



July 10



Getting Away with It

Tim Gustafson



By faith Abel still speaks. [Hebrews 11:4](#)

Read: [Genesis 4:1–12](#)

Bible in a Year: [Job 41–42](#); [Acts 16:22–40](#)

In June 2004, at a Vancouver art gallery, Canadian cross-country skier Beckie Scott received an Olympic gold medal. That's interesting, because the Winter Olympics had been held in 2002—in Utah. Scott had won bronze behind two athletes who were disqualified months later when it was learned they had used banned substances.

It's good that Scott eventually received her gold, but gone forever is the moment when she should have stood on the podium to hear her country's national anthem. That injustice couldn't be remedied.

Injustice of any kind disturbs us, and surely there are far greater wrongs than being denied a hard-won medal. The story of Cain and Abel shows an ultimate act of injustice (Gen. 4:8). And at first glance, it might look like Cain got away with murdering his brother. After all, he lived a long, full life, eventually building a city (v. 17).

But God Himself confronted Cain. “Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground,” He said (v. 10). The New Testament later recorded Cain as an example to avoid (1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11). But of Abel we read, “By faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead” (Heb. 11:4).

God cares deeply about justice, about righting wrongs, and about defending the powerless. In the end, no one gets away with any act of injustice. Nor does God leave unrewarded our work done in faith for Him.

Father, as Your Son taught us to pray, we ask that Your kingdom will come, Your will be done to change this broken world. Thank You for redeeming us.

Sin will not ultimately be judged by the way we see it, but by the way God sees it.



July 11



Giving in to Jesus

James Banks



In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. [Romans 6:11](#)

Read: [James 4:6–10](#)

Bible in a Year: [Psalms 1–3](#); [Acts 17:1–15](#)

They call it “The Devil’s Footprint.” It’s a foot-shaped impression in the granite on a hill beside a church in Ipswich, Massachusetts. According to local legend the “footprint” happened one fall day in 1740, when the evangelist George Whitefield preached so powerfully that the devil leaped from the church steeple, landing on the rock on his way out of town.

Though it’s only a legend, the story calls to mind an encouraging truth from God’s Word. James 4:7 reminds us, “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

God has given us the strength we need to stand against our adversary and the temptations in our lives. The Bible tells us that “sin shall no longer be your master” (Rom. 6:14) because of God’s loving grace to us through Jesus Christ. As we run to Jesus when temptation comes, He enables us to stand in His strength. Nothing we face in this life can overcome Him, because He has “overcome the world” (John 16:33).

As we submit ourselves to our Savior, yielding our wills to Him in the moment and walking in obedience to God’s Word, He is helping us. When we give in to Him instead of giving in to temptation, He is able to fight our battles. In Him we can overcome.

Lord Jesus, I give my will to You today. Help me to stay close to You in every moment, and to love You by obeying You.

The prayer of the feeblest saint . . . is a terror to Satan. Oswald Chambers
For more insight from Oswald Chambers, visit utmost.org.



July 12



Approaching God

Lawrence Darmani



But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge. [Psalm 73:28](#)

Read: [Hebrews 4:14–16](#)

Bible in a Year: [Psalms 4–6](#); [Acts 17:16–34](#)

A woman desiring to pray grabbed an empty chair and knelt before it. In tears, she said, “My dear heavenly Father, please sit down here; you and I need to talk!” Then, looking directly at the vacant chair, she prayed. She demonstrated confidence in approaching the Lord; she imagined He was *sitting* on the chair and believed He was listening to her petition.

A time with God is an important moment when we engage the Almighty. God comes near to us as we draw near to Him in a mutual involvement (James 4:8). He has assured us, “I am with you always” (Matt. 28:20). Our heavenly Father is always waiting for us to come to Him, always ready to listen to us.

There are times when we struggle to pray because we feel tired, sleepy, sick, and weak. But Jesus sympathizes with us when we are weak or face temptations (Heb. 4:15). Therefore we can “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” (v. 16).

Lord, thank You that I can pray to You in all places at all times. Put the desire to come near to You in my heart. I want to learn to come to You in faith and in confidence.

For help in your prayer time, read *In His Presence* at discoveryseries.org/q0718.

God is everywhere, is available every time, and listens always.



July 13



Intimate Details

Sheridan Voysey



You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. **Psalm 139:2**

Read: **Psalm 139:1–18**

Bible in a Year: **Psalms 7–9; Acts 18**

The universe is astonishingly grand. Right now the moon is spinning around us at nearly 2,300 miles an hour. Our Earth is spinning around the sun at 66,000 miles an hour. Our sun is one of 200 billion other stars and trillions more planets in our galaxy, and that galaxy is just one of 100 billion others hurtling through space. Astounding!

In comparison to this vast cosmos, our little Earth is no bigger than a pebble, and our individual lives no greater than a grain of sand. Yet according to Scripture, the God of the galaxies attends to each microscopic one of us in intimate detail. He saw us before we existed (Ps. 139:13–16); He watches us as we go about our days and listens for our every thought (vv. 1–6).

It can be hard to believe this sometimes. This tiny “pebble” has big problems like war and famine, and we can question God’s care in times of personal suffering. But when King David wrote Psalm 139 he was in the midst of crisis himself (vv. 19–20). And when Jesus said God counts each hair on our heads (Matt. 10:30), He was living in an age of crucifixion. Biblical talk of God’s caring attention isn’t a naïve wish. It is real-world truth.

The One who keeps the galaxies spinning knows us intimately. That can help us get through the worst of times.

Father God, Your eye is on me as much as it is on the stars in the sky. Thank You for Your love, Your care, Your attention.

The God of the cosmos cares for us intimately.



July 14



Face to Face

Amy Boucher Pye

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. [Exodus 33:11](#)

Read: [Exodus 33:7–14](#)

Bible in a Year: [Psalms 10–12](#); [Acts 19:1–20](#)

Although the world is connected electronically like never before, nothing beats time together in person. As we share and laugh together, we can often sense—almost unconsciously—the other person's emotions by watching their facial movements. Those who love each other, whether family or friends, like to share with each other face to face.

We see this face-to-face relationship between the Lord and Moses, the man God chose to lead His people. Moses grew in confidence over the years of following God, and he continued to follow Him despite the people's rebelliousness and idolatry. After the people worshiped a golden calf instead of the Lord (see Ex. 32), Moses set up a tent outside of the camp in which to meet God, while they had to watch from a distance (33:7–11). As the pillar of cloud signifying God's presence descended to the tent, Moses spoke on their behalf. The Lord promised that His Presence would go with them (v. 14).

Because of Jesus's death on the cross and His resurrection, we no longer need someone like Moses to speak with God for us. Instead, just as Jesus offered to His disciples, we can have friendship with God through Christ (John 15:15). We too can meet with Him, with the Lord speaking to us as one speaks to a friend.

Face to face! O blissful moment! Face to face—to see and know; face to face with my Redeemer, Jesus Christ who loves me so! Carrie E. Breck

We can speak to the Lord as a friend.
