



A FREE 2-DAY TASTE

When the Days Are Long

*14 days of grace for the parent
in the little years*

THE STILL PRAYING COLLECTION • NO. 4



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This Counts

READ: Colossians 3:23–24

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”

— Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

Nobody claps for a folded laundry basket. There is no certificate for the four hundredth diaper, no year-end review for reading the dinosaur book again, with the voices, because the voices are non-negotiable. Most of what you did today will be undone by Thursday, and nobody saw you do it.

So start here, with a sentence Paul wrote to people whose work was also invisible: whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord. Paul wrote that to household servants, the people whose labor the ancient world counted least. And into their unseen, repetitive, undone-by-Thursday work, he dropped a bombshell: it is the Lord Christ you are serving.

There is no asterisk excluding sippy cups. “Whatever you do” is a category with room for wiping noses, cutting grapes in half, and standing in the dark patting a small back for the length of two entire worship albums. If it is done in love, it is done unto Him. The theologians call this the doctrine of vocation. Your toddler calls it Tuesday.

You have been measuring your days by what got finished, which is why the days feel like failure; nothing with small children ever finishes. Measure instead by who it was for. The laundry was for Him. The eleventh reading was for Him. The 3 a.m. shift, for Him.

This counts. It has always counted. Today, no assignment except to believe that.

REFLECT

1. Which part of your daily work feels most invisible, and how does it change to imagine doing that exact task for the Lord?
2. Where did the idea come from that this season counts less than paid or public work?

TRY TODAY

Pick your most-hated chore today and, as you do it, say five words: Lord, this one is Yours.



Lord, You see the work nobody claps for. Teach me to do it for You, and to believe it counts.

Gently Led, With Young

READ: Isaiah 40:9–11

“He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.”

— Isaiah 40:11 (NIV)

Tucked into one of the grandest chapters in the Bible, between mountains being leveled and nations weighed like dust on scales, there is a sentence written for you. The Almighty, the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, tends His flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs and carries them close to His heart. And then, six words that should be needlepointed above every crib on earth: he gently leads those that have young.

Shepherds know what this means. A flock can only move at the pace of its slowest members, and mothers with lambs cannot be driven hard without harm. So a good shepherd slows the whole company down. He does not scold the ewe for her pace. He sets the pace by her.

Now look at the pace you have been demanding of yourself. Pre-children productivity. Pre-children prayer times, friendships, waistlines, sleep. You have been driving yourself like a shepherd who lost the manual, and then feeling guilty for limping. But notice who in this verse gets the gentleness: those that have young. Not those who have it together. The gentleness is not a reward for coping. It is issued with the lambs.

God is not standing over your scattered day with a stopwatch. He is walking beside it, deliberately slow, matching His stride to a family that stops every forty feet because somebody saw a worm.

Let Him set the pace. It was never supposed to be yours.

REFLECT

1. What pace have you been demanding of yourself this season, and where did that standard come from?
2. What would it mean, practically and today, to let yourself be gently led rather than driven?

TRY TODAY

Cancel or postpone one non-essential thing today, on purpose, without apologizing. Call it walking at the shepherd's pace.



Gentle Shepherd, You slow down for those with young. Forgive my stopwatch, and teach me Your stride.



This is only the beginning

There are twelve more days waiting for you: the shepherd who slows for those with young, the cups of cold water heaven counts, the faith planted in crumbs along the road. Find the complete 14-day guide in the Everyday Mercies shop on Etsy, and come say hello at everydaymercies.com.

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