



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hope for the holidays: Peace instead of pain

Pain. We all experience it. We all have it. Just in different ways.

Does December make you depressed? The new smartphone or a set of keys to your own car might not be coming. December might be a reminder of how little money your family has. Jesus understands. He’s been there. Hear this: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Now don’t get me wrong. Jesus isn’t promising you a smartphone, or a car with a big red bow on it. He promises something better. An eternal life with the Lord—tied together by the red ribbon of his blood that flows from the cross. Now that is true riches!

Pain can come with the loss of a family member or a marriage torn apart. There might be an empty chair at the dinner table where Grandpa used to sit. Or a family Christmas at Mom’s might be cut short so that you can finish Christmas Day with a family Christmas at Dad’s. Neither situation is easy.

Jesus understands. He knows the sorrow of death. He knows people who have turned away from him for all the wrong reasons. He knows what relationships are like. His perfect love is there for you.

Maybe there is a different pain—the pain of temptation. Is temptation to sin staring at you in the face until you blush? Does anyone know what it is like to be tempted and to stand pure without giving into temptation?

Jesus knows the strength of temptation. He went through temptation like us. But he did not sin. I don’t tell you this to make you feel like a failure. I tell you this so that you know you have a Helper. More than that, I tell you this so that you know the perfect life of Jesus who earned righteousness, which is yours by faith!

Go to God with repentance in your heart. He knows your hurts and temptations better than anyone. You find God’s amazing love speaking to you in the Word, even if he finds you crunched up in a ball in the corner of your bed. He has compassion on you. He sent Jesus to save you from sin, guilt, and despair.

No matter what pain you have, Jesus reaches out and finds you. He reassures you of his love and understanding in spite of all the pain.

Prayer: Lord God, struggling with finances, failing in relationships, and falling into sin is not who I am. I am a child of God. You love me, Jesus. I see this from the manger to the cross. Even though there is pain in my life, lead me to you for love and peace. Make me alive in you, O Lord. Amen.