

appnotes

DAY 1 READ PROVERBS 3:5-6

1

Have you set out on a hike in an unfamiliar forest and ended up getting lost? Perhaps what you thought was a path wasn't, and you didn't know how to get back. But in every state or national park, the paths are marked by triangles; just follow the triangles. You might not know where you are any more than you did ten minutes ago, but when you trust the ones who marked the path, it will lead you back. Following God's way is like that. We don't always know exactly where we are or where we're going, but if we trust in God with all our hearts, He will lead us where we need to go. And something else happens: trusting in Him allows us to enjoy the beauty along the way!

DAY 2 READ PSALM 56:1-13

2

Have you ever reached your breaking point? David writes about his dark night in Psalm 56. He was seized by the Philistines in Gath, which was bad enough. But there is more to the story. He was in Gath because he was fleeing from King Saul. The king wanted to kill him. David was running for his life, and now he was captured by Israel's enemies! Out of the frying pan and into the fire! David cries out to God, listing some of the hardships he has endured, but through it all, David knows he can count on God. "God is for me," he says. God is for you, too! Even when the hardships are stacking up, one on top of another and another, until the weight threatens to crush you. We know we are pressed for a purpose, and we can trust God and praise Him for it!

DAY 3 READ 2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10

3

What is the one situation you are sure you cannot handle? That thing that causes you to say secretly to God, "Anything else, God, but please not that." Maybe it's a bad diagnosis or the loss of a job. The loss of a loved one, or the physical break-up of the family. Perhaps you fear the day it will happen, or maybe you are staring it in the face right now. There's the old saying that God never gives us more than we can handle, and I'm not convinced that's exactly true. I think He does, sometimes, because it's when we can't handle it ourselves that we turn to Him. His strength is on display when we are too weak to carry it. We'll see His strength and faithfulness in those times, so we can delight in the hardships that force us to rely on Him!

DAY READ JOHN 16:33

4

If you were on death row, how would you spend your last night? Sitting at the Last Supper with His disciples, Jesus knew what was coming. He understood what torment would be required of Him in the next few hours. And yet as He spent time at this Passover meal with His closest friends He encouraged them. He knew they would face hardships, persecution, and deep dread. He explained a bit about what they could expect. He instructed them about remaining close to God. He warned them that things would not always be as they appeared. He promised them the Holy Spirit would come. Then Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace." Jesus sealed this promise with His pain. No matter what we face in this life, we can trust God. Jesus has conquered death itself, and so we can have an abiding, lasting, and deep peace.

DAY READ JAMES 1:2-3

5

My nephew's scout troop went on a three-day bike ride and camping trip last August. Some of the boys already rode their bikes regularly, and some did not. The scout leaders started preparing the boys in May, taking increasingly longer bike rides every other weekend for two or three months leading up to the big trip. The shorter trips helped the boys build endurance and strength, which they might not otherwise have had, but my nephew complained no matter how often his leader and his parents told him he'd be glad in the end. The trials we face are hard, no doubt about it. But if we can look at these trials as preparation for the road instead of roadblocks, we can rejoice in these hardships because we know we will be stronger on the other side!

AppNotes are available on our Facebook page, Monday-Friday.

facebook.com/parkerhill.org