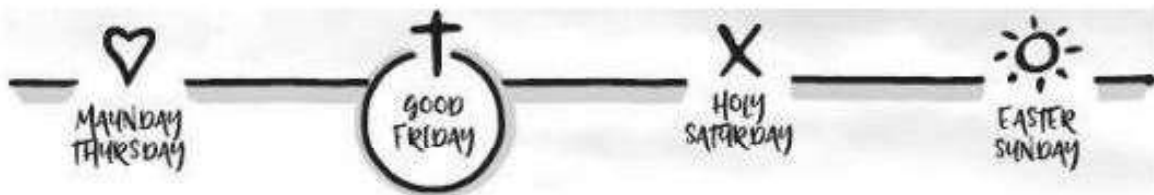


SECTION 2 (DAYS 14–26)

EXPLORING GOOD FRIDAY

**Why Aren't My
Prayers Being
Answered?**



Day 14: Big Red Switch (Chapter 7) (Thursday in the second week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 16: 1-2, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“Keep me safe, O God, I’ve run for dear life to you. I say to God, ‘Be my Lord!’ Without you, nothing makes sense” (MSG).

REFLECT

Bible: How happy are those who know what sorrow means for they will be given courage and comfort! (Matt. 5: 4 PHILLIPS)

Book passage: Sammy and I would not want to go back, of course, to the dark days of brain surgery. But neither would we want to go back to the days before our lives were hijacked by fear. I guess we prefer the people we have become through all these contradictions.

ASK

Ask myself: Can I see any positive ways in which the Holy Spirit might be using my sorrow for good? Are there any signs of Him changing me in some way through these difficult times?

Ask the Lord: Father, if You were to hand me a big red switch to solve my problems and heal my pain, I’d flick it without hesitation. But in the absence of that switch, please at least make something good out of this mess. Don’t let this ugly situation make me ugly. Give me “beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair” (Isa. 61:3).

YIELD

Our yielding prayer over the next few days is going to be the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane, which we studied at the start of this devotional. But before praying these famous words, I clench my fists, holding in my left hand my greatest desire (the miracle I need God to do) and in my right hand my deepest dread:

“*Abba*, Father ... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me.” (Mark 14:36a)

I open my left hand to offer God my deepest desire and to ask for a miracle.

“Yet not my will, but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

I open my right hand and, naming my deepest dread, I make the difficult decision to relinquish control.

Amen.

Day 15: Stupid Ain't Stupid (Chapter 8) (Friday in the second week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 91: 2-3, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“God, you’re my refuge. I trust in you and I’m safe!... You rescue me from hidden traps, shield me from deadly hazards. Your huge outstretched arms protect me – under them I’m perfectly safe; your arms fend off all harm.” (MSG, paraphrased and personalized)

REFLECT

Bible: Rejoice always, pray continually, I give thanks *in all circumstances*; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thess. 5: 16-18, emphasis added)

Book passage: Praying about the tiny things of our lives opens our eyes to the hidden myriad of God’s daily blessings, which then enables us to live with grater gratitude. People who don’t pray for stupid things such as parking spaces only get to thank God when sensible things happen – which means that they live less grateful lives!

ASK

Ask myself: Even against the backdrop of big prayers that have gone unanswered, God’s will for me in Christ Jesus is still that I would “pray continually” and “give thanks in all circumstances.” How do I do this? How do I prevent disappointment from destroying my joy? How do I stop unanswered prayer from blinding me to the other prayers God has answered?

Ask the Lord: Keep my heart soft and my eyes open to recognize what You are doing all around me, Lord. I give You thanks now for the signs I see of Your goodness – however small – in my life today.

YIELD

Naming my greatest desire and my deepest dread before the Lord, I clench them in my fists now as I join with Jesus in His ultimate prayer of surrender:

“*Abba*, Father ... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me.” (Mark 14:36a)

I open my left hand to offer God my deepest desire and to ask for a miracle.

“Yet not my will, but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

I open my right hand and, naming my deepest dread, I make the difficult decision to relinquish control.

Amen.

Day 16: The Necessary Scarcity of Miracles (Chapter 8) (Saturday in the second week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 119: 76-77, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant. Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight.”

REFLECT

Bible: You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! (Ps. 139: 13-17)

Book passage: I quote C. S. Lewis saying something we may not want to hear: “That God can and does, on occasions, modify the behavior of matter and produce what we call miracles is part of Christian faith; but the very conception of a common, and therefore stable, world demands that these occasions should be extremely rare.”* (p.96)

*C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 25

ASK

Ask myself: Does this assertion that miracles have to be “extremely rare” match up with my experience? Does it echo what I’ve been taught? Does it help me find a little more peace with my situation?

Ask the Lord: I take time now to marvel at the infinite complexity and intricate beauty of the world around me, giving thanks especially for the harmony of creation.

YIELD

A prayer of wonder and humility from Psalm 8:1, 3-4

“Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens ... When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?”

Amen.

Day 17: Tough Life (Chapter 8) (Monday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 18: 28-29, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“You, Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall.”

REFLECT

Book passage: Perhaps we should accept what older people and poorer people and many of those with disabilities already know: things are probably going to be very difficult today and just as hard tomorrow. Maybe by adjusting our expectations we can reduce the sense of disappointment, isolation, and unfairness riding on the back of unanswered prayer. With a business-as-usual approach to life's trials, the good times can become surprising and delightful. It will be our blessings more than our sufferings that provoke us to ask God, “Why?” (p.100)

Bible: In John 16:33, Jesus promises His disciples both trouble and peace: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

ASK

Ask myself: Which do I find more surprising: life's trials or its blessings? If I'd been born at a different time in history or in a different part of the world how might I relate differently to the difficulties I face?

Ask the Lord: I give thanks to the Lord now for the “common grace” of the world's essential goodness, and the particular signs of His kindness towards me today.

YIELD

Naming my greatest desire and my deepest dread before the Lord one last time, I join with Jesus in His ultimate prayer of surrender in Gethsemane:

“Abba, Father ... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me.” (Mark 14:36a)

I ask for a miracle.

“Yet not my will, but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

I relinquish control.

Amen.

Day 18: Good Friday: Bloody-minded Faith (Chapter 8) (Tuesday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 19: 14, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

REFLECT

Bible: When Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego were commanded to worship an idol on pain of death, they replied:

“King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” (Dan. 3:16-18)

Book passage: The paradox of faith is encapsulated in this rousing speech. [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego] believe unequivocally that God *can* save them, and that He *will* save them. But then they add “even if he does not .. we will not serve your gods”. These men have complete faith for a miracle but they also have a sort of bloody-minded defiance should the miracle no happen. (p.103)

ASK

Ask myself: If I could look into the future and see that my most desperate prayers are not going to be answered, how might it affect the choices I am making now?

Ask the Lord: Mostly, I do believe that You are *able* to save me, Lord. I do have faith. But give me faithfulness too, to keep trusting and worshiping defiantly even if my prayers go unanswered.

YIELD

A prayer of surrender by Richard Foster:

Today, O Lord, I yield myself to You. May Your will be my delight today. May You have perfect sway in me. May your love be the pattern of my living. I surrender to You my hopes, my dreams, my ambitions. Do with them what You will, when You will, as You will. I place into Your loving care my family, my friends, my future. Care for them with a care that I can never give. I release into Your hands my need to control, my craving for status, my fear of obscurity. Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and establish Your kingdom on earth. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

Day 19: Victory! (Chapter 8) (Wednesday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 22: 10-11, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“From birth I was cast on you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.”

REFLECT

Bible: “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:55-58)

Book passage: “This is not the worst thing to ever happen!” wrote my friend Margaret Lee as she lay dying of cancer. “Cancer is so limited. It cannot cripple love, shatter hope, corrode faith, eat away peace, destroy confidence, kill friendship, shut out memories, silence courage, quench the Spirit, or lessen the power of Jesus.” (p. 107)

ASK

Ask myself: As Christians, we believe in life after death, but also life *before* death, and even line *in the midst* of death (as we see in saints like Margaret Lee).

What might the resurrection power of Jesus look like *in the midst of* my struggle today?

Ask the Lord: Lord, fill me afresh with Your Holy Spirit. Let my life be marked by defiant love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control

YIELD

The well-loved hymn of surrender, “All to Jesus I surrender,” by Judson W. Van DeVenter:

*All to Jesus I surrender
All to Him I freely give
I will ever love and trust Him
In His presence daily live
I surrender all, I surrender all
All to Thee, my blessed Savior
I surrender all
Amen.*

Day 20: A Higher Way? (Chapter 9) (Thursday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 23: 1-3, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul.”

REFLECT

Bible: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa. 55: 8-9)

Book passage: Sometimes God denies my prayers because He has something even better for me. I breathe an easy amen to God’s promise through Jeremiah: “I know the plans I have for you ... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jer. 29:11). My heart rises to pray with Thomas s Kempis: “O Lord you know what is best for me. Give what you will, how much you will and when you will.” (p. 114)

ASK

Ask myself: Billy Graham’s wife Ruth said that “God has not always answered my prayers. If He had, I would have married the wrong man several times!” (p. 226)

Ask the Lord: Is it possible that the reason for my unanswered prayer is that God has a “higher way”? If so, I ask Him now to help me trust His alternative Plan, even if every fiber of my being wants something completely different.

YIELD

Reflection of an unknown soldier from the American Civil War:

*I asked for strength that I might achieve;
He made me weak that I might obey.
I asked for health that I might do greater things;
I was given grace that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy;
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;
I was give life that I might enjoy all things.
I received nothing that I asked for, all that I hoped for.
My prayer was answered, I was most blessed.*

Amen.

Day 21: Wake-Up Call (Chapter 9) (Friday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 38: 9-10, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“All my longings are open before you, Lord: my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes.”

REFLECT

Bible: From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. He said: “In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry.” (Jon. 2: 1-2)

Book passage: “Afflictions quicken us to prayer,” observed John Newton, the former slave-ship captain best known for writing the hymn “Amazing Grace.” “Experience testifies that a long course of ease and prosperity, without painful changes, has an unhappy tendency to make us cold and formal in our secret worship; but troubles rouse our spirits, and constrain us to call upon the Lord in good earnest, when we feel a need of that help which we only can have from him.”* (p. 119)

*John Newton, *Letters of John Newton* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1960), n.p.

ASK

Ask myself: Is it true that “troubles rouse our spirits” and “afflictions quicken us to prayer”?

Ask the Lord: Like Jonah crying out to God from the Belly of the beast, I rouse myself again today to call out to You Lord from the darkness of my impossible predicament.

YIELD

A prayer of the eighteenth century soldier, explorer, and monk, Charles de Foucauld:

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures - I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Amen.

Day 22: Changing the Conversation (Chapter 9) (Saturday in the third week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 25: 16-17, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish.”

REFLECT

Bible: As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a female slave look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. (Ps. 123: 2)

Book passage: Why does God speak clearly about peripherals but remain silent on the issue with which we most need His help? My answer – call it a hunch – is that sometimes God is enjoying the way we are wrestling with Him in prayer through this process. To put it another way, He may consider our wondering and questioning more important than the relatively simple act of supplying us with an answer. Whatever the reason, I can’t begin to tell you how frustrating this is? .. Sammy and I are praying harder, we are searching our souls more diligently, and we are tuning our ears to the slightest whisper from heaven in a way we would not normally do. In short, we are drawing nearer to God precisely because of our unanswered prayer. (p.118)

ASK

Ask myself: Do I ever experience God “changing the conversation” when I am being vulnerable with Him in prayer or asking Him for help?

Ask the Lord: Instead of asking the Lord to do something *for me* today, I wonder if there is anything He is asking *me* to do *for Him* today?

YIELD

A prayer of surrender by Richard Foster:

Today, O Lord, I yield myself to You. May Your will be my delight today. May You have perfect sway in me. May your love be the pattern of my living. I surrender to You my hopes, my dreams, my ambitions. Do with them what You will, when You will, as You will. I place into Your loving care my family, my friends, my future. Care for them with a care that I can never give. I release into Your hands my need to control, my craving for status, my fear of obscurity. Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and establish Your kingdom on earth. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

Amen.

Day 23: Choosing Life (Chapter 9) (Monday in the fourth week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 27: 1, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?”

REFLECT

Bible: I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life. (Deut. 30: 19-20)

Book passage: When I asked Sammy to marry me, it was a terrifying moment. I knew that she could say one single syllable word and dash all my dreams, or say another and make them all come true. My future hung on her choice. Had I decided to avoid the risk of disappointment, grabbing her by the hair with one hand while beating my chest in triumph with the other and declaring, “You shall be mine,” then my actions would not have been loving. Love, by its very nature, always permits choice, and choice permits terrifying risks. (p. 123)

ASK

Ask myself: Sometimes I wish that God didn’t trust me with quite so much choice. In what practical ways might I use my free will to “choose life” today, both for myself and those I meet?

Ask the Lord: I ask you, Lord, for the gift of heightened awareness today. Sensitize me to discern in each moment its extraordinary potential for life-giving words and deeds of love.

YIELD

A prayer of joyful surrender attributed to Mother Teresa of Calcutta:

Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that my life may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus.

*Amen.**

*This prayer was a favorite of Mother Teresa, to whom it is often attributed and she encouraged her Missionaries of Charity to use it after Mass. It is unclear, however, as to its source. Parts of the second half are drawn from Cardinal Newman’s meditation Jesus the Light of the Soul (*Meditations and Devotions* Part III, VII,3).

Day 24: This Means War (Chapter 10) (Tuesday in the fourth week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 25: 1-2, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame.”

REFLECT

Bible: Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground. (Eph 6: 12-13)

Book passage: Sometimes, submission to God involves meek acceptance of suffering, but at other times we should get angry about our unanswered prayers and fight! Why? Because Christians do not believe that all suffering is God’s will. We know that the terrors and tragedies screaming from today’s newspapers cannot possibly reflect the heart of a loving Father at work in His world. Instead, we believe something so surprising that it would be almost impossible to accept if it wasn’t so blatantly true: we believe that the almighty God does not always get His way on earth – even though He is the almighty God! Jesus taught us to pray to the Father, “Your kingdom come, your will be done,” precisely because it isn’t a foregone conclusion. (p. 136)

ASK

Ask myself: Do I ever misdirect my anger against “flesh and blood,” or even against God Himself, when I should instead be harnessing it in spiritual warfare against “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”?

Ask the Lord: Recognizing the spiritual battle raging around me today, I put on the helmet of salvation to guard my thinking; the breastplate of righteousness to guard my heart; the shield of faith to deflect enemy attacks; the belt of truth to guard my sexuality; the shoes of the gospel to make myself ready; and I take up the sword of the Spirit to fight the enemy with the sharpness of God’s Word.

YIELD

A prayer of the eighteenth century soldier, explorer, and monk, Charles de Foucauld:

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures - I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Amen.

Day 25: Chariots of Fire (Chapter 10) (Wednesday in the fourth week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 27: 13-14, repeating the words slowly, several times:

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."

REFLECT

Bible: When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see."

Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6: 15-17)

Book passage: "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils," observed C. S. Lewis. "One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors, and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight."* (p. 140)

*C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (London: Fount, 1986), 9.

ASK

Ask myself: Am I inclined to be a bit over-sensitive to spiritual powers – perhaps blaming them for everything – or a bit oblivious of them instead? How might it affect my prayers and my choices if I lived today with a much greater awareness of the angelic realm?

Ask the Lord: Open my eyes, Lord, as You opened the eyes of Elisha's servant, to perceive the spiritual realm. Thank You for the wonderful reassurance we have that, while in the present warfare may be vicious, the ultimate war has been well and truly won.

YIELD

A prayer of the eighteenth century soldier, explorer, and monk, Charles de Foucauld:

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures - I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Amen.

Day 26: Naked Trust (Chapter 11) (Thursday in the fourth week of Lent)

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

(pause)

I pray Psalm 31: 9-10, repeating the words slowly, several times:

“Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief. My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak.”

REFLECT

Bible: As long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. For we live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. (2 Cor. 5: 6-9)

Book passage: Brennan Manning writes (in chapter 10) that “The way of trust is a movement into obscurity, into the undefined, into ambiguity, not into some predetermined, clearly delineated plan for the future. The next step discloses itself only out of discernment of God acting in ..the present moment. The reality of naked trust is the life of a pilgrim who leaves what is nailed down, obvious and secure, and walks into the unknown without any rational explanation to justify the decision or guarantee the future. Why? Because God has signaled the movement and offered his presence and his promise.”* (p. 149)

*Brennan Manning, *Ruthless Trust* (London: SPCK, 2002), 13.

ASK

Ask myself: Boredom can be one of the hidden consequences of a long term problem such as a chronic illness. Instead of living our lives to the full with “naked trust,” we merely survive from day to day.

Have I become a little risk averse? What might it look like for me to “live by faith, not sight” today?

Ask the Lord: I ask the Holy Spirit now to disturb any complacency that may have crept into my life. To take me on new adventures (however small!). To give me the kind of courage that comes from having an eternal perspective.

YIELD

A prayer for disruption by M. K. W. Heicher*

*Disturb me, Lord, when I am too well pleased with myself,
When my dreams have come true because I have dreamed too little,
When I arrived safely because I sailed too close to the shore.*

*Disturb me, Lord, when with the abundance of things I possess I have lost my thirst for the
waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life, I have ceased to dream of eternity
And in my efforts to build a new earth, I have allowed my vision of the new heaven to dim.*

*Disturb me, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas where storms will show Your mastery;
Where losing sight of land, I shall find the stars.
I ask You to push back the horizons of my hopes;
And to push into the future in strength, courage, hope, and love.
Amen.*

*This prayer is often falsely attributed to either Sir Francis Drake or Archbishop Desmond Tutu, but seems to have been written by M. K. W. Heicher and first published in The Minister's Manual vol. 37 (1962) under the title "Stir Us, Oh Lord." I have personalized it into the first person voice used elsewhere in this devotional.