people aren’t listening. I feel slighted, and I’m sure Nehemiah felt the same. He was an expendable captive and the king’s cupbearer. But the king noticed him and asked how he could help—and he listened to Nehemiah’s request.

As Christ-followers, we can have an audience with the King at any time. Unfortunately, sometimes we don’t pray because we’re too busy or too tired. Sometimes we don’t want to waste His time with trivial things. Sometimes we’re irritated and grumble. Scripture, however, asserts that God listens to our prayers. We can come boldly before Him and find grace.

**Father,** forgive my excuses and mindless “duty prayers.” Remind me of the privilege to come before You. May I truly listen to the needs of others and help when I can. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

June 5

## A Leader Who Intercedes

**“Hear us, our God, for we are despised.”** (Nehemiah 4:4)

**Scripture:** Nehemiah 4:1–6

**Song:** “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying”

Every Sunday the whiteboard in our small group is filled with prayer opportunities. Some are praises, some are requests. A volunteer leads us in praying for each one. Then, someone pulls out a cell phone, takes a picture, and emails it to the group as a reminder to continue praying.

In today’s passage, the returned exiles were trying to rebuild Jerusalem’s wall in the face of fierce opposition. In his prayer, Nehemiah used the words *us* and *we*, not *me* and *I*, to plead for God’s intervention.

Many times, I pray self-centered prayers. I need help remembering that I am a member of Christ’s body, so what affects one part affects all parts. Our Sunday morning ritual gives me a chance to rejoice with friends who have experienced God’s blessing and to pray for those who are experiencing trials. Most important, it reminds me that God really does work for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28) and that I am not the only one in this world who has problems.

**Father,** You tell me I am part of a kingdom of priests who intercede for others. Forgive me when I pray only for myself. Thank You that I can pray with and for others. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## A Leader Who Serves

**“Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”** (John 13:17)

**Scripture:** John 13:3–17

**Song:** “Where He Leads I’ll Follow”

My grandfather was the patriarch of my family. I remember him as a gently stern, no-nonsense Christian man of prayer who was very involved in our local church. But he was also a compassionate man, generous to a fault. I admired how he “walked the walk.” Despite that, to his sorrow, I left the church and Christ. However, the weight of my grandfather’s exemplary life continued to pull on me until I was reconciled to Christ (and to him) several years later.

Jesus culminated three years of teaching and service by washing the feet of His disciples. It must have impacted them, because the account appears in three of four Gospels. Even though His disciples would desert Him a few hours later, the weight of Jesus’ exemplary life pulled them back into a relationship with Him.

Jesus told His friends that they would be blessed by doing “these things.” He didn’t mean only washing each other’s feet. He was saying that their lives should make others hunger for a relationship with Him. I need to check myself frequently to see whether I am living the kind of life that mimics Christ’s example and reflects His love.

**Father,** help me lovingly serve others so that they will come to know You. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

June 7

## A Leader Who Inspires

**Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.”** (Judges 4:8)

**Scripture:** Judges 4:4–10, 14, 21–22

**Song:** “Trust and Obey”

When I was a young man, my uncle, a Kentucky colonel, offered to teach me auctioneering. I was intrigued, but questions and self-doubts caused me to refuse. Now, my wife and I are “down-sizing” after 30 years of living in a house with a lot of storage. I’m really wishing I had those connections and resources as we try to thin our collections to fit our new space.

Barak also missed a blessing because of fear and doubt. God offered him the chance to be a great leader in Israel, but he wanted a co-leader. God provided Deborah to spur Barak on to the task to which God had called him. Due to his lack of trust, Barak did not get full credit for a victory against King Jabin. Just as I sold some of my collected things at a deep discount, Barak had to settle for less than he might have had he not given into fear or doubt.

The Lord can use anyone to accomplish His purpose. When He gives me a task, I can feel privileged and humbled that He chose me. And when He gives someone else a task, I can come alongside them, encouraging and supporting them along the way.

**Father,** many times I have missed the blessing of seeing what You can do. Forgive my fearfulness and help me do better both in obeying You and inspiring others. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Living a Righteous Life

**“Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right. . . . He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws.”** (Ezekiel 18:5, 9)

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 18:5–9

**Song:** “Lord, I Need You”

Three of my former co-worker’s children were in the navy. Each day she’d take a pen from her desk and write them letters. After a few years, she gave notice she was leaving. As she tied up loose ends, I saw her take a bundle of pens from her purse and put them in her desk drawer. When I inquired about it, she shared she had often distractedly popped the pens from her desk into her purse after writing notes. They weren’t hers to keep, and she was returning them to the company. That small act of honesty impacted me greatly. She was a righteous woman who knew that integrity—even when it involved returning a few pens—was of utmost importance.

In today’s passage, the Lord shares the behaviors of a righteous person—someone who does what is just and right in every aspect of their life, great and small, a person who follows God’s decrees and faithfully keeps His laws.

While no one can keep every law (which is why Jesus died as a sacrifice for us), we are called to be faithful—even when it comes to small things like returning pens.

**Father,** thank You for examples of righteousness that show me how to honor You. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

June 9

## Trusting a God Who Sees

**She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me.”** (Genesis 16:13)

**Scripture:** Genesis 16:1, 4–16

**Song:** “God Is With Us”

One night I sat alone in my car crying out to God. In frustration, I compared Him to the moon, saying He was immense and beautiful but a million miles away. I laid out specific laments and eventually got out of my car. A neighbor drove up with her sister, whom I’d never met, saying God led them to come pray for me. The sister spoke no English but prayed over me while my neighbor translated. Everything I’d cried out to God in my car, her sister addressed in her prayer—to the word. I wept anew, knowing this was no coincidence. Through a stranger, God let me know He saw me and heard my cry.

Hagar was feeling abandoned and abused as she ran into the desert. The angel of the Lord met her where she was and let her know she had been heard. There’s no indication that her circumstances were any different when she went back, but now she had hope. God had seen her and given her the strength to face her hardships.

If you are feeling unseen today, know that God sees you and hears every prayer. Psalm 56:8 says, “You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book” (NLT).

**Father,** thank You that I don’t have to face this world and my hardships alone. You are the God who sees and cares for me. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Keeping Wise Counsel

**My son, keep your father's command and do not forsake your mother's teaching.** (Proverbs 6:20)

**Scripture:** Proverbs 6:20–22

**Song:** “The Blessing”

As a child, I was basically a rule-follower. But as an older teen, I challenged my parents in one particular area, thinking I was mature enough to know what was best for me. In the end, going against their instruction led to years of difficulty and heartache for me that could have been avoided.

This passage implores children to keep their parents' teaching so close that it is bound on their heart and fastened around their neck, never to be forgotten. The guidance is not given to weigh children down or burden them. It's not done in a “because I said so” manner but provided out of care and concern. Verse 23 says, “For this command is a lamp, this teaching is a light, and correction and instruction are the way to life.”

God has tasked parents with the job of raising their children to love Him, respect others, and to exercise good judgment. When we ignore these teachings, we do so at our own peril. As much as we may think we're mature enough to know what is best, others have seen more of life and want to spare us grief when it's within their power to do so.

**Father,** thank You for the gift of people who care enough to teach, discipline, and love me even when I disagree. Help me to respect their wise counsel. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## Praising the Lord

**Let the name of the LORD be praised, both now and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the LORD is to be praised.** (Psalm 113:2–3)

**Scripture:** Psalm 113

**Song:** “From the Rising of the Sun”

I once heard a challenging question—what if you woke up tomorrow with only the things you thanked God for today? It’s a sobering thought, and I’m guessing we might find ourselves devoid of things like jobs, creature comforts, and even people when the sun rose. Today’s passage begs a similar question—what might our attitude be like if we praised God every minute of every day?

In just nine verses, this psalm directs us seven times to praise or exalt the Lord. We’re reminded there is no one like Him, no one else deserving of our praise. And while God is enthroned in the heavens, He still stoops down to see our needs and care for us all. Psalm 113 gives us one simple command with no end—now and forevermore from daybreak to sunset—praise Him because He is worthy of our praise.

It may sound daunting to always praise, but let’s start today. Each time you’re tempted to complain, praise God for all He has done and all that He is. Then praise Him with gratitude each time you see or hear something that brings you joy. When we praise God in all things, we’ll quickly develop an attitude of gratitude.

**Father,** I praise You for who You are. I’m grateful You love and protect me through every circumstance. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Comforting Like a Mother

**“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem.”** (Isaiah 66:13)

**Scripture:** Isaiah 66:9–13

**Song:** “In Christ Alone”

Charles Spurgeon once made an astute observation. He said, “A father can comfort, but I think he is not much at home in the work. When God speaks about His pity, He compares Himself to the father. But when He speaks about comfort, He selects the mother. There is placed in the mother’s tender heart a power of sympathy, and very soon she finds the word or gives the touch that will meet her darling’s case and cheer its troubled soul.”

Anyone who can harken back to their childhood and remember a time when their mom was able to take the sting out of a hurt—emotional, relational, or physical—can understand the picture this Scripture is painting. There is something special about a mother’s love for her child and the comfort it brings.

God is speaking to Israel, and by extension, to us today about His protection, peace, and great love. He is also reminding us that He is faithful and true to bring His promises to fruition. When He sets things in motion, He brings them to completion. He not only provides but does so with overflowing abundance, like a mother who pours out all her love and attention on her child.

**Father,** thank You for lavishing Your love and comfort upon Your people Israel and for grafting me into Your greater family. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

June 13

## Rejoicing in God's Deliverance

**And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.”** (Luke 1:46–49)

**Scripture:** Luke 1:46–55

**Song:** “Blessings”

We see it all over social media: #blessed. We say we're “blessed” when we get a new job or car, go on an exciting vacation, or even eat a fancy meal at a nice restaurant. *Blessed* has become an over-used and misinterpreted word.

Mary was poor, unmarried, and pregnant in a culture that stoned women for being in that situation. At best, she'd be an outcast looked upon with suspicion by anyone doing the pregnancy math. Yet, despite the personal cost, she considered herself blessed because she was chosen to give birth to the Messiah. She rightly considered that a great thing. Mary was thankful to God because she knew her child would bring the deliverance His people had been praying for over hundreds of years.

Blessings aren't always wrapped up as financial windfalls and nice things. Often blessings come when we surrender our will even if things are uncomfortable and there's a personal cost. God can take what appears to be a hardship on the outside and create for us a beautiful blessing that showcases His glory and power.

**Father,** help my spirit to rejoice in You when I'm called to a hard task. I know You'll bless me when I surrender my life to Your perfect will. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## Praying for Provision

**And she made a vow, saying, “LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me, and . . . give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD.”** (1 Samuel 1:11)

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 1:9–20, 25

**Song:** “Standing on the Promises”

Years ago, I stopped making New Year’s resolutions. Frustrated by my inability to keep well-meaning vows to lose weight or get organized, I prayed God would give me a meaningful word to pray over and meditate on during the coming year. He provided words like *consistency*, *delight*, *abundance*, and *trust*.

Hannah wanted a child so badly she was willing to make a seemingly impossible vow . . . not to herself but to God, and she was faithful to keep it. She promised to give that child back to God *forever*. As a mom of two who prayed her kids would serve God, I don’t think I could have handed them off as veritable babies, seeing them just once a year.

We need to be mindful that promises to God should never be made lightly. The typical “God, help me, and I promise to go to church every day for the rest of my life” vow is not practical, sustainable, or advisable. God doesn’t make promises to us that He doesn’t keep, and He wants us to measure our words carefully. Hannah weighed the cost, and God remembered her sincere prayers, providing the desire of her heart.

**Father**, help me not to make promises lightly, but to sincerely seek to align my will with Yours as I trust You to provide. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

June 15

## A Praying Friend

**God is my witness . . . how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times.** (Romans 1:9–10)

**Scripture:** Romans 1:8–12

**Song:** “I Love Your Church, O Lord”

I love to camp, and a campfire is one of my favorite parts of the experience. It is almost impossible for me to sit beside the fire and not poke and prod it frequently to turn the logs or watch the sparks fly upward. Occasionally the errant log rolls away from the fire, and if I am not quick to notice, it will lie against the circled stones until it goes out and turns cold.

The apostle Paul understood this principle. He knew that the followers of Christ who maintained fellowship with each other and encouraged each other would burn brightly together in a world of spiritual darkness. A believer who chose to drift from the community of faith would be destined to occupy a world that is spiritually apathetic or cold—a world that could easily extinguish faith.

In Romans 1, Paul sent a “love note” to the believers in Rome. He told them that their faith was influencing the whole world. He wrote that they were always on his mind and always in his prayers. He let them know that it was his heart’s desire to be among them, so that he could encourage them and so that they could do the same for him. Paul reminds us that the fire of faith burns brightest when those who love Jesus encourage one another.

**Father,** help me look for ways to consistently encourage others through my words, actions, and prayers. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Choose Your Friends Wisely

**Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”**  
(1 Corinthians 15:33)

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:30–34

**Song:** “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

A little country church I attended sponsored an annual apple festival to raise money for missions. One year a friend talked me into managing the making of 1,500 fried apple pies for the event. Every Monday for several weeks, eager volunteers created yummy little pies to be frozen then later cooked at the event. I learned many principles during this experience: one cannot handle large quantities of sugary cooked apples without getting sticky; dough can leave hands gummy; and, most certainly, flour adheres to every surface. Even aprons didn't prevent us from leaving with blotches of white flour on our sleeves, pants, and even faces.

The apostle Paul understood this. He knew that spending time in the presence of worldly people would have an effect. One might have pure motives when joining them but leave “sticky” with bad attitudes or “floured” with negative thoughts. A friend who gossips or a co-worker who is critical can influence our own behavior and actions.

What Paul told the Corinthians was an undeniable truth: “Bad company corrupts good character.” A person who spends time in the presence of ungodly behavior (or messy pie makers) will walk away displaying evidence of it.

**Father,** help me choose friends who reflect the character of Jesus, and help me be good company for others. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

June 17

## A Friend Closer Than a Brother

**One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.**  
(Proverbs 18:24)

**Scripture:** Proverbs 18:18–24

**Song:** “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

I recently read a random online exchange between a high school student and several adults of varying ages. The student had a small group of good friends at school, but he saw others with large groups of friends. He felt sad that he wasn't as popular. The comments he received were amazingly similar, despite the difference in ages and backgrounds of the responders. All agreed that this student's few close friends were far more valuable than large groups of friends. “Quality over quantity” was their advice.

The verse for today affirms this truth. The prodigal son in Luke 15 may have enjoyed the companionship of many others in his wild living, but he journeyed home alone. Jonathan and David, however, developed a friendship so close that “Jonathan became one in spirit with David” (1 Samuel 18:1), and after Jonathan died, David took care of his son.

In the family unit, there is an implied loyalty because of connections established at birth, but in a friendship, we freely choose to be loyal. As the proverb indicates, many friends cannot outweigh the one friend who “sticks closer than a brother.”

**Father**, please help me show true love and loyalty to any person who calls me friend. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## Friends Stick Together

**“Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.”** (Ruth 1:16)

**Scripture:** Ruth 1:11–18

**Song:** “Blessed Be the Tie That Binds”

The story of Ruth and Naomi tells of a woman who lost everything she loved and the daughter-in-law who refused to leave her side. Ruth’s self-sacrifice and steadfast love helped Naomi face the days ahead with hope.

One Christmas, my children and I also experienced the power of friendship in the face of loss. The day before Christmas Eve, two men broke into our home while we were out. My older daughter arrived home to find the glass broken on our back door, the Christmas tree in shambles on the floor, and all the gifts we had bought gone. That afternoon, I shared this with my best friend. The next morning, to our surprise, that friend and two others stood at our door with shopping bags full of presents. The same day, a man I didn’t know called to say he had heard what happened. He and his wife, instead of exchanging presents, wanted to buy each of us a Christmas present. Because of the overwhelming friendship expressed to us, my children said it was the best Christmas they had ever experienced.

Naomi’s loss far exceeded ours, but in both instances, the love embodied in friendship brought light into a dark place. No gift we can offer someone is more valuable.

**Father,** You demonstrated sacrificial love through Your Son. Help me sacrifice my own needs to fill the needs of others and to be present in the lives of my friends. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Friends Love Radically

**“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”** (John 15:13)

**Scripture:** John 15:9–17

**Song:** “Oh, How He Loves You and Me”

In July of 2022, the Webb telescope began sending new pictures of space back to earth. The beauty of the universe was astounding. Job chapter 26 lists other wonders that offer a glimpse of the creator. In verse 14, he makes the profound statement that these miraculous sights are only “the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him!” Imagine—the miracles of nature and the universe are only a *whisper* of the loving God who spoke creation into being.

That same incomprehensible God demonstrated His love for us by sending His only Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus showed us the Father, and as He approached death, He told His disciples, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

The God of the universe sent Christ to express the greatest love—the love in which a person gives their own life for a friend. But Jesus did more. I wasn’t His friend when He died for me. I was wrapped up in myself, more interested in my ways than His. I didn’t seek Jesus. He sought me. Truly, His death on the cross for someone like me reveals the greatest love the world has ever known.

**Father,** thank You that Jesus’ love was so great that He gave His sinless life for mine. May my love for others be as selfless. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Sworn Friendship

**And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as himself.** (1 Samuel 20:17)

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 20:16–17, 32–34, 42

**Song:** “God Be With You till We Meet Again”

The story of David and Jonathan might well be called the story of Jonathan and David. Jonathan initiated the friendship, courageously protected his friend David, and sacrificed his own ordained future for David. Jonathan was King Saul’s son and was to be the next king of Israel. Scripture says that Jonathan’s spirit became one with David’s on the day they met. Jonathan felt selfless love for David and gave David his robe, tunic, and weapons, symbolically offering his right of kingship to his friend.

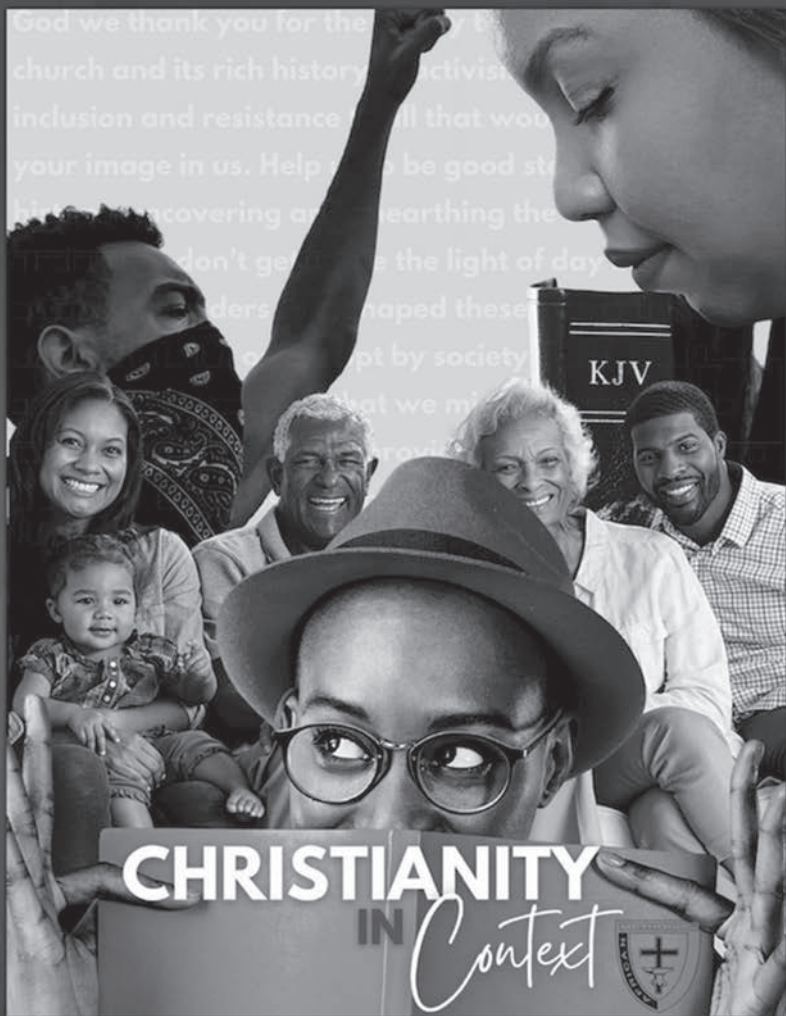
David felt the same love toward Jonathan, but David was in crisis. He went to Jonathan when Saul, jealous of David’s successes in battle, sought to kill him. Jonathan took the risk of standing between his father (the king) and his friend David. More than once, he fiercely protected David from Saul’s ardent determination to kill him, and in his final rescue of David, Jonathan made a covenant with him then sent him away to safety.

Why would Jonathan pass his right to the throne to David? Why would he face the wrath of his father and risk his own life in defying Saul to protect his friend? In verse 42, we find the answer: the Lord is at the center of their bond, a deep bond of love that would last forever.

**Father,** help me be a faithful friend to others. May I always put You at the center of who I am and what I do. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.



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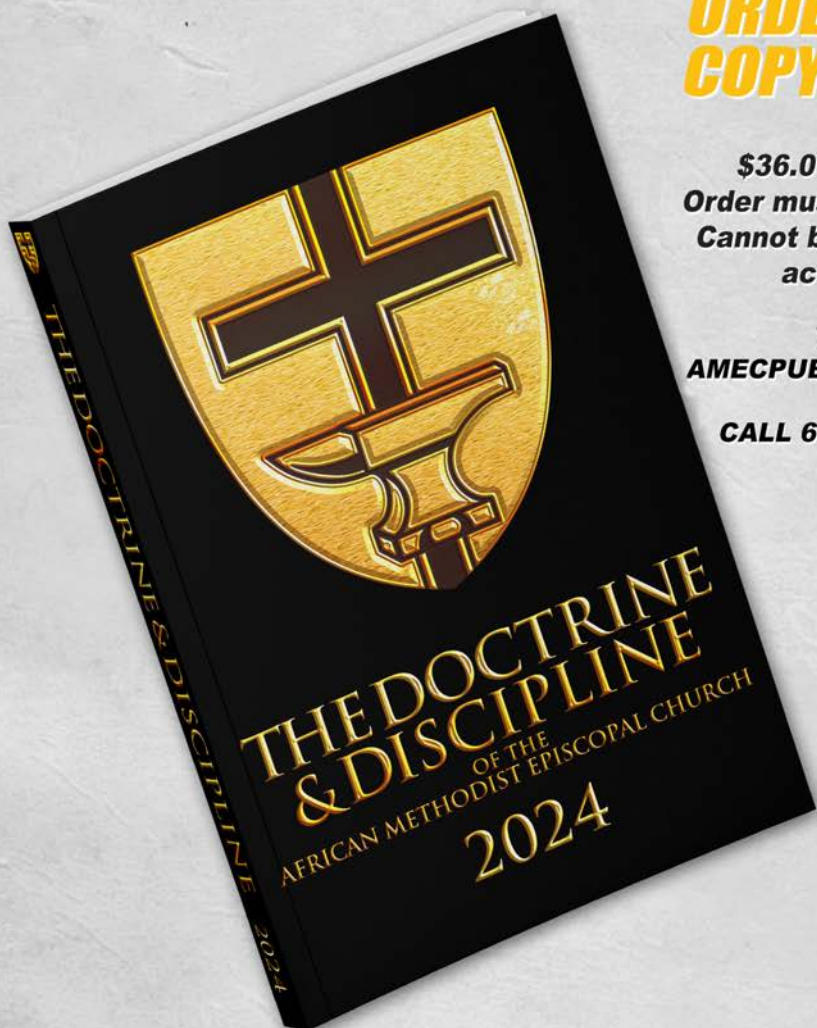
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