

# 41 MADE RIGHT WITH GOD



## Receive

### Romans 5:12-21

“Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man they many will be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18-19, NIV)



## Reflect

*Through Christ I've found and will keep finding real life, real answers, real faith. Am I ready to stop stressing and start celebrating?*

*Have I ever tried to blame someone else and not taken responsibility for my own sin?*

*Do I choose to live by Adam ... or by Christ?*

We may read these verses and feel frustrated and resentful of the fact that the sins of one couple—Adam and Eve—led to our downfall. “Not fair!” we’re tempted to complain. “Why do I have to pay for their sins?” But read on. The beauty is that Jesus redeems us, every single one of us, whether we deserve it or not. That’s grace, isn’t it? An undeserved gift. The fact is, one sin may have condemned us all, but a single act of righteousness—Jesus’ death on the cross—saves every one of us and redeems every single one of our sins. God forgives the fact that we sin over and over and over. God overlooks the fact we don’t deserve such grace.



## Respond

**Ask for Change:** *Lord, help me understand the wondrous and infinite gift You have given me through the grace of Your son Jesus Christ.*

**Consider What’s Real:** Meditate on the overwhelming gift of God’s grace as you read these verses from *The Message*: “Sin didn’t, and doesn’t, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace. When it’s sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that’s the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.” (Romans 5:20-21).

**Additional Verses to Consider:** 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Ephesians 2:1-10

# 42 TRUE TREASURE



## Receive

### 1 Chronicles 29:10-20

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things.” (1 Chronicles 29:11-12, NIV)



## Reflect

*Based upon the message of these verses, what should I view as my real home ... my true treasure?*

*Do I live my everyday life as if I believe that all things come from God?*

*Do I put my trust and confidence in God ... or in the ephemeral things in my life?*

So often we get mired in the material possessions in our lives. We desire a larger salary, a bigger house, a fancier car, a more luxurious vacation. We strive for bigger, better, and more, focusing on material rather than spiritual prosperity. And we forget, of course, that all things—our house, our car, the money in our 401K—are made possible only by God. When we make an offering to our church or when we serve the poor, we pat ourselves on the back for “doing good,” forgetting, of course, that everything we give, everything we consider ours, comes from Him. As David says, “Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.” (1 Chronicles 29: 14).



## Respond

**Ask for Change:** *Lord, help me be wholeheartedly devoted and loyal to You alone.*

**Consider What’s Real:** In 1 Corinthians 29:18, David prays that his people will continue to keep God front and center in their hearts and will worship the Lord with wholehearted devotion. In light of that prayer, ask yourself this today: Am I wholeheartedly devoted and loyal to God, or have I put something in my life ahead of Him? If you suspect that God does not take first place in your heart, ask Him for His guidance in shifting your priorities.

**Additional Verses to Consider:** Matthew 6:20-21, 1 Timothy 6:17-19

# 43 I AM GOD'S UNIQUE CREATION



## Receive

### Psalm 139

“For 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.”

(Psalm 139:13-14, NIV)



## Reflect

*I’m a unique creation God placed here for the purpose of His design. Do I truly believe this—even when I feel stuck?*

*How can the truth of this help to get me unstuck?*

*How can I figure out what God’s unique purpose is for me?*

We all suffer through periods when we feel lost, unmoored and without direction. We flounder, wondering if we are on the right path, or whether there is even a path meant specifically for us at all. We might even begin to doubt God’s presence in our lives. In dark times like these it’s more important than ever to return to Scripture, so we can read with our own eyes exactly how involved and in tune God is with each one of us. He searches us and knows us. He knows our comings and goings and is familiar with who we are and how we think and act. And He is always with us, His hand guiding us and holding us close—even when we can’t quite feel it ourselves.



## Respond

**Ask for Change:** *Lord, guide me today; help me know the purpose You have created just for me.*

**Consider What’s Real:** It’s perfectly normal to experience times in your life when you feel frustrated, hopeless, weary, and worthless. It’s normal, too, to wonder what God has in store for you and to question what His purpose might be. God’s ways and plans are not always clear and obvious, and His timeline doesn’t always unfold exactly the way we might like. Know in your heart, though, that God’s plans for you are right, perfect and good, and He will continue to “lead you in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:24).

**Additional Verses to Consider:** Matthew 10:30-31, Jeremiah 29:11

# 44 PROTECTED AND LIFTED UP



## Receive

### Psalm 145

“The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.” (Psalm 145:13-14, NIV)



## Reflect

*How can I remain fearful or overwhelmed by life's pressures when the Lord is very near?  
Do I truly believe that God “satisfies the desires of every living thing?”  
Do I praise God even during times of trouble?*

Notice that this psalm doesn't promise that we will live a burden-free life, unscathed by grief or suffering. The fact is, God doesn't promise us a life free from suffering ... but He does promise to be with us during those hard times, and to lift us up out of darkness. Psalm 145 makes it clear: We *will* fall ... but we will also be lifted up again. The key is that we need to reach out to God, to “call on Him,” trusting that He will love us, care for us, and rescue us. God can't help us unless we fully open ourselves to Him.



## Respond

**Ask for Change:** *Lord, please be with me in the difficult, dark times. Help me trust that You love me and are always nearby, ready to offer Your hand.*

**Consider What's Real:** Today, take a few minutes to reflect on a period of hardship or suffering that you weathered in the past. Can you see now, perhaps in hindsight, the ways in which God was with you all along? Did God use someone in your life to lift you up—perhaps in the kindness of a neighbor delivering a meal, or a friend offering comforting words? Or maybe it was His words themselves that shined the light of life and hope during a difficult time in your past. Sometimes we are better able to recognize the presence of God in our lives after a period of time has passed. Recalling these instances now may help you learn to recognize Him more easily in the future.

**Additional Verses to Consider:** Psalm 23:1-3, Proverbs 3:5-6

# 45 PRAISE NOW AND FOREVER



## Receive

### Isaiah 26

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.” (Isaiah 26:3-4, NIV)



## Reflect

*What do I feel when I read verses 1-15?*

*What are some ways I can live these verses?*

*Do I feel that perfect peace possible in this world?*

Have you ever met a person who seemed perfectly centered, focused, and at peace, even when the rest of the world seemed to be falling apart around them? More than likely, that person’s mind, heart, and spirit were centered on God. We live in an unsettled, tumultuous time, in a world full of strife, suffering, pain, and grief. Despite this, inner peace and stability are possible, even in turmoil. When our hearts are in tune with God, and we are focused on His work in and purpose for our lives, we can proceed steadily and courageously through even the most painful circumstances. Peace *is* possible, and it begins in Him.



## Respond

**Ask for Change:** *Lord, please guide my heart and mind toward You, so that the kind of peace that transcends all circumstances is possible through You.*

**Consider What’s Real:** There are times in life when it’s incredibly challenging to feel God’s peace prevailing through our circumstances. If you’re experiencing such a period right now, practice repeating a short but comforting verse, like Philippians 4:7 or John 14:1, as you walk through your day. Let the repetition of God’s Word be a soothing balm for your weary heart.

**Additional Verses to Consider:** Philippians 4:4-7, John 14:1-4

## Our *Get Unstuck Devotions* Were Written by **Michelle DeRusha**

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Michelle DeRusha moved to Nebraska a decade ago, where she discovered the Great Plains, grasshoppers the size of chickens ...and God. She writes about finding and keeping faith in the everyday at her blog, *Graceful*, as well as a monthly religion and spirituality column for the *Lincoln Journal Star* and for a variety of online publications. She's mom to two rambunctious, bug-loving boys, Noah and Rowan, and wife to Brad, an English professor. Prior to her move to Nebraska, Michelle earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English from the University of Massachusetts and the University of Connecticut and worked in New York City as an associate editor for *Art & Antiques* magazine. You can also connect with Michelle on Twitter and Facebook.