

# B2M DEVOS

APRIL 13-18



## Weekly Memory Verse!

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus,

6 who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited.

7 Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity.

And when he had come as a man,

8 he humbled himself by becoming obedient

to the point of death—

even to death on a cross.

9 For this reason God highly exalted him

and gave him the name

that is above every name,

10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—

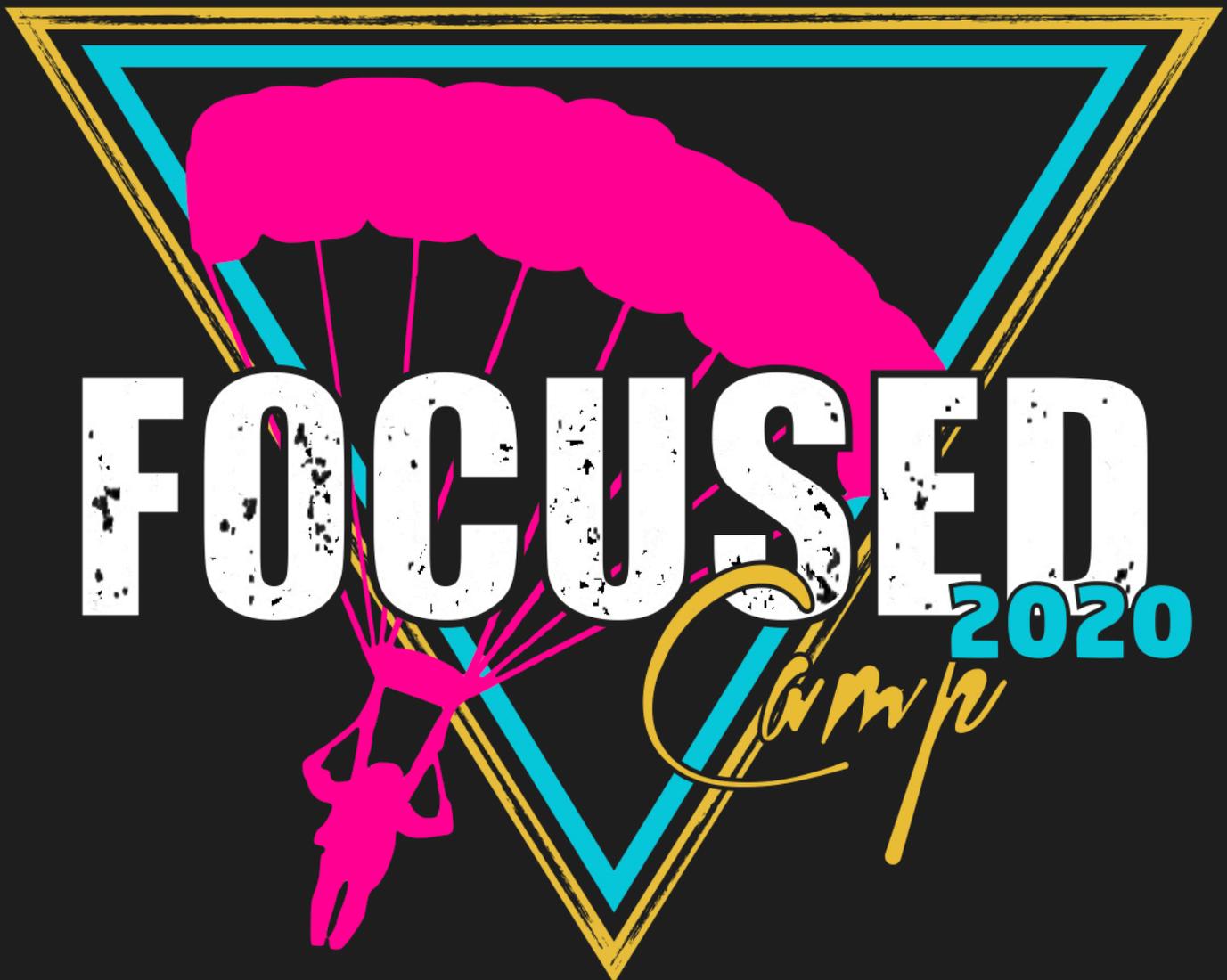
in heaven and on earth

and under the earth—

11 and every tongue will confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.



# Monday

1 You, God, are my God,  
earnestly I seek you;  
I thirst for you,  
my whole being longs for you,  
in a dry and parched land  
where there is no water.

2 I have seen you in the sanctuary  
and beheld your power and your glory.

3 Because your love is better than life,  
my lips will glorify you.

4 I will praise you as long as I live,  
and in your name I will lift up my hands.

5 I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;  
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

6 On my bed I remember you;  
I think of you through the watches of the night.

7 Because you are my help,  
I sing in the shadow of your wings.

8 I cling to you;  
your right hand upholds me.

## SEEKING GOD

PSALM 63:1-8

**Cause and effect.** That's what forms the pattern of [Psalm 63:1-8](#), which traces David's inner spiritual journey while in the wilderness of Judah. Verse 1 is the acknowledgment of his need for the presence and power of God. David's need is deep and fundamental. Like water in the desert, God is the one thing he needs for survival. In verse 2, he has found this "water." He's discovered the power and glory of God. With the need and discovery expressed, verses 3-8 now chronicle the psalmist's response: praise, satisfaction, singing, thinking about God, and clinging to Him. David shares his desire for God, which leads to his discovery of God, and results in his declarations about God.

It's inspiring to watch people's passion and dedication in pursuing their dreams. A young woman I know recently graduated from college in just three years—a task that took total commitment. A friend wanted a particular car, so he worked diligently baking and selling cakes until he reached his goal. Another person who's in sales seeks to meet one hundred new people every week.

While it can be good to earnestly seek something of earthly value, there's a more important kind of seeking that we must consider.

In desperation, struggling in a desert, King David wrote, “You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you” (Psalm 63:1). As David cried out to Him, God drew close to the weary king. David's deep spiritual thirst for God could only be satisfied in His presence.

The king remembered meeting with God in His “sanctuary” (v. 2), experiencing His all-conquering love (v. 3), and praising Him day after day—finding true satisfaction in Him that's not unlike enjoying a full and satisfying meal (vv. 4–5). Even during the night he contemplated God's greatness, recognizing His help and protection (vv. 6–7).

Today the Holy Spirit convicts us to earnestly seek after God. As we cling to Him, in power and love God holds us up with His strong right hand. By the leading of the Spirit, may we draw close to the Maker of all good things.

## Reflect & Pray

**How has the Holy Spirit been prompting you to seek God?  
What are some things you can do this week to grow closer to  
Him?**

*Thank You, God, for drawing me to seek after You. To know You better. To love You more. To recognize Your greatness. I'm so grateful for Your presence in my life.*

# Tuesday

## HEALING WORDS

### PROVERBS 16:20-24

*20 Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers,  
and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.*

*21 The wise in heart are called discerning,  
and gracious words promote instruction.*

*22 Prudence is a fountain of life to the prudent,  
but folly brings punishment to fools.*

*23 The hearts of the wise make their mouths prudent,  
and their lips promote instruction.*

*24 Gracious words are a honeycomb,  
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

### Insight

In [Proverbs 16](#) we find two examples of Hebrew poetry. In verse 20, we see “synonymous parallelism,” in which the same idea is repeated using slightly different words. The key connector for the comparison is the word *and*. Verse 22 is an example of “antithetical parallelism,” a device that uses opposite ideas set in terms of contrast. Here the key connector for the contrast is the word *but*. See if you can find other examples of these poetic devices in [Proverbs 16](#).

A recent study has shown that encouraging words from a health-care provider can help patients recuperate faster from their ailments. A simple experiment exposed volunteer study participants to a skin allergen to make them itch and then compared the reactions between those who received assurance from their physician and those who didn't. Patients who received encouragement from their doctors had less discomfort and itching than their counterparts.

The writer of Proverbs knew how important encouraging words are. "Gracious words" bring "healing to the bones," he wrote ([Proverbs 16:24](#)). The positive effect of words isn't limited to our health: when we heed the wisdom of instruction, we're also more likely to prosper in our efforts (v. 20). So too encouragement buoys us for the challenges we face now and may encounter in the future.

We may not yet fully understand why or even how much wisdom and encouragement bring strength and healing to our daily lives. Yet the cheers and guidance of our parents, coaches, and colleagues seem to help us endure difficulty and steer us toward success. Similarly, the Bible brings us encouragement when we face trials, equipping us to bear up under even the most unthinkable circumstances. Help us, God, to be strengthened by Your wisdom and to, in turn, offer the healing and hope of "gracious words" to those You've placed in our lives.

## Reflect & Pray

**Who has spoken "gracious words" into your life? Why is it vital for you to share words of encouragement with others?**

*Dear Father, thank You for Your words of healing and hope.*

# Wednesday

## *From Pity To Praise*

### **2 Timothy 4:9-18**

*9 Do your best to come to me quickly, 10 for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. 12 I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. 13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.*

*14 Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. 15 You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message.*

*16 At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. 17 But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.— 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)*

### **Insight**

The book of 2 Timothy was written from Rome as Paul was awaiting execution. The clear sense of his impending death is seen in [2 Timothy 4:6](#): “For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near.” His tone is very different in his prison letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon), where he’s under house arrest awaiting trial (see [Acts 28:30–31](#)). This difference of tone contributes to the view of many scholars that Paul experienced two imprisonments—the first leading to trial and the second (seen here) leading to execution.

At a coat drive for children, excited kids searched gratefully for their favorite colors and proper sizes. They also gained self-esteem, an organizer said, with new coats boosting their acceptance by peers and school attendance on winter days.

The apostle Paul seemed to need a coat, as well, when he wrote Timothy, “Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas” (2 Timothy 4:13). Held in a cold Roman prison, Paul needed warmth but also companionship. “No one came to my support, but everyone deserted me,” he lamented, when he faced a Roman judge (v. 16). His words pierce our hearts with the honesty of this great missionary’s pain.

Yet in these final words of Paul’s last recorded letter—his closing thoughts after an astounding ministry—he moves from pity to praise. “But the Lord stood at my side,” he adds (v. 17), and his words rally our hearts. As Paul declared, “[God] gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And he rescued me from certain death” (v. 17 nlt).

If you’re facing a crisis, lacking even the right clothing for warmth or close friends to help, *remember God*. He’s faithful to revive, provide, and deliver. Why? For His glory *and* for our purpose in His kingdom.

## Reflect & Pray

**In what “cold” area of your life do you need God’s great and warming strength? As you praise Him, how does your outlook change?**

*Our strong God, when life’s circumstances overwhelm us, stand with us, stir our praise, giving us Your strength to overcome.*

# Thursday

**Hungry  
For God**

*15 Lord, you understand;  
remember me and care for me.  
Avenge me on my persecutors.  
You are long-suffering—do not take me  
away;  
think of how I suffer reproach for your  
sake.*

*16 When your words came, I ate them;  
they were my joy and my heart's delight,  
for I bear your name,  
Lord God Almighty.*

*17 I never sat in the company of revelers,  
never made merry with them;  
I sat alone because your hand was on me  
and you had filled me with indignation.*

*18 Why is my pain unending  
and my wound grievous and incurable?  
You are to me like a deceptive brook,  
like a spring that fails.*

*19 Therefore this is what the Lord says:  
“If you repent, I will restore you  
that you may serve me;  
if you utter worthy, not worthless,  
words,  
you will be my spokesman.*

*Let this people turn to you,  
but you must not turn to them.*

*20 I will make you a wall to this people,  
a fortified wall of bronze;  
they will fight against you  
but will not overcome you,  
for I am with you  
to rescue and save you,”  
declares the Lord.*

*21 “I will save you from the hands of  
the wicked  
and deliver you from the grasp of the  
cruel.”*

## Insight

The prophet Jeremiah is known as “the weeping prophet.” One reason is that he openly weeps over his wayward Jewish brothers and sisters and the discipline their disobedience requires. The word *weep* appears twelve times in Jeremiah, including 9:1: “Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for the slain of my people.” Jeremiah also bears this title due to his book of laments, which we call Lamentations. In the book, Jeremiah uses the word *weep* three times, including [Lamentations 2:11](#): “My eyes fail from weeping, I am in torment within; my heart is poured out on the ground because my people are destroyed.”

A new believer in Jesus was desperate to read the Bible. However, he'd lost his eyesight and both hands in an explosion. When he heard about a woman who read Braille with her lips, he tried to do the same—only to discover that the nerve endings of his lips had also been destroyed. Later, he was filled with joy when he discovered that he could feel the Braille characters with his tongue! He had found a way to read and enjoy the Scriptures.

Joy and delight were the emotions the prophet Jeremiah experienced when he received God's words. "When your words came, I ate them," he said, "they were my joy and my heart's delight" ([Jeremiah 15:16](#)). Unlike the people of Judah who despised His words (8:9), Jeremiah had been obedient and rejoiced in them. His obedience, however, also led to the prophet being rejected by his own people and persecuted unfairly (15:17).

Some of us may have experienced something similar. We once read the Bible with joy, but obedience to God led to suffering and rejection from others. Like Jeremiah, we can bring our confusion to God. He answered Jeremiah by repeating the promise He gave him when He first called him to be a prophet (vv. 19-21; see 1:18-19). God reminded him that He never lets His people down. We can have this same confidence too. He's faithful and will never abandon us.

## Reflect & Pray

**When have you experienced joy in reading the Scriptures?  
What can help you regain your hunger and thirst for God?**

*Faithful God, thank You for speaking to me through the words of the Bible. Help me to seek You earnestly and to obey You faithfully.*

***ABLE To HELP***

# Friday

*14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. 16 For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. 17 For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. 18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

## **Insight**

The New Testament letter to the Hebrews was written to help Jewish believers in Jesus understand the danger of taking their eyes off the One who came to rescue them and all humanity from our universal fear of death (2:1, 14–15). Only Christ can give us the courage to freely live without the fear of dying. Nothing less than the public record of His life, death, and resurrection can overcome Satan’s twisted suggestion that God can’t be trusted because He isn’t as good as He wants us to believe. It took Jesus’ suffering and death to reveal a God who’s merciful enough to forgive the worst of our wrongs. It took His resurrection from the dead and the changed lives of His witnesses to expose the lie that when we’ve taken our last breath, all hope is gone.

Joe's eight-week "break" from his job as a crisis care worker at a New York City church was not a vacation. In his words, it was "to live again among the homeless, to become one of them, to remember what hungry, tired, and forgotten feel like." Joe's first stint on the streets had come nine years earlier when he arrived from Pittsburgh without a job or a place to stay. For thirteen days he lived on the streets with little food or sleep. That's how God had prepared him for decades of ministry to needy people.

When Jesus came to earth, He also chose to share the experiences of those He came to save. "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). From birth to death, nothing was missing from Christ's human experience—except sin (4:15). Because He conquered sin, He can help us when we're tempted to sin.

And Jesus doesn't need to reacquaint Himself with our earthly cares. The One who saves us remains connected to us and is deeply interested in us. Whatever life brings, we can be assured that the One who rescued us from our greatest foe, the devil (2:14), stands ready to help us in our times of greatest need.

### **Reflect & Pray**

**How does it encourage you to know that Jesus became one of us to identify with us and help us? What difference does knowing that He "walked in our shoes" make during this season in your life?**

*Father, help me to remember that You're ready to help me in all areas of my life.*

# Saturday

## **Being Cared For.**

*1 God is our refuge and strength,  
a helper who is always found  
in times of trouble.*

*2 Therefore we will not be afraid,  
though the earth trembles  
and the mountains topple  
into the depths of the seas,*

*3 though its water roars and foams  
and the mountains quake with its turmoil. Selah*

*4 There is a river—  
its streams delight the city of God,  
the holy dwelling place of the Most High.*

*5 God is within her; she will not be toppled.  
God will help her when the morning dawns.*

*6 Nations rage, kingdoms topple;  
the earth melts when he lifts his voice.*

*7 The Lord of Armies is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.Selah*

*8 Come, see the works of the Lord,  
who brings devastation on the earth.*

*9 He makes wars cease throughout the earth.  
He shatters bows and cuts spears to pieces;  
he sets wagons ablaze.*

*10 “Stop your fighting, and know that I am God,  
exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth.”*

*11 The Lord of Armies is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.Selah*

*Reflect on this verse today. READ it again and  
again.*

**Speak the words out loud. Let them  
penetrate your heart.**

**Ask The Lord to Speak through these  
words.**



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