



EBPC Presents: Ten Minutes in the Story- Good Intentions Gone Wrong...

January 26-30, 2026

This week's daily practice invites you to spend just ten minutes a day with the Bible in your hands —reading, reflecting, and reconnecting with the larger story that shapes our faith. This week's theme is upon grace and draws upon poetry resources, along with an invitation to be attentive to nature, especially as we experience winter weather.

How to use this daily practice:

Read (2 min): Old Testament first, then New Testament

Read or listen to the poem or reading (2–4 min)

Reflect (2 min): Short prompt.

Practice (2 min): Consider one concrete, doable action.

Prayer (30 sec): One-sentence prayer.

Monday — The snow...calling us back to *why, how, whence...*

Read: [Isaiah 55:10–11](#) → [Luke 12:27](#)

Poem: [Mary Oliver's "First Snow"](#)

Reflect: Where do you notice God's creative intention today?

Practice: 2-minute 5-4-3-2-1 grounding practice (*Notice five things you can see; Notice four things you can hear; Notice three things you can feel; Notice two things you can smell; Notice one thing you can taste*)

Prayer: "Holy One, let your quiet love settle me into this moment."

Tuesday - For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free. (Wendell Berry)

Read: [Psalms 23](#) → [Romans 8:19–21](#)

Poem: [The Peace of Wild Things - Written and Read by Wendell Berry](#)

Practice (2 min.) Take a slow breath in... and a slow breath out. Let your body settle where it is. As you breathe, imagine the words of Psalm 23: *God leads me beside still waters... God restores my soul.* Let those waters rise in your imagination—quiet, steady, unhurried. Let your breath match their rhythm. Now, picture the scene from Wendell Berry's poem:

the wild things resting in the dark woods, creatures who "do not tax their lives with forethought of grief." Let their calm become your teacher. Let their peace brush against your own restless places. Now hold the promise of Romans 8: that nothing—neither fear nor worry nor the ache of the world— can separate you from the love of God. Let that assurance settle into your chest like a warm weight, steady you from the inside out. *Return to your breath.* Let the still waters, the wild peace, and the unbreakable love gather themselves around you. *Rest here for a moment.*

Prayer: "God of still waters and wild peace, let your grace steady my anxious heart and lead me back to the quiet where you restore my soul."

Wednesday — For we have been saved by his grace (Apostle Paul)

Read: [Jeremiah 11:18-22](#); 12:1-13 → [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)

Reading: Augustine of Hippo (circa 400 C.E.) makes clear that though grace must come before any good works that are truly pleasing to God, grace necessarily leads to good works which are really God's works in and through us as we tread Christ's path of humility. [Access an excerpt from his sermon here.](#)

Reflect: Sit with Augustine's line: "*He will condemn what we have done, but he will save what he himself has done in us.*" Where in your life are you still trying to earn God's approval through effort, performance, or self-protection?

Practice: Write down thoughts on where might God be inviting you to release your striving and trust the quiet, hidden work of grace already unfolding within you?

Prayer: "God of mercy, let your grace do in me what I cannot do for myself."

Thursday — "Grace is what lets us tell the truth about our lives without being undone by it." (Nikki Grimes)

Read: [Psalm 34:18](#) → [John 1:16](#)

Listen Option: "Complicated Childhoods, Forgiveness, and Extraordinary Grace" ([Kate Bowler podcast with Nikki Grimes; Season 15, Episode 13](#))

This episode explores: how grace shows up in the aftermath of trauma; forgiveness as a practice shaped by faith; beauty and belonging emerging from difficult beginnings; the tenderness required to tell the truth about our lives.

Reflect: Where do I need to tell the truth about my life —and trust that God is near?

Practice: Write down how I have received "grace upon grace" this week, even in small ways?

Prayer: "God of nearness and overflowing grace, meet me in the truth of my life and hold me with the love that never lets me go."

Friday — "The great privilege of life is to become a conduit for grace." (Howard Thurman)

Read: [Psalm 103:8](#) → [1 Peter 4:10-11](#)

Poem: ["How Good to Center Down!"](#)

Reflect: Let this be the doorway: grace is not something you manufacture—it is something you receive and pass on. Sit with Thurman's image of being a "conduit." Where in your life do you feel grace flowing toward you—unexpected

kindness, patience, forgiveness, or gentleness? Where might grace be asking to flow *through* you today, toward someone who needs tenderness, understanding, or mercy?

Practice: Where is one place today—one conversation, one relationship, one moment—where you can allow grace to pass through you rather than stop with you?

Prayer: “God of gracious abundance, let your mercy flow into me and through me in ways that heal.”

Looking Ahead: the week of February 1

Who Was This Jesus? Was Jesus really Divine? Was Jesus Really Human?