



Reflections on Justice



A SERIES OF DAILY DEVOTIONAL REFLECTIONS ON JUSTICE,
WRITTEN BY WOMEN FROM AROUND THE SALVATION ARMY WORLD



We envision women
who are...engaged in
social justice and action
to positively impact
the world.



Women's Ministries international vision statement, 2020

ENGAGED

DAY 1

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 1:17

'Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.'

DEVOTION: Social justice issues are at the forefront of our minds these days. This collection of reflections on social justice is written by women around the world who have a passion and desire to help others in Christ's name.

William Booth, Founder of The Salvation Army, gave his final sermon on 9 May 1912 which included these powerful words: 'While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry, as they do now, I'll fight; ...while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight – I'll fight to the very end!'

Booth's promise to fight still resonates in ministry and missional work today. For so many, the struggle for social justice is as real today as it ever has been. Day in and day out, millions strive to overcome addictions, abuse, hunger, loneliness, poverty and so much more. What a privilege and obligation we have, to stand on the front lines with those whose voices need to be heard, and to fight alongside and for them.

Our hope is that these reflections will stir in you a deep desire to 'do something'! Hebrews 13:16 reminds us: 'Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.'

CHALLENGE: Check on a neighbour or friend. So many in our communities need extra help. You won't know the issues they face without going out and asking. Is there is something simple you can do to help someone today?

PRAYER: God, help us to use our gifts and abilities to help those in our communities who are most vulnerable. God help us to work for justice within our neighbourhoods, for the oppressed and those hurting. Help us by your grace to obey your word daily and do something. Amen.

**COMMISSIONER SHELLEY HILL,
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

DAY 2

SCRIPTURE: MARK 5:25-34 New Living Translation

'The frightened woman, trembling at the realisation of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him [Jesus] and told him what she had done. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over."'

DEVOTION: As a female and 'unclean', this woman still dared to come to Jesus with the hope of finding healing. And she did. She found both physical and spiritual healing.

Despite her recovery, however, she felt ashamed of being discovered by the community, as her status excluded her from public life. This passage reminds us that no one can be too far from God to be healed. Let us acknowledge our sin to him and not cover up our iniquity; confess our transgressions to the Lord because he forgives the guilt of our sin (Psalm 32:5).

May we also remember that no matter who considers us hopeless and unworthy, Jesus sees us as worthy of being his daughter, who finds freedom and wholeness in him. Despite how the world works, how people are often excluded because of their differences, I can personally testify that the Lord still chose me to serve him and be his beloved daughter.

CHALLENGE: Just as Jesus noticed the suffering woman, pay attention to those around you who feel unworthy. Share in a special, personal way that Jesus changed your status from marginalised and 'unclean' to a worthy child of God.

PRAYER: Lord, help us to see any marginalised people close to us and give us boldness to reach out to them to share our personal experience of freedom and healing in you.

**CAPTAIN MARIE LANGE DRUART,
FRANCE AND BELGIUM TERRITORY**

DAY 3

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 42:1-4

'Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets... In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth.'

DEVOTION: Isaiah is a prophet from the Old Testament whose words point to Jesus. Hundreds of years earlier, Hannah said, 'For the Lord is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed' (1 Samuel 2:3). Hundreds of years later, Mary prophesied, 'His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation' (Luke 1:50).

Isaiah, Hannah and Mary's declarations of God's justice are from completely different cultures, times and contexts. But each point to the Christ who comes to bring peace and right order.

If someone broke into your home, you would turn things the 'right way up again', seek justice and then rebuild. In the same way, Jesus came to turn the world the 'right way up again', brings justice and invites us to rebuild the world together.

Your prophetic voice joins theirs, if you will live out the transformative truth God has put in front of you.


CHALLENGE: Ava DuVernay says, 'To be an artist, you must imagine and create and world build. To be an activist, you must do the same.' How could creativity applied help you to overcome injustice?

PRAYER: Jesus, make your creative intent clear in bringing hope to the world. Show me where to join you in rebuilding and renewing, so we can be 'the right way up' again.

**AUXILIARY-LIEUTENANT ROSY KEANE,
AUSTRALIA TERRITORY**



EQUIPPED



*As we develop a daily
posture of gratitude
in a world filled with
chaos, it will overflow
into witness and
testimony.*



DAY 4

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 13:15-16

'Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.'

DEVOTION: Having recently visited the beautiful mountains in Banff, Alberta, it was easy for my soul and heart to shout praise to God, our Creator, as I looked upon and sat in admiration on the mountain top. It was truly a majestic experience! It is important for this type of praise to translate into our daily living.

Author Ann Voskamp writes, 'We were made to live in a posture of grateful worship, and when we live in praise we live our purpose, and all the pieces fall in place, us all falling down in thanks.'

As we develop a daily posture of gratitude in a world filled with chaos, it will overflow into our witness and testimony. One of my favourite worship songs is 'I Speak Jesus'. A particular line resonates within me: 'Shout Jesus from the mountains, Jesus in the streets...' May we always desire to proclaim his praise!

CHALLENGE: How can you make praise a lifestyle? Every day you'll praise him, every day you'll share who Jesus is and every day you'll speak the powerful name of Jesus.

PRAYER: Lord, I pray my praise for you will be loud and bold, declaring you as the One who is holy and just, bringing joy and peace to our souls.

**MAJOR JENNIFER REID,
CANADA AND BERMUDA TERRITORY**

DAY 5

SCRIPTURE: John 8:4-5, 7

““Teacher... In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?”... Jesus... said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.””

DEVOTION: During one of my ministry stations, I was informed about a woman in the church. Despite hearing various accounts of her behaviour, I realised that my knowledge of her was superficial. I didn't want to prejudge her, so I decided to hear her story. Through our conversation, I gained better understanding of her character and the experiences that had shaped her into the person she was back then.

Instances like these are all too common; not just in our communities but even within our churches. We often witness people being marginalised due to our limited understanding of them. Perhaps we've been unfairly judged ourselves.

Jesus sets a high standard for his followers, reminding us to refrain from judgement and instead embrace compassion, grace and understanding. Let us always return to his teachings whenever our thoughts are clouded by judgement, and during those times may we in humility recognise our own imperfections.

CHALLENGE: Is there someone in your community who you could get to know better? Strike up conversation with them or invite them for a cup of tea or coffee.

PRAYER: Lord, may my heart and mind never be clouded by judgement, and may my words and actions always mirror your love, grace and understanding.

**CAPTAIN ANNELI AAVIK,
FINLAND AND ESTONIA TERRITORY**

DAY 6

SCRIPTURE: James 1:26-27

'Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.'

DEVOTION: 'Religion stinks, but the gospel is a blast.' This was the slogan for an evangelistic campaign in the summer of 2000. Christians were the most shocked.

Are we still good examples? Does our religion make people envious? Two thousand years ago, James wrote of the importance of holding one's tongue. Unfortunately, none of us are protected from this 'stinking' reality; conflicts and disputes to keep one's place or one's power.

But if we allow ourselves to be touched by God's love, we can live out the verbs proposed in the various versions of James 1:27: to rescue, to help, to care, to look after, to visit, to reach out. That's why this gospel is a blast!

I know these verbs well. As a mother they're ingrained in me, and I use them happily and without constraint! Rescue, help, care. Look after, visit, reach out.

CHALLENGE: Share the gospel like a meal that someone is in desperate need of. Even if at first glance it seems repulsive or uncertain, God's love is a blast if it's shared.

PRAYER: Lord, help me to carry and share your values of love for others beyond duty or expectation.

**LIEUT-COLONEL KAREN ETCHEVERRY,
FRANCE AND BELGIUM TERRITORY**

"Are we still good examples?"

DAY 7

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:14-16

'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

DEVOTION: As children of God, it is our responsibility to do good and bring light into the world. We can stand for justice and make a difference in the lives of those facing injustice.

In our communities, people are dealing with various forms of injustice, such as domestic violence and harassment. I think of one young woman, staying in a Salvation Army hostel after facing mistreatment from her husband and in-laws. She was enduring it for the sake of her son. Through her goodness and the grace of God, she has come through to a happier and safer place. Many women like her are facing challenges at home and in the workplace.

Vulnerability and cultural barriers often push women into darkness. As Christians, we can be the light that brings hope to those who have been silenced. It is important to remember that fairness and justice should be extended to all, as Jesus demonstrated when he showed compassion to a woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11). Let us raise our voices for the voiceless and, like a lamp on its stand, guide them towards a better path.

CHALLENGE: You might have met women in darkness who are facing injustice and ignored them. Are you willing now? Spare time to listen, pray and bring light to their lives.

PRAYER: I want, dear Lord, a soul on fire for thee,
A soul baptised with heavenly energy;
A willing mind, a ready hand
To do whate'er I know,
To spread thy light wherever I may go.
(Salvation Army Song Book 497 v 3)

**LIEUT-COLONEL JASHIBEN D. KHRISTI,
INDIA CENTRAL TERRITORY**

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Vulnerability and cultural barriers often push women into darkness. As Christians, we can be the light that brings hope to those who have been silenced.

DAY 8

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 9:7-8 *New Living Translation*

'But the Lord reigns for ever; executing judgement from his throne. He will judge the world with justice and rule the nations with fairness.'

DEVOTION: A crowd of us sat in close quarters outside the intensive care unit. On the other side of the hospital waiting room, my mother was under critical care.

Perhaps it was the common concern we had for our loved ones battling for their lives that made conversation amongst us strangers an easy one. The lady seated next to me recounted stories of growing up in a large family with seven siblings. Out of all of them, only she and her older sister – who was undergoing care in the adjoining room – remained alive. Despite all the deaths she had witnessed and the grief she had endured, she did not for once think of God as being unfair. Her family had experienced so many deaths, but she believed that the Lord is fair and just. In the same manner, death visited smaller families as well.

We often question God's fairness and justice when we come across situations outside of our control, or not in favour of our circumstance. But the Lord is just and rules with fairness, always. It is only when we say 'Amen' to this truth that we can see divine justice in operation, even in our worst moments. Through the waiting-room testimony of that lady, I was a witness to the palpable calmness that only the Holy Spirit could deliver in such a situation.

CHALLENGE: Are there any situations that you need to release control over? Remembering that the Lord is just, always, hand your concerns and anxieties over to him.

PRAYER: Father, though I may question your fairness and justice when I look at the world around me, remind me that your ways are always higher than mine. Help me to see life through your eyes. May you lead me in all I do to be just and fair as befitting my inheritance in you.

**CAROLINE HMINGTHANZUALI,
INDIA EASTERN TERRITORY**

DAY 9

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 36:5-7

'Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O Lord. How precious is your unfailing love, O God!'

DEVOTION: How blessed are the parents who train the values of love, mercy and justice to their children. How blessed are the children who grow up watching these models in their homes!

But, more than this, how precious it is to have the extraordinary love of God, which is as wide as the sky, as high as the mountain and as deep as the ocean! God wants us to become advocates of justice and love in this broken world. We are to share this love with others.

Mercy Mathew was born to a rich Christian family in Kerala, south-western India. At the age of 16, she left her family in Kerala and travelled over 2,000 km to move to a convent in Bihar, eastern India, with the purpose of serving God. She soon realised that life in the convent was entirely different from the experiences of the many tribal people around her, and she was moved by their suffering. So, she decided to serve God by serving tribal communities across Central India. To work with them, she changed her name to Daya Bai and wore tribal dress. Slowly, over many years, she adapted their culture and lifestyle and was embraced by the communities in return.

Now in her eighties, Daya is credited for a vital role in uplifting tribal communities in access to healthcare, education and economic facilities. It was her life-long fight of love against the injustice the tribes were subjected to for many decades. May our loving words and actions show a unique God to society and bring positive changes in the life of suffering humanity.

CHALLENGE: In some states of India, as well as other parts of the world, Christian minorities are suffering persecution because of religion. Consider your circumstance, and commit to uniting, praying, visiting or responding to their suffering.

PRAYER: Lord, kindle the fire of your infinite love in our hearts. Please help us to develop our love in order to see the pains of our brothers and sisters. You lead me in all I do to be just and fair as befitting my inheritance in you.

**MAJOR EVAMA SHAIJURAJ,
INDIA NATIONAL OFFICE**

DAY 10

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:3-6

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.'

DEVOTION: These verses speak to the core of justice, which is rooted in compassion, empathy and fairness. Justice is not merely about laws and punishment; it is about lifting up the oppressed, standing with the marginalised and advocating for those who cannot speak for themselves.

As followers of Jesus, we are to pursue justice with a fervent desire for what is right and just in the eyes of God. It challenges us to actively seek justice for all, to fight against inequality and oppression, and to strive for a world where righteousness and compassion prevail. We embody his teachings of justice, mercy and love in all that we do.

Being 'poor in spirit' and aware of our need for God's grace and mercy highlights the importance of approaching justice with a sense of humility and empathy towards others. Additionally, hunger and thirsting for righteousness emphasises the desperate pursuit of what is right and just. True justice stems from a sincere heart that seeks to align itself with God's principles of compassion, mercy and righteousness.

CHALLENGE: Read Matthew 5:3-12. Consider what the world would be like if we could live out these ideals.

PRAYER: Dear God, grant us the wisdom to recognise injustice where it exists, the courage to speak out against oppression and the compassion to stand up for the marginalised. Help us to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to act justly in all we do.

**CAPTAIN TABITHA NYAGAH,
KENYA EAST TERRITORY**

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My mother...had a
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So, I exemplified the art
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DAY 11

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 15:10-11

'Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be open-handed towards your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.'

DEVOTION: As a girl growing up, I would attend the women's programme at our church – the Home League – with my mother, who was the Home League Secretary.

Our family was not well off, but I realised my mother always had a caring, compassionate and caring heart for others. I watched as she would often give food and water to those in need, among other things, when the government supply was low. I developed this in my life as well, following her example. I try to give people gifts and items in acts of kindness; a warm meal, even if it meant I went without.

My mother also had a prayerful spirit which I admired. So, I exemplified the art of praying for people, just like my mother. When I was ordained and commissioned as a Salvation Army officer (minister), I became a 'Faithful Intercessor'! I have developed prayer networks using social media and emails to engage others in presenting their requests before the Lord.

As Hebrews 13:2 reminds us: 'Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.'

CHALLENGE: Let us all have a caring heart for everyone because we do not know how we might impact their lives as we engage and interact with them. Allow God to use you as a vessel for him in this area of ministry.

PRAYER: Lord, may your loving hand, mercy, grace, peace and wisdom be upon us as we seek to engage in advocating for social justice. Help us to be willing to pray for, intercede and stand in the gap for those who need our support. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**MAJOR PAULA PYLE,
CARIBBEAN TERRITORY**

DAY 12

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 9:9

“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”

DEVOTION: God is a safe place for the poor and defenceless, especially in times of trouble. Amid hardship and adversity, we can find comfort, security and protection in God. No matter what happens, we can trust him and find strength in his presence.

For many people, facing times of distress and hardship can be overwhelming. Sometimes, knowing where to seek help in adverse situations can be difficult. However, we are encouraged to seek refuge in God. He is an inexhaustible source of love and mercy, who will always be there for us when we need him, and we can experience the peace and strength we need to move forward.

God is a protector for the poor and for those defenceless for other reasons, such as oppression, discrimination and illness. We will face problems in life, but we can be sure to find comfort and refuge in God during them. We do not have to face our struggles alone, but we can trust in the goodness and grace of our Creator. Instead of relying on our strength to face the challenges that come our way, we can trust that God will always be our refuge and strength.

CHALLENGE: How can you be a refuge for those going through difficult times? We can all be instruments in God's hands to provide protection and love to those who need it. Since God is a refuge for us, we want to be a source of strength and hope for those around us.

PRAYER: Lord, please help us to trust you because you are our strength and refuge, and please help us to be a refuge for the people going through difficult times, being instruments in your hand to give them protection and love.

**MAJOR LOURDES RAMÍREZ,
MEXICO TERRITORY**

DAY 13

SCRIPTURE: Mark 10:13-14

'People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."'

DEVOTION: In many cultures, children are considered insignificant and seen as having little to no importance in the structure of social life. Their presence is presumed to be disruptive, and their activities can cause disturbance. Even in Jesus' day, this happened when the disciples saw the children brought by their parents and, instead of welcoming them, they rebuked them. However, Jesus does not refuse them. Jesus embraces them and puts his hand upon them, and he blesses them.

Based on Mark 10:13-14, there is an important teaching about how we view children through the lens of God's Kingdom. They are included, valued, loved, precious and worth just as much as adults. These are the values of God's Kingdom, so we should reflect this in our community life.

Children are precious before God, and this is a gift that we must accept. We trust that they are the next generation who will continue our task to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, so that the next generation will be one that reveres God.

CHALLENGE: How does your life show that children are precious and loved by the Lord? How do you see the value of God's Kingdom through their life?

PRAYER: Our loving Father, grant us wisdom to grow and teach our children based on the values of your Kingdom. May our children have godly wisdom in their life. Amen!

**LIEUT-COLONEL ELSI SARIMIN,
NEW ZEALAND, FIJI, TONGA AND SAMOA TERRITORY**

"Children are precious before God"

DAY 14

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:40

'The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

DEVOTION: Matthew 25:40 highlights something important: it builds a bridge between our actions to others with our service to God.

In my work with The Salvation Army, an international Christian church and charity, we advocate and try to be change-makers in our local communities. We are sometimes accused of not being evangelistic enough or of working with only one side of the global mission of The Salvation Army.

This passage challenges such voices and it brings a perspective on our social justice actions. Here, they are reframed and seen as a service to God, and not just good acts for the people benefiting from them. Your calling to make a difference counts in the Kingdom of God. I believe that when our actions are cloaked in prayers it makes us 'response-able', and God's Kingdom and his Word become known and spread for all to hear and experience.

CHALLENGE: 'Saved to serve' are words synonymous with the Salvation Army's mission. How do they challenge us to take up the calling from this passage? How might our acts and words be seeds of change where we live?

PRAYER: Lord, take all I do and make it yours.

**DR PETRA BROOKE,
NORWAY, ICELAND AND THE FÆROES
TERRITORY**



EQUIPPED



Your calling to make a
difference counts in the
Kingdom of God.



DAY 15

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 6:9-10

'Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.'

DEVOTION: I can summarise the message of Galatians 6:1-10 in three words: mercy, empathy and justice.

In my experience within the Church, I've noticed that when newcomers join, there's often a concerted effort to help them with their struggles or guide them towards salvation through repentance. However, I've also witnessed how the enemy, in his craftiness, has caused even great leaders or steadfast members of church congregations to stumble and fall.

This has deeply saddened me, but even more disheartening can be the lack of those willing to practise Galatians 6:1: 'Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.'

In verses 9 and 10, God calls us to be just – not in a judgemental sense, but in a way that seeks to restore those who have stumbled. We are called to be just in the sense that if we have received forgiveness from the Lord, we should also extend forgiveness alongside mercy, empathy and justice.

CHALLENGE: Let's not become discouraged or tired of doing good, despite others' faults. Along the way, we'll encounter people who stumble, but we must remember to love the sinner while hating the sin. Continue to live out the righteousness of the Lord, and in due time we will receive heavenly rewards.

PRAYER: God, grant us hearts full of love so that we may be people who lift others up. Forgive us when our human sense of righteousness leads us to condemn. May our sense of justice from now on mirror yours, filled with compassion.

SARAI LÓPEZ,
LATIN AMERICA NORTH TERRITORY

DAY 16

SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 58:6-7 New Living Translation*

'Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.'

DEVOTION: Isaiah 58 is a disturbing chapter. We see a picture of people blinded by their sinfulness, yet believing a lie that has deeply calloused their hearts. In verse 3, they accused God of insensitivity to their self-inflicted sacrifices. In response, God brought to light their hypocrisy. How could God accept their offering when, at the same time, they oppress their neighbours!

Even the hardest sacrifice and noblest service will never win God's approval when they are offered to cover abuse and feed pride and arrogance. History is replete with examples of professing Christians who advocate slavery, abuse children and vulnerable individuals while proclaiming the saving power of Christ. How self-contradictory!

Verses six and seven encompass those that are within our reach – those who work for us, our relatives, the hungry, the homeless. God desires faith in action – lighten the burden, remove the chains, share your food, give shelter, do not hide. James 1:27 calls this 'pure and undefiled' religion (ESV). This is the kind of fasting that God requires.

CHALLENGE: Identify a few people in your community who need help. You may have clothes, a pair of shoes or other stuff that you can give. Prepare a gift bag or box to make your items more presentable. If you have people working for you, make sure that you do not overburden them, pay them appropriately and on time.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, make me an instrument of justice by living a life of love and service to the oppressed and abused, the hungry and the homeless. May there be no inconsistency in my dealing with others, no unclean motive, no futile sacrifice, but all for your sake and glory. Amen.

**COLONEL ELSA OALANG,
THE PHILIPPINES TERRITORY**

DAY 17

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 3:28 *New Living Translation*

'There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

DEVOTION: I work in Wageningen, a vibrant university city in The Netherlands with people from many different cultural backgrounds.

Here, I've noticed that when working as a pioneer in a so-called 'Fresh Expression', and we sing, dance and share our deepest feelings, we create a special bond with one another. It's like Christ is right there with us, filling our hearts with warmth and comfort.

Singing and dancing are especially powerful for young mothers who often feel isolated. These activities create a bridge across language barriers, allowing women to connect and share joy, even if they don't speak the same language. Through these joyful moments, they can forget about the loneliness of being in a new country or the worries that come with challenging domestic circumstances.

To me, these connections reflect God's presence among us, showing that we are one family under his care. It's a glimpse of God's Kingdom on earth, where everyone belongs, and his love shines through each and every interaction.

CHALLENGE: Look for what touches your heart and what talent God has given you. This will enable you, as Jesus did, to share God's love with others, even if our language or cultural norms differ. Often, it is not the words but an open attitude, like Jesus had.

PRAYER: God, we pray that you bring us together in unity. May we find in you the strength to do good as we work in our own corner of the world. Help us to follow the example of Jesus, always ready to support those you send our way.

**MAJOR JOLANDA FENNEMA-STRIJK,
THE NETHERLANDS, CZECH REPUBLIC AND
SLOVAKIA TERRITORY**

DAY 18

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 25:4-5

'Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.'

DEVOTION: How can we choose our path when faced with important decisions in life?

Once, I was unsure about how to choose my path and so I consulted someone I trusted. I believed I had to discern which path was right or wrong in God's eyes. However, they taught me something valuable: 'Whatever path you choose, God will bless it. Choose the path you feel called to with confidence.'

Sometimes you will have to choose a path that is tough for you. There will also be times when you think you are on the right path, but others may not understand. But the Lord is always true, and he is the one who leads me to the right path.

I wish to trust in the Lord who saves me and to walk straight on the path he leads me.

CHALLENGE: Reflecting on your life so far, let's write down how your choices were made and the blessings you have received as a result.

PRAYER: God, I trust you that you will guide my life for the best, so I surrender myself to your will. May I be able to follow the path you show, even in times of doubt or difficulty. Amen.

**LIEUT-COLONEL KAZUE NISHIMURA,
JAPAN TERRITORY**

"...The Lord is always True..."



Their anguish calls
to us, urging us to
embody Christ's love
and seek justice for our
global neighbours.

ENGAGED

DAY 19

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10:27,-24 *English Standard Version*

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.” And, “Love your neighbour as yourself”... “And who is my neighbour?”

DEVOTION: Deep within every woman's heart is a longing for justice, for a world where goodness prevails.

Yet, we witness a world embroiled in conflict, with pleas for help often ignored. The war in Myanmar has drenched the soil in the blood of the innocent, prompting us to ponder: ‘Who is my neighbour?’ (Luke 10:29). This strife is more than headline news; it's a devastating story of disrupted lives and dreams destroyed.

As believers, our hearts break for our neighbours in Myanmar, suffering the civil war's brutalities, leaving millions displaced and lives in ruins. Our neighbour is a mother in Myanmar, embracing her child as they flee to the jungle's safety. It's the father, grieving his wife's loss, and the children whose innocence is stolen by war's relentless cruelty. Their anguish calls to us, urging us to embody Christ's love and seek justice for our global neighbours.

CHALLENGE: Embrace the call of Luke 10:27; love transcends borders. Act now – pray, advocate for those in need. Let's unite in compassion, seeking justice and peace for our global neighbours.

PRAYER: Lord, drape those who are suffering in your mercy. Comfort the grieving, empower the weary, inspire the fearful. Shield the innocent, mend the broken and sustain all amidst the chaos.

**MAJOR SUSIE ERICKSON,
SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR
AND THAILAND TERRITORY**

DAY 20

SCRIPTURE: John 4:21-24 *English Standard Version*

'Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father also seeks such worshippers to worship him. God is Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.'"

DEVOTION: With all the problems that existed between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus says that it is necessary for him to go through Samaria.

His true purpose was to have contact with a specific woman, whom he meets at the well and asks for water. If we read John 4:1-20, we learn that Jesus engages with the woman, making her feel important, and takes the time to speak with her about her life experiences. It is in those moments that the woman realises she is not dealing with a typical Jewish man – this man is different.

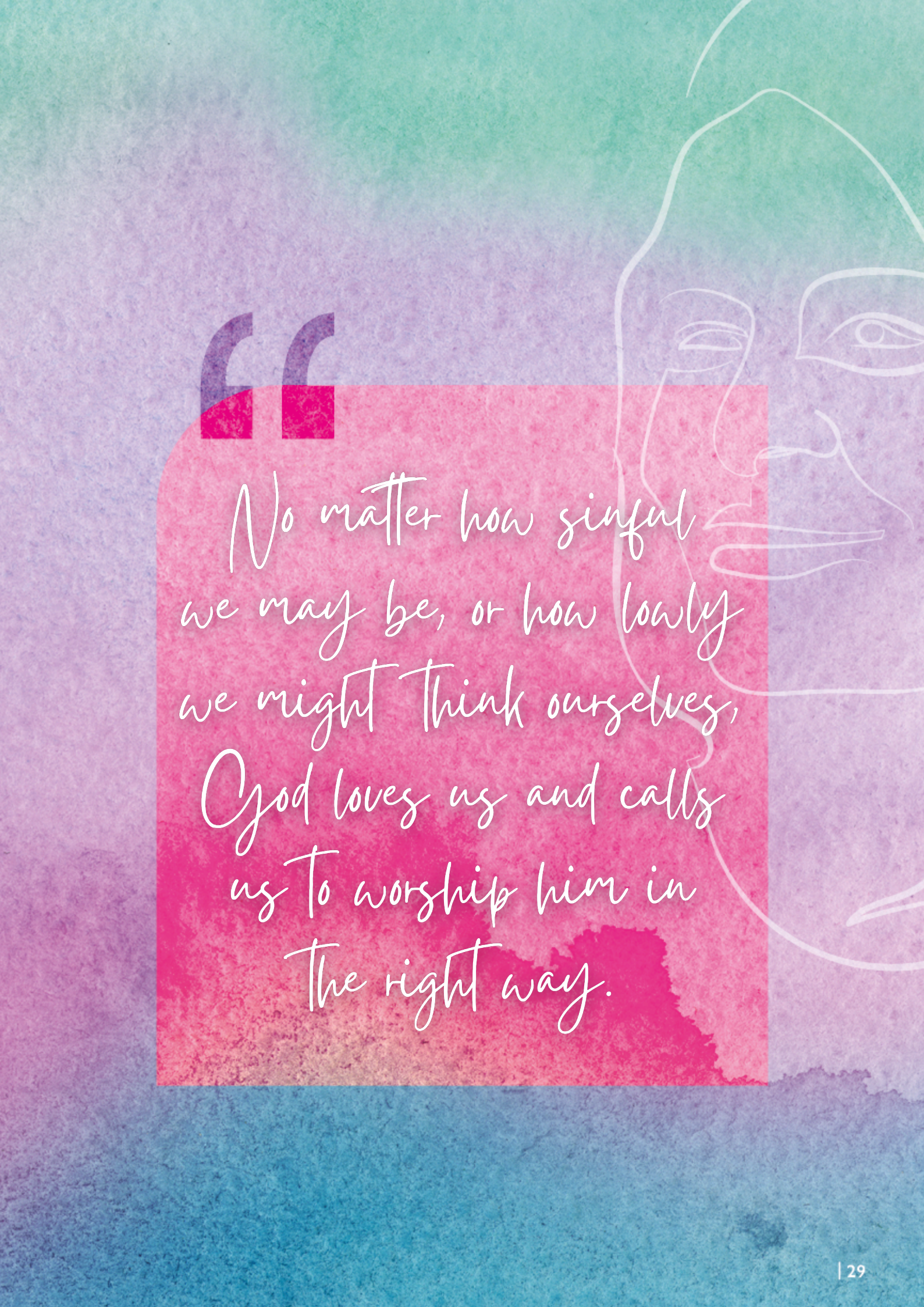
When Jesus enquires about the woman's past, she seems to feel ashamed and diverts the conversation away from personal stories and speaks of places of worship. Without evasion or embarrassment, Jesus makes the woman see her mistake. He tells her plainly that it is not about being in the right places, but about possessing a right heart. Later, he reveals to her that he is the Messiah (John 4:26).

No matter how sinful we may be, or how lowly we might think ourselves, God loves us and calls us to worship him in the right way. This is a beautiful picture of what it looks like to treat others with justice, with dignity and to make known to each person their true value.

CHALLENGE: Let us worship God in the right way; with devoted love for God and for our neighbour. Is your love authentic and sincere, without hidden intentions or selfishness?

PRAYER: Lord, help me to worship you with total honesty and sincerity, so that I can treat others with the dignity they deserve, even when their thoughts are contrary to mine.

**MAJOR SANDRA ALARCÓN,
SOUTH AMERICA WEST TERRITORY**



No matter how sinful
we may be, or how lowly
we might think ourselves,
God loves us and calls
us to worship him in
the right way.

DAY 21

SCRIPTURE: Luke 6:27-29, 36

“But to you who are listening I say: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also... Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

DEVOTION: In life, we grow up hearing of the golden rule: ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you’ (Luke 6:31). I always thought it was something people said to get out of being treated unjustly. Little did I know it was a biblical command!

As a single female minister, I’ve encountered the need to use this verse at my own convenience, repeating it to those around me who have treated me unjustly because of my status and gender. But never did I think about what Luke is really saying: ‘Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.’ Many times, my reflections on these verses were in a selfish manner.

Christ suffered lots of injustices, and yet he loved others, healed them and forgave those who persecuted him. Are we not to do the same?

On recent travels, I’ve learned to embrace the culture, the language and the countries, and I’ve loved every second; but I have also encountered the ridiculed, the mocking and bullying. However, by focusing on the ministry that God has trusted me with, I’ve learned to pray, love and forgive as I witness the changes God does in the lives of those who persecute me.

CHALLENGE: Cease your focus on what is being done to you, and embrace the message of Luke 6:27-36, as well as the call of Micah 6:8.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, give us the heart to love and be kind to those who are not kind to us. Help us to always remember the golden rule and to act justly, and to be merciful, just as you are merciful, not expecting anything in return. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

**MAJOR LOURDES GRIFFITH,
SPAIN AND PORTUGAL TERRITORY**

DAY 22

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 68:5

'A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.'

DEVOTION: I lost my father at a young age. I watched my widowed mother cry in silence as she was overwhelmed by the need to care for her three young children on her own.

While we were going through our grief, we dealt with unkind comments accompanied with discrimination from others. We were treated differently than before. Our voices were ignored simply because we did not have a father and a husband. People took advantage of us and we were hurt deeply by the actions of those around us.

We held onto God's promise from Psalm 68:5. God gave us strength and carried us through as he gradually healed the deep wounds of our hearts and our minds from the painful memories of how we were treated. Although we felt we were alone, God was always there for us.

He is a compassionate father who loves and cares for his lonely children. He is a strong defender who protects and acts on behalf of powerless widows. He is always there.

CHALLENGE: How can we show through our words and actions that God is a father to the fatherless and a defender of widows. How can we respond when we see the hurting, grieving, lonely and oppressed orphans and widows?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we are grateful for your unconditional love and compassion for us. Help us, Lord, to share this love and compassion in words and deeds with those in need. Amen.

**MAJOR FLORENCE SHEIN,
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

"He is a compassionate Father..."

DAY 23

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 3:27-28

'Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbour, "Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you" – when you already have it with you.'

DEVOTION: I've been sitting with the words of Proverbs 3:27-28 for a while during a sabbatical, and also whilst reading around the importance of taking a regular, God-ordained Sabbath.

These verses could stir within me a 'call to duty' when I'm already exhausted and weary of 'doing good'. For example, I like to make a meal and take it round to someone who has just been bereaved, but this has happened less frequently in the busyness of church ministry. These verses could leave me with a sense of guilt or a feeling of not doing enough.

However, 'acting justly' also includes intentionally doing good to ourselves. Something happens to us when we take Sabbath rest. Walter Brueggemann states: 'Sabbath is not simply the pause that refreshes. It is the pause that transforms.' When we return to our usual work we are our best, rested and more attentive selves. We are more able to say, 'I'm available!'

CHALLENGE: I wonder if you feel drawn to explore at a deeper level God's invitation to take Sabbath rest? How might this 'transform' you and make you more available to act immediately?

PRAYER: Lord, for the sake of others and myself, help me to accept and fall in love with your gift of Sabbath. May my 'doings' spring from this temple in time.

**MAJOR ALISON HUDSON,
UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND TERRITORY**

DAY 24

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:1

'The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.'

DEVOTION: These words declare that the coming Messiah has been anointed to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and to release the prisoners from darkness. This decree has now been placed in our hands, God's people!

As prophetic voices, we have the honour and duty to walk in unison with God in bringing his Kingdom to earth by speaking truth, valuing the undervalued and releasing freedom to those who are oppressed.

The enemy is pleased if the sound of this mission fills us with trepidation and doubt, but the reality is that the almighty God has anointed you for the assignment at hand. Through Jesus, you have been granted the spiritual authority to walk into this Kingdom calling, and his Word promises us that 'The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it' (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

CHALLENGE: Silence any sceptic whisper that may lead you away from this mandate. Rely on the Word of God to grant you the authority and faith needed to be victorious in this mission. Partner with the Spirit and cultivate a relentless vision for seeing those who are trapped in darkness.

PRAYER: Lord, restore the broken-hearted with your healing hands. Use us as broken vessels in your mission to find the lost, and allow the hurting to experience the touch of God.

**CAPTAIN KELSEY BRIDGES,
USA SOUTHERN TERRITORY**

DAY 25

SCRIPTURE: Amos 5:23-24

'Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!'

DEVOTION: One sibling hurts another. The mother immediately says, 'Tell your brother you are sorry.' The child mutters, 'I'm sorry', not really meaning the words; the words are said simply to appease the mother.

We can do the same thing with our worship of God. We come to church on Sunday and sing songs of praise and love to God, but do not allow it to translate into how we live our lives each day. In Amos 5:23, God clearly says that songs sung with the wrong motives are just noise to him.

God doesn't want mere words on Sunday; he desires that we live our lives reflecting his justice and righteousness each day. His expectation is that our profession of love for him is lived out daily in our right living and just behaviour. It should be like an overflowing, never-failing stream, that floods all that we do and say.


CHALLENGE: Look for opportunities each day this week to show your love for God in how you act and respond to others. Flood them with God's grace, mercy, justice and righteousness.

PRAYER: Lord, you are a God of righteousness and justice. May we not just say we love you, but show it by living rightly and acting justly to everyone we encounter.

**MAJOR BETH DESPLANCHE,
USA WESTERN TERRITORY**

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God doesn't want mere words on Sunday; he desires that we live our lives reflecting his justice and righteousness each day.



If we yield ourselves
to him, he will direct
our paths in a way
that will bring freedom
for the oppressed.

DAY 26

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 33:4-5

“For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.”

DEVOTION: Psalm 33 celebrates some of the attributes of God's character – righteousness, kindness and justice. It is a call to worship for whosoever will revere God. Verses 4 and 5 drive home the truth that God can be trusted, for his word is right. There is no wrong or unfairness found in him.

Israel had just experienced victory over an enemy. The Psalmist acknowledged that this victory would not have been without God showing that he is righteous and just, the principles upon which his throne is founded (Psalm 89:14). In Israel's oppression, God came through to liberate its people from the clutches of the enemy because ‘The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed’ (Psalm 103:6).

Often we face oppression in its various forms. Sometimes we are victims of injustice, and other times we know someone who is being treated unjustly. God is aware. If we yield ourselves to him, he will direct our paths in a way that will bring freedom for the oppressed. The Lord sets the captives free and binds the broken-hearted. Trust in him and he will deliver justice – it may tarry, but it shall surely come.

CHALLENGE: Are you facing any injustice or do you know someone who is? Micah 6:8 says: ‘He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?’ (NKJV). This week, pray for holy courage to stand up for what is right and offer support to the oppressed.

PRAYER: Lord, as you are, so am I in this world. Help me to bring light and hope to those who need it the most around me.

**MAJOR KASAMBA HAMANENGA,
ZAMBIA TERRITORY**

DAY 27

SCRIPTURE: Acts 4:32-34

'All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had... And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there was no needy person among them.'

DEVOTION: In Acts 4:32-34, we see a picture of believers who were one in heart and mind (one translation uses the words 'heart' and 'soul'). Their sharing had not been imposed on them by church leadership, but had its grounding in their unity of heart and soul. They loved each other, took care of each other and shared all they had with each other. The love that flowed within the Christian community flowed out to the society. So much so that they gained an amazing reputation of counter-cultural caring for those who weren't members of their faith.

I see this picture across our world in many expressions of church, where everyone comes together and shares what they have. Whether they have plenty or little, everyone brings what they have to the table. This happens because of the love and grace of God being so powerfully at work in all these places.

This is taking care of each other; making personal sacrifices to help each other, considering the well-being of Christian brothers and sisters above our own personal welfare. Living in that kind of peaceable community makes it possible to let go of judgement, to assume the best of all those we meet, and to live without fear or rejection.

This way of living is possible because of a common commitment to be of one heart and mind, to love like Jesus, to share everything we have, so there are no needy people among us.

CHALLENGE: Consider who the 'needy' are in your community. What do you have to share with them? How can they feel included? How can we be counter-cultural in our areas of influence and ministry?

PRAYER: Lord, may I have eyes that see the injustice in the world of those who have and those who have not. May I share what I have with those in need, and not just delegate to 'the church'. May I be of one heart and mind with fellow believers and the communities around us to show love, grace and mercy to those in need.

**MAJOR FRAN EVERITT,
AUSTRALIA TERRITORY**

DAY 28

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:3-4

'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.'

DEVOTION: Having been with believers in the church in Philippi, Paul understood well their way of life. He also received reports about how they were living. With that understanding he wrote to them, instructing them not to look only on their own interests, but to consider others.

In other words, he warned them not to be selfish. Not to let their care and attention be wholly absorbed by their own concerns or by the concerns of their own family. Demonstrate a tender interest for the happiness of the whole and let the welfare of others lie near your hearts. This, of course, does not mean that there is to be any improper interference in the business of others, or that we are to have the character of busybodies in other people's matters, but that we are to regard with appropriate care the welfare of others, and to strive to do them good.

The responsibility is ours, collectively. No one is at liberty to live for themselves, to disregard the wants of others. We are called to break up the narrow spirit of selfishness, and to replace it with love and benevolent regard for the happiness of others.

CHALLENGE: How often have you concerned yourself with the interests of others? Do you care? Do you help? Start with prayer.

PRAYER: Lord, thank you for creating us to be part of families and communities. Help us not only to look for our own interests, but also to look to the interests of others. We cannot do this without your help, so please be with us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**LIEUT-COLONEL RASOA KHAYUMBI,
LIBERIA, SIERRA LEONE AND GUINEA TERRITORY**

DAY 29

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 14:21

'It is a sin to despise one's neighbour, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy.'

DEVOTION: We need to realise that the commitment of the early Christians was not simply a humanitarian cause. Our calling and passion to minister and care for those in need is a cause deeply rooted in the teachings of the Bible.

The Israelites chose to care for the poor among them because they knew God cared for the poor: 'If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you...be open-handed and freely lend them whatever they need' (Deuteronomy 15:7-8). We receive God's command to his people and make a choice to obey it.

God has a heart for the poor and he wants us to have the same heart. So many people, including Christians, look down upon those who are in need; they don't believe that they have anything to offer in society. We need to know that this mindset is a sin. God says that we are to be kind to the needy and to treat the poor as our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The concept of biblical justice covers more than punishing wrongdoing. It includes adopting a posture of treating all people with fairness, protection and care. God calls all people to seek justice for those most vulnerable to suffering injustice. The Bible pairs justice with acting righteously and behaving in a way that is merciful, to be a person that exudes love, kindness and compassion.

CHALLENGE: 'When we have an opportunity to help someone in need, we have an opportunity to serve Jesus.' How does this change the way you will put living justly into practice?

PRAYER: Dear Lord, we ask that you pour out your abundant grace and mercy upon all those who are in need. We ask that you provide them with strength and courage to endure, and that you would bring them the peace that surpasses all understanding.

**CAPTAIN ABIOSEH MONYA-LEWIS,
LIBERIA, SIERRA LEONE AND GUINEA TERRITORY**

DAY 30

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 31:8-9 *New Living Translation*

'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.'

DEVOTION: Recorded in Proverbs as wisdom passed on by a mother to her son, this passage is a clear call to just living.

From positions of privilege, we are called upon to use our voices and advocate for justice. In the upside-down Kingdom of God, leaders are servants; the first is last and the last is first.

We cannot fairly or accurately advocate for a person or group that we have not taken the time to know. At the heart of Proverbs 31:8-9 is the instruction to live in relationship with one another, to be actively engaged in the lives of others with Christian love and concern.

The love of Christ compels us to act. When we advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves – perhaps because they do not have the platform, the influence or the same ability to speak – we are building the Kingdom of God, voice by voice.

CHALLENGE: Consider who the 'voiceless' are in your community. Write and send a letter, email or greeting card to them, perhaps asking how you can support them in prayer and in practice. Wait and listen intently to their response.

PRAYER: Lord, may I have ears that listen to the poor, a voice that speaks boldly against injustice, and a heart that grows in love for you and for others.

**LAUREN WESTWOOD,
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

"The love of Christ compels us to act."

DAY 3 |

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 2:10

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

DEVOTION: Many years ago, when my husband and I served as leaders of a village church in rural Africa, we heard of a girl-child who was to be married off by her father without consent. The girl was 15 years old, still in school, and she did not know her rights in the situation.

I felt this was clear child abuse and entirely unjust, but the cultural practice and tradition of the village did not condemn the issue outright. It was a grey area, even in the eyes of the law. I prayed to God for wisdom, strength and guidance.

I decided to take a risk to prevent this marriage, so we took the schoolgirl to the police. Our case was presented, I provided a defence for my actions, and the case was ruled in our favour. The government was already fighting this kind of injustice in our country and the police were grateful for our part in rescuing and protecting her.

I am convinced that God prepares us in advance for what he calls us to do. As we step into service, we realise that there is so much work to be done and sometimes we are not sure how to handle it. But in all things, the Holy Spirit equips us with great wisdom, strength and understanding for every assignment.

CHALLENGE: Sometimes we become ambitious to change the world with grand gestures, but we neglect to do what is simple: give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, welcome strangers, visit prisoners, clothe the naked, care for the sick, comfort those who mourn. Stand up even for one soul that needs your service, love and care for the glory of our God.

PRAYER: Compassionate Father, we ask for your strength to serve those who need our love. May we be sensitive to those around us and respond to their needs with courage. Holy Spirit, empower us to serve the hungry, oppressed and marginalised. Amen.

**MAJOR ESTHER MUNKOMBWE,
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

EQUIPPED

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...in all things,
The Holy Spirit equips
us with great wisdom,
strength and understanding
for every assignment.





INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
MINISTRIES