

TAKE A
PEEK
INSIDE



pray

a word for

hope

Connecting with God One Word at a Time

editors of guideposts

day 1

welcome

When my son started a lawn business, he got to know one of our neighbors, Mr. B., and they soon became friends. It was an unlikely friendship: Mr. B was a ninety-nine-year-old Jewish Ukrainian immigrant. My son was a Christian Indian-American teenager.

Whenever we visited, he'd welcome us with the kindest, humblest smile. "Thank you for thinking of me," he would say. He was so pleased to have visitors.

Once, he wanted to see a Christmas tree, so we invited him over to see our tree. I made him Indian-style fried rice. He loved it so much, he began making it for his weekly Shabbat dinner. Who would have thought?

We were heartbroken when he passed away at the age of 103. We welcomed him, and he welcomed us, and we were both blessed by this friendship of mutual affection and respect.

—Prasanta Verma

Dear Lord, please help me to welcome others as You have welcomed me. Amen.

Words to Pray On

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

—Romans 15:7 (NRSVUE)

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

—Matthew 25:34–35 (NRSVUE)

Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me....whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous.

—Matthew 10:40–41 (NRSVUE)



walk

For my grandson's birthday, our family took him to a game facility that included a rope obstacle course that was high in the air. I'm not particularly afraid of heights, so I agreed to harness up and join him on the course.

It all seemed fine—until it wasn't. I did exactly what everyone says not to do—I looked down. Way, way down. I stood frozen to the spot until my grandson looked back and encouraged me. "Come on, Granny! You're hooked onto the rope above you. You can't fall."

I took a deep breath and stepped out, my focus on the clip above me. And I made it to the other side, step by careful step.

I see my walk with God in much the same way. When I hear the still, small voice of God in my heart telling me to walk somewhere new, my first reaction is often to balk. *It's too high up. I'm going to fall.* And yet I hear His gentle word: *Walk.*

The first step is always the hardest.

—Deb Kastner

Lord, help me to walk in the path where You've led me.

Words to Pray On

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

—2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.

—Deuteronomy 5:32–33 (NKJV)

Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the LORD; I shall not slip. Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my mind and my heart. For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth.

—Psalm 26:1–3 (NKJV)



vintage

I've adored vintage objects most of my life. But the way they're described on eBay can sure give one pause. "Condition consistent with age," says a vendor about an old cookie jar. And how's this for a teapot: "spout is cracked but still usable." Or the handmade vintage quilt: "A little worse for wear but great as a decorative accent."

Chalk it up to my old-school mentality, but those words used to remind me of myself. Until four years ago, that is, when a miracle of God took away a lifetime of agony. Folks had to remind me what my pain was like; I didn't even recognize my new body.

Recently I found a wonderful new doctor who is board-certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics. Wouldn't you agree it's a match made in heaven? I'm not vintage. At four years new, I'm a certified toddler.

—Roberta Messner

Vintage doesn't exist in Your vocabulary, Lord. When we entrust our lives to You, we are new every morning.

Words to Pray On

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

—2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

—Psalm 98:1 (NIV)

See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

—Isaiah 65:17–18 (NIV)



notice

I flew alone for the first time when my husband graduated from Officer Indoctrination School in Rhode Island as a Navy entomologist. The flight marked only the second occasion I'd taken to the air—the first was my honeymoon. A distinguished-looking, grandfatherly gentleman noticed my apprehension as we disembarked and pointed me to baggage claim. When I told him I'd traveled north to see my husband graduate from OIS, he recommended the proper shuttle for my destination.

Imagine my surprise when I saw that same gentleman, Commodore Caudill, address the Navy graduates at the ceremony. My husband, David, showed even greater surprise when the two of us made our way through the receiving line and Commodore Caudill called me by name. Out of earshot, David whispered, "How do you know the keynote speaker?" I just smiled and said, "Oh, he noticed this frightened little Southern girl on an airplane and extended kindness."

—Julie Lavender

Thank You, God, that You notice me and I find favor with You, for that is quite a treasure. Help me notice others, too, especially in their time of need. Amen.

Words to Pray On

At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?"

—Ruth 2:10 (NIV)

She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."

—Genesis 16:13 (NIV)

O LORD, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them? For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow.

—Psalm 144:3–4 (NLT)



day 5

enlightened

You don't realize what you can't see until you can see—until your eyes become enlightened. I recently had cataracts removed after waiting for several years for them to "ripen." When I opened my eyes after surgery, my worldview quickly and unexpectedly became illuminated. Objects were free of darkness, cloudiness was gone, opaque became transparent, and everything of substance was impregnated with color. My enlightened vision empowered my mind to take in new perceptions about my world. What I once viewed as truth shifted. Life transformed with the light.

We are spiritually enlightened when we read God's word. God's word is a lamp that lights our path and secures our walk. It removes the spiritual cataracts that distort our perceptions and views. Enlightened eyes clearly see. Distortion, confusion, and hazy vision become clear, sharp, and focused.

—Betty A. Rodgers-Kulich

Jesus, shine in my darkness and upon my faith walk. Remove any spiritual cataracts so I can see clearly what the darkness has distorted and reveal what I have grown accustomed to. Amen.

Words to Pray On

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling....

—Ephesians 1:17–18 (NKJV)

For You are my lamp, O LORD; the LORD shall enlighten my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop; by my God I can leap over a wall.

—2 Samuel 22:29–30 (NKJV)

The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

—Psalm 19:8–9 (NKJV)



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