

A close-up photograph of a sun shining through a wire mesh fence. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper right quadrant, casting a warm, golden light across the scene. The wire mesh fence is in the foreground, with several strands crossing the frame diagonally. A small, delicate plant sprout with tiny leaves is growing through the mesh in the lower right area. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape under the sun's glow.

*Guided Prayer
Experience*

Introduction

As you begin this guided prayer experience take a moment to breathe deeply and remind yourself that God is with you. Take your time – it is okay if you don't get through the whole prompt in one sitting. Each person may go at a different pace. God may want you to spend more time on one particular area. You might want to take a walk or find a comfortable place to sit. Use this time to do what is best for you. The goal is not to get through all the questions, but to open your heart to the work of the Holy Spirit.

This prayer guide will invite you to reflect on God's character and on your experience. As we hear the truth of Scripture our hearts can respond in a variety of ways. Sometimes we feel connected with the truth and sometimes we feel disconnected. Regardless of the response of our heart, the goal is to enter into honest and genuine conversation with God. For example, you may read a passage of Scripture that says God is loving and you may feel thankful for this truth and encouraged by His love. In that case, the call is to celebrate God's love and rest in His care.

You may hear about God's love and doubt the truth of His care or feel disconnected from His love. Perhaps, you doubt His love because it feels like God has been distant in the hardships and difficulties of life. In that case, the call is to honestly share your doubt and hurt with God. The goal is not to pretend like you believe He is loving, but to share your heart with Him and ask Him to reveal the truth of His character to you. God doesn't want us to fake it. Prayer is not a time for illusion, but a time for reality. This guided prayer experience is intended to facilitate authentic conversation with God.

Guided Prayer Experience

It is our hope that this time will give you space with Jesus in the midst of all you are experiencing today.

As you begin this prayer experience take notice of the beauty around you - the sky, the trees, the flowers. Notice their color, smell, and details.

Remind yourself that God is with you. He is the one who loves you, gives you a purpose, offers you a place to belong, gives you choices and provides a spiritual family where you are needed.

Step One... Read through the verse and quote below. Remember God's love for you...

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

“His love is never, never, never based on our performance, never conditioned by our moods - of elation or depression. The furious love of God knows no shadow of alteration or change. It is reliable. And always tender.” - Brennan Manning

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Step Two... Meditate on the verse below. Sometimes in the darkness it can feel like we are all alone and that God is not with us. Ponder this verse...

Psalm 139:12 (NASB)
*Even the darkness is not dark to you. And the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are alike to God.*

- What are you experiencing in life that feels “dark”? For example, a situation or circumstance that is painful or hard?

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o Share with God your pain and hurt:

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- When was a recent time you felt understood, known, and safe to talk about your experience? Where were you? Who were you with? How did their response make you feel safe?

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- Read Psalm 139:12 again. Rest in the truth and reality that is spoken about in this verse. Listen for God and what He might be saying to you. Imagine the darkness of night feeling as clear and light as the day around you. Even if things feel silent, know that He is present with you and that He is steady, constant, and true to His character in the midst of the darkness you experience.

Step Three... What will you remember about your time with God today? After reflecting on the time with Him, ask Him to bring to mind what He might have you take away from what you have experienced today. What will help you remember this in your daily life? Is there anything you want to put into practice?

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- With whom do you want to share this experience? Write down the names of people who would be safe and helpful.

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Step Four... As you end this guided experience, anchor yourself in the reality of your identity as someone loved and cared for by God.

Isaiah 54:10 (GNT)
"The mountains and hills may crumble, but my love for you will never end; I will keep forever my promises of peace." So says the LORD who loves you.

Zephaniah 3:17 (NET)
The Lord your God is in your midst; He is a warrior who can deliver. He takes great delight in you; He renews you by his love; He shouts for joy over you.

Lamentations 3:21-24 (GNT)
Hope returns when I remember this one thing: The LORD's unfailing love and mercy still continue, fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise... and so in him I put my hope.

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