

Day By Day With Jesus

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Date: 22 March 2026

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[0:00] I wonder this morning, how many of you are math people? Do we have any, are there students who are math majors?! Oh, look, and they're proud of it. I just want to say, God bless you and thank you for your ministry.

I am not a math guy. My son is an accountant. But I'm not a numbers guy at all. The only way I can help you with numbers is to point you to the book of numbers in the Bible.

So just keep that in mind if you're ever looking for math problems. But this morning, I want to tell you a story about a time when a math problem changed my life.

But first, I need to give you a little bit of backstory on my math story. About a year ago, January 9th, 2025, I had a high fever, uncontrollable chills.

My wife took me to the ER. They said I had 103 degree plus temperature. They said, are you hurting anywhere? I said, well, I think I pulled a muscle over here.

[1:12] And it's been hurting for a few weeks. CT scan. CT scan showed either a tumor or a lot of abscess. And so I was at Erlanger North.

They sent me to downtown Erlanger. And the very next morning early, I had emergency surgery where they removed an eight centimeter tumor, colon cancer that had perforated from my colon and attached itself to my abdominal wall over here and was pressing on a muscle.

That's why I was hurting. And the surgeon said to my wife, it was a mess in there. I received an ileostomy bag five days in the ICU and the pathology came back as stage 3B colon cancer.

A few weeks later, in February of last year, I was lying in bed thinking about all the things that they had told me were coming in the next year for my treatment for this cancer.

And this is when I started to do, this is when I did my math problem. One emergency surgery plus one tumor, well, minus one tumor removed along with part of my colon, plus one ileostomy bag, plus six months of chemotherapy, and then after that, an ileostomy reversal surgery so we can subtract the bag and add the colon coming back together.

[2:55] And then add an anticipated five weeks of recovery from that surgery and then another five and a half weeks of radiation. When I added all that together that night, the total came to over three-fourths of 2025, somewhere around 300 days of cancer treatment.

So as I ran those numbers that night, I was hoping to drift off into sleep. Instead, I drifted into anxiety and worry.

My mind raced ahead, just tallying up all those burdens that 300 days might carry. I tried to count every procedure, every side effect, and all the needles.

I was attempting to shoulder all of those troubles at once. Now eventually, and it took longer than I'm proud of, eventually I remembered to pray.

And this is when I asked the first of my four questions of Jesus that I would have in 2025. My question was, Jesus, how am I gonna get through all this?

[4:18] How am I gonna get through all this? And the Lord graciously brought to mind the verses that we just read that I've often shared with others in their suffering as a pastor.

I'll read them again. Blessed be the Lord who daily bears us up. God is our salvation. Our God is a God of salvation. And to God the Lord belong deliverances from death.

And as I remembered those verses, I was struck by the word daily. The Lord daily bears us up. Day by day, one day at a time.

Jesus said it this way in Matthew 6, you'll probably remember. He said, don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

And so if you think about it, it's as if each day of my life, each day of your life, has its own little closet with shelves full of that day's burdens.

[5:26] And Jesus is saying that each day's shelves are stocked with plenty of burdens. Each day has enough trouble of its own. But as I lay there that night, counting my burdens, I was trying to unload the burdens of 300 days worth of shelves of burdens into one night.

And just let the absurdity of that image sink in because this is what we do. We try to pack all those burden closets into one.

But through the promise of Psalm 68, 19, the Lord daily bears us up. Jesus has been encouraging me. He's been saying, Jimmy, leave tomorrow's burdens there.

I will bear you up under them tomorrow. Leave every procedure, every side effect, and all those needles right where they are on their own appointed days.

I will bear you up when we get to them. I will bear you up under your real burdens when they show up in real time, no matter what they are or how many there are.

[6:43] And he said real burdens because sometimes the burdens we carry never happen. I will carry you, I will bear you up under your real burdens when they show up in real time.

It doesn't matter how many there are. So friends, Jesus daily bears us up day by day, one day at a time.

I've been using this word burden a lot and, you know, it is a biblical word. In the Bible, burden is used as something heavy that you carry.

You know, we use the phrase the beast of burden like a donkey. You can just imagine loading burdens on this beast. The Bible also talks about it as some trouble that's causing pain or distress or suffering in your life.

And I thought, as I thought about burdens, I thought, where do they come from? Some of our burdens come from outside of us and some burdens are not bad. There are good burdens because there are so many good things God has given us to carry.

[8:02] The relationships we have, the roles He's given us to play, the responsibilities He's given us to fulfill. They're good burdens, but they're still weighty.

And then there are those other burdens. Cancer, family conflict, job loss, adult children who don't follow Jesus, paying the bills, and on and on it goes.

There are so many burdens that come from outside of us. But then there are burdens that come from inside of us. Sins we just can't seem to shake.

Bitterness, hopelessness, fears about the future, and on and on. Fears that, burdens that sometimes we create for ourselves. So I want to ask you this morning, what's weighing on you? What's coming up in the months and days and weeks ahead of you? Maybe this question will help. What keeps you up at night?

[9:16] Because if you're like me, you try to add them all up and bring them all into one day. And that's not what Jesus encourages us to do.

I recently saw two fathers and their probably three to four year old sons. I saw one at a grocery store and one at a coffee shop. And those boys, I just listened for a minute, those boys were full of questions for their dads.

And they just fired off one question after another before he could even answer them. They're just question, question, question. And it reminded me of something that Larry Crabb used to say. He used to say, if I'm going to live like a man, I'm going to have to pray like a little boy.

And I don't think God's afraid of our questions. And so I had another question for him after he said that he'd bear me up daily.

This is my second question for Jesus. Okay, Jesus, but will your bearing match my burdens? Right?

[10:24] Will they be enough? Will your bearing be enough? And I needed to hear from him so I took my doubts to his word and I dug a little deeper into Psalm 68 and looked at verse 20.

Verse 20 in the Hebrew, the first line of verse 20 literally reads, our God is a God of salvations. Plural. salvations.

Yes, we have many burdens, but our God has an endless supply of salvations. So I begin to discover in his word that there's plenty in the plurals.

And there's another plural. Look, if you keep going, he says in verse 20, to God the Lord belong deliverances from death.

Now, I don't know if you feel like you're dying every day, but the Apostle Paul did. In fact, he said it. I die every day in 1 Corinthians.

[11:32] And then in another letter, he said, we're being killed all the day long, Lord. But our God has deliverances, plural, from death.

There are many ways to die, both literally and physically, literally and figuratively, but our God has many more ways of escape. He has stocked his shelves with an endless supply of rescues from our daily deaths.

Friends, the storehouse of his heart is fuller of salvations and deliverances than your days are filled with troubles and deaths. When Paul cried out three times for God to remove his thorn in the flesh, you remember?

Remember what Jesus himself said to him? He said, my grace is sufficient for you. Sufficient means enough. My power is made perfect in weakness.

So, Jesus didn't promise to remove Paul's thorny burden, but he did promise to bear him up under it. Jesus says, I have enough bearing up grace to carry you through every one of your thorny burdens.

[12:52] I am enough. I am sufficient and my power is made perfect whenever your weakness says, I can't carry this. Friends, he's enough.

Whatever this day's burden, thorn, loss, or pain, the strong grace of the resurrected Jesus is enough. Jesus has more resurrection power than I have graves to get out of.

And the weeping prophet Jeremiah experienced the same thing. He said, his mercy has never come to an end. They are new every morning. Friends, your troubles will never drain Jesus dry.

His supply of mercy and grace is fresh every morning and sufficient for every day. And we just sang about this last week. It reaches the highest mountain, sing it with me, and it flows to the lowest valley.

Oh, the blood that gives me strength. From day to day, it will never lose its power.

[14:26] Amen. It's day to day, and will it ever lose its power?

No. But I'm still a little boy, and I still get anxious, so I keep asking Jesus questions. My third question for Jesus is, so, I've heard what you've said, but are you really able to bear me up?

And he doesn't look at me in disgust and shake his head and say, I've told you. He said, bring your questions. He says, keep looking.

Keep looking at the word. So, New City, we're going to do just a few minutes of Bible study, and I know that you are people of the word, and you'll be fine with that, but hang with me, okay?

I started digging a little more, and I discovered that there is one place in the New Testament where Psalm 68 is quoted by Paul.

[15:33] And so, let's, and it's the verse that comes right before my daily bearing up verses. Look at it with me. Verse 18 says to the Lord, you ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train, and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the Lord may dwell there.

And then it says, blessed be the Lord who daily bears us up. That verse, 18, is the one that Paul quotes in Ephesians 4, 8 through 10, when he says, talking about Jesus, therefore it says, when he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.

And then Paul puts this little parentheses after that, the little commentary on Psalm 68, 18. In saying he ascended, what does it mean that he who had, that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?

He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. Friends, by doing that, by saying that, Paul is saying that all of Psalm 68 is about Jesus.

So, read it sometime, it's a little long, but read it sometime, and look for the imagery of God leading his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness, conquering kings and defeating enemies along the way, bringing them to Mount Sinai to receive the law, and then finally, taking his throne on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

[17:29] That's Psalm 68, talking about that God, and that God is Jesus, who has ascended to his throne next to his Father, and so, his answer to me is, am I able?

I am able. I sit on the throne of heaven. And so, then Psalm 68, 35, at the end says, awesome is God from his sanctuary.

He is the one who gives power and strength to his people. Bless me, God. Awesome is Jesus from his sanctuary. He's the one who gives power and strength to his people.

Jesus is the conquering king of Psalm 68, who's defeated all of his enemies, Satan, sin, death, suffering, and now reigns in power with his Father by his spirit.

He rules in power over every star and planet, every forest and field, every grain of sand and drop of the seas, every kingdom and country, every man, woman, boy, and girl.

[18:38] All things and all power have been given to him by his Father. Is he able? He's able. He promises then to use his position and power to bear you up.

One of my favorite verses is Colossians 1.11 where Paul says that we, his people, are being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for what?

for all endurance and patience with joy. Friends, if all you're able to do right now is endure and maybe have some patience and maybe have some joy, it's taking the mighty resurrection power of Jesus for you to do just that.

So be encouraged since Jesus is ascended, he's able to carry us in our burdens. But this little boy has one more question.

All right, Jesus, you may be willing, I mean, you may be able to bear me up, but are you willing? Are you willing? Do you want to use that power?

[20:00] And remember that Paul said that the Jesus who ascended first descended to the earth.

He's talking about his incarnation coming in the flesh. Jesus descended to the earth, took on human flesh and lived as a baby, as a boy, as a teenager, as a man.

So Jesus knows what it's like to carry the burdens that humans carry. Listen to Isaiah 53, 4 through 6.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted, but he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the beast of burden, the iniquity of us all.

[21:15] Jesus carried all the kinds of grief and sorrow that we carried, but he also carried burdens burdens of ours that weren't burdens of his. He was grieved, stricken, smitten, afflicted, pierced, crushed, chastised, and wounded, all to bear us up under our greatest burden, which is this.

Friends, this is your greatest burden, my greatest burden. It's the soul-crushing weight of guilt and the penalty of the never-ending death that our sin deserves.

On the cross, Jesus bore the heaviest burden, the sharpest thorn, and the most excruciating relational loss there is to bear for us.

His blood stained cross and empty tomb are the proof that this little boy is asking for that I need to trust that he's already taken my greatest burden upon himself.

Now, it's easy to think that the Jesus who ascended up there is somehow now different from the Jesus who was descended down here. But the Jesus that carried our burdens down here is the same Jesus who is now enthroned up there.

[22:44] So what that means is, here's how he will carry you. He will carry you as a human who knows what it means to carry human burdens. Friends, the man of sorrows is on the throne of heaven, carrying you.

And it also means there's a reason he wants to carry you. Is he willing? Yes, he wants to because he loves you. He's carrying you with nail scarred hands.

Love scarred hands. So friends, don't doubt anymore. Jesus loves you so much that he will use his up there power to bear you up down here.

If Jesus already bore our biggest burden, how will he not also be with us to bear us up under every smaller burden that we will ever have to carry?

In his final sermon, Charles Spurgeon put it this way. He said, the heaviest end of the cross is ever on his shoulders. If he bids us carry a burden, he carries it also.

[24:02] So, after a few months of my questions for Jesus and answers from him through his word, my heart began to slowly turn each page of my appointed cancer calendar one day at a time, one procedure at a time, one side effect, and one needle at a time.

And I started to lean on Jesus as he held me up under each one. Day by day with Jesus has become my prayer.

Day by day with Jesus is how the one who cares for us promises to carry us. Children like me need to learn to crawl before we walk, but by God's grace, I'm crawling.

him. So now, the doctors say that my scans are stable, my cancer numbers are undetectable, and there's no active disease.

Praise God. But that doesn't mean that if your cancer keeps going, he's not going to carry you anymore.

[25:32] He carries each of us differently, but he's given me more days to learn to crawl and learn how to live day by day with Jesus.

So, what can you do today and what can you do today when tomorrow's worries weigh heavy on your heart?

How can you live day by day with Jesus? Three practices quickly that I found helpful. I'll say them and then I'll just say a brief word about each one of them.

Bless Jesus for being your burden bearing God. Ask Jesus to bear you up today and then reach out to your community of burden bearers.

So, every day, bless Jesus for being your burden bearing God. That's what Psalm 68, 19 says.

Bless the Lord who daily bears us up.

[26:30] Bless him and say thank him. Thank you Jesus for freeing me from my biggest burden by bearing the guilt of my sin on the cross. Thank you for coming here in human flesh to bear my griefs and carry my sorrows.

I trust you. Thank him and trust him. I trust that you will bear me up with your strong and tender nail-scarred hands. Bless Jesus for being your burden-bearing God.

And then ask Jesus to bear you up today under today's burdens. You know, you may have to wrestle with him and say, I'm going to try to leave tomorrow's over there Lord, but I need help today.

John Calvin said that the chief exercise of faith is prayer. And what he means by that is that the primary way we express our trust in God is to talk to him.

Right? It's that simple. Prayer is talking to him. And so, do what 1 Peter 5 7 says.

[27:49] Cast all your anxieties on him because he cares for you. Because you can trust that he cares for you, express that trust by casting your cares on him in prayer.

And the word casting is just what it sounds like. Throw them. Throw your cares on Jesus because you know he cares for you.

Hebrews says, since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, he's ascended. He's able to sympathize with our weaknesses.

So, let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need today.

Friends, do life with Jesus day by day through prayer. Do your marriage through prayer. Do your parenting through prayer.

[28:55] Do work through prayer. Do school through prayer. Do your friendships through prayer. Cast the burdens of each of those parts of your life on Jesus by talking to him about him.

Lord, I can't carry this. But you said you will. And it may just take simple words like I love Psalm 119 94.

I'm yours, Lord, save me. That's when I, sometimes when that's all I know to say. I'm yours, Lord, save me.

And then sometimes you come to him and there's no words at all. Because Paul said the spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words when we don't know how we ought to pray.

Sometimes you just come to him with no words at all, but you come to him. So then, one of the ways Jesus carries you and your burdens is by his own spirit giving you his mercy and grace and resurrection power to patiently endure with joy in answer to your prayers.

[30:09] When you cast your burdens, he catches them and carries them. But another way he bears you up is by his body. We think Jesus is on the throne.

He can't physically carry my burdens. Ah, but his body his people, the church is here and his body obeys his command to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Because of my surgeries and I'm about to land this plane, I promise. Because of my surgeries last year, because of a hernia I now have, because of those, I've not been able to carry anything over 10 pounds.

I've not been allowed. You know, a jug of milk weighs eight and a half pounds. And I've not been allowed or able to carry those.

And so, I can't tell you how many times I've tried to lift something and someone has said, hey, let me carry that. Let me carry that. And then they take it from me.

[31:23] friends, reach out to your community of burden bearers. Christine and I saw this time and time again in the last year.

So many of the burdens of cancer were physically carried by our brothers and sisters in Christ, including you. Meals, rides, yard care, trash cans being taken to the street every week, money to pay medical bills, and people who would just be with us.

And then the prayers of God's people. You all have prayed for me. Your elders came after they, some of your elders came after they learned I was diagnosed with cancer and they anointed me with oil in my house and prayed for me.

I've learned that there's probably thousands of people praying for me. I have a friend who told me there are women in a Bible study in Ukraine who pray for you because I send them your updates. I should be praying for them. That's how Jesus carries you bodily through his body, physically through his body.

[32:39] And some of you are resistant to reaching out for help. I know you say, I don't want to be a bother. Ever say, I don't want to be a bother. Well, you might just be robbing your brothers and sisters of the joy of being Jesus with skin on to you.

It takes humility to ask for help. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and cast your cares on his body. Because through his body, his people, Jesus is saying to you, let me carry that.

So let them, let him carry it. Well, one of the, one of the things that has fascinated me about my treatments is when I had radiation, I had to do radiation on this section, this abdominal wall piece because there are still cancer left there.

and my radiation oncologist described how this machine was going to do it. He said, it's fascinating, all these rays of radiation come together like little fingers and they form this cloud, this is what he said, this cloud of radiation and then we have programmed it to read where the spot is where we want, that we want to radiate and the cloud, every treatment I had for five and a half weeks every day, the cloud would come and rest on that spot, this little radiation cloud and just zap it for just a couple of minutes and that happened every day.

And I thought, wait a second, that's really cool. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12, after Jesus talked to him about the thorn, when Jesus said, my grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness, Paul's response to that was, therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest on me.

[35:10] And some Bible scholars think that that's a, that's a kind of an allusion to the glory cloud resting on the temple. So in our, Paul says, I'm happy to tell you about all my burdens and weaknesses because, and I'm happy to cast them on Jesus because when I do, his power rests on me.

So friends, when we cast our cares on Jesus because we trust that he cares for us, then by his spirit all of his sufficient and kind, nail-scarred, mighty resurrection power will come like that

radiation cloud and rest on us in our weakness.

sin. so cast your cares on Jesus today because he cares for you father thank you thank you for this good news this good word thank you for Jesus it's in his name we pray amen