

Grace Guide



FEBRUARY 2-8

“Walk Toward The Mess”

MONDAY

2/2

ECCLESIASTES 12:1, 13-14

The author of Ecclesiastes, the Teacher, calls us to remember our Creator before life becomes cluttered with regret, distraction, or weariness. After exploring everything “under the sun,” he concludes that meaning is not found in avoiding difficulty or chasing comfort, but in revering God and living in faithful obedience. The notion of “walking toward the mess” begins with clarity about what truly matters. When we remember God at the center of our lives, we are freed to face hard realities honestly, trusting that God sees, judges rightly, and redeems even what feels wasted or broken.

1. What distractions or pursuits most often pull your attention away from remembering God in daily life?
2. What is living a successful and meaningful life to you? How does God fit into those definitions?

TUESDAY

2/3

RUTH 1:1-18

Ruth's decision to stay with Naomi is not driven by logic, security, or promise of reward. She chooses love, loyalty, and faithfulness in the face of loss and uncertainty. Rather than turning away from grief, Ruth walks directly into it, trusting that God will be present even when the future is unclear. Trusting God in the messiness of life often means committing ourselves to people and places where healing is not guaranteed, but where faithfulness is promised. Ruth's courage reminds us that God often works redemption through ordinary acts of steadfast love.

1. What fears or uncertainties might have made Ruth's decision feel unreasonable from the outside?
2. What does Ruth's story of commitment and faith do to shape your understanding of faith as being more than belief, but lived loyalty?

WEDNESDAY

2/4

LUKE 19:1-10

Zacchaeus is both curious and compromised. He is searching for something more while trapped in a life that isolates him. Jesus does not wait for Zacchaeus to clean himself up, he enters Zacchaeus's home and enters into his mess. That encounter leads to repentance, restoration, and salvation. Living out this life of faith means allowing Jesus to step into the uncomfortable places of our lives and trusting that real transformation begins there. When Jesus seeks us out, he does so not to condemn the mess in our lives, but to restore us fully into God's family.

1. How do you see Zacchaeus as one who is searching for something more, something that he could not find on his own?
2. What are some "messy" areas in your own life that you need to invite Jesus into for transformation and redemption?

THURSDAY

2/5

JAMES 1:2-8

James offers a startling invitation to us – consider trials a source of joy. He is not minimizing pain and he's not pretending that suffering is easy. Instead, James reframes suffering as a place where God is actively at work. Trials expose what we trust and form perseverance when we refuse to flee discomfort. Walking toward the mess means resisting the urge to escape hardship and instead asking God for wisdom within it. Faith grows not by avoiding struggle, but by learning to trust God fully in the middle of it.

1. What current challenge in your life do you most want to escape rather than endure? Why is it hard to endure?
2. How does James's understanding of wisdom differ from simply wanting answers or relief and what does that mean to you in your present circumstances?

FRIDAY

2/6

PSALM 34

The psalmist does not claim that the righteous are spared suffering and messy lives, but that God is near when trouble comes. God hears the cries of those who are brokenhearted and saves those crushed in spirit. "Walking toward the mess" requires believing that God is not distant from pain, but present within it. When we bring our brokenness honestly before God, we discover that the nearness of God, not escape from trouble, is often the first step toward healing.

1. How do you usually respond when life leaves you feeling broken or overwhelmed?
2. What does it mean for you personally to believe that God is "near" rather than merely powerful?

**SATURDAY/
SUNDAY**
2/7-8

LUKE 17:20-21

When asked about the arrival of the kingdom of God, Jesus points away from spectacle and toward presence. The kingdom is not something to be observed from a distance, it is already among and within those who follow Jesus. Even though we follow imperfectly, even though our lives might be messy, we recognize that God's reign is not postponed until life is orderly. The kingdom takes root in everyday struggles, in broken relationships, and in uncertain circumstances. When we allow Jesus to walk into the messiness of our lives, we discover that God is already at work there.

1. Do you ever tend to look for God's kingdom in dramatic or visible ways rather than quiet faithfulness? Why one more than the other?

2. What does it mean to you that the kingdom of God is "within"?

VERSE OF THE WEEK

Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, 21 nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."

(Luke 17:20-21)