

This is one of the great "grace texts" of the church. In this letter, because of St. Paul's own autobiography, the contrast between a former unhealthy way of living and the great love of God that allows for new possibilities is clearly defined. Such Grace means living like today never happened before.

**I Timothy 1:12-17**

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

*Reflections*

Every ending leads to a new beginning. Live for today as if yesterday never happened and tomorrow never will. I've been taught to never live in regret; instead to learn from the decisions and choices which were made. I know it is also important not to forget what I've learned, so that the mistake is not made again.

God wants us to be happy with the choices we make in our life. When we make a wrong one, not only does it hurt us and others around us, it hurts God. Thankfully, he doesn't punish us "for life," or hate us because of it. He embraces us in his arms, loving us more than ever and promising us forgiveness.

This week a brand new school year began. The fear, anxiety, excitement, and many other feelings overwhelm us, as we return to something so familiar all over again. Knowing that junior year is a most important academic year for high school students, is terrifying to me.

This year may change the rest of my life. That's also exciting. I'm that much closer to ending my high school education and starting something new. I can decide to let the fear of a new thing overcome me, and ruin my junior year, or I can make the decision to embrace it and be glad, welcoming change, just like God does with us every day.

*There are times when I don't pray as much, thank him as much, and just trust he's there, until all of a sudden, something changes, like a friend or family problem, a failing grade, or something that I really need help with.*

Last week on my way to work, my dad was teaching me how to use the cruise control with a car. I found it interesting how easy it was to just put it on and have one less thing to worry about. Then it got tricky when other people would brake, change

lanes suddenly, and various other challenges that come with driving. Once the traffic congestion slowed down I put the cruise control back on and watched the road pass me by. I thought to myself, how often do I do this to God? How often do I put on the cruise control with my faith? There are times when I don't pray as much, thank him as much, and just trust he's there, until all of a sudden, something changes like a friend or family problem, a failing grade, or something that I really need help with.

I allow days to pass me by, not cherishing them for what they are or can be. But no one ever promised me a tomorrow, or that I would even make it through this day. Appreciating what is in front of me now makes me realize how much I have to live today for today, like it never happened before and never will happen again.

— Kayleigh McQuaid

# Readings

## **Sunday, September 2**

1 Timothy 1:12-17

We hear in Paul's words that he is not the person he used to be; he has grown in Christ. How have you grown in Christ in the past year? As you look ahead, how would you like to grow with the help of God's grace?

## **Monday, September 3**

Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 26:4

Why are you inclined to forget God in "days of your youth," those days of life when you are full of hope and free from trouble? Why is it important to remember him then?

## **Tuesday, September 4**

2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

Christ has made us a new creation. We are able to begin life again, clean and righteous in his grace. What is God's purpose for this grace -- For us? For others, through us?

## **Wednesday, September 5**

Galatians 5:24-25; 2 Corinthians 2:6-16

Your old sinful nature has been crucified with Christ. What is your new nature?

## **Thursday, September 6**

Philippians 1

It is evident that Paul had great confidence in Christ and peace in the midst of his imprisonment, whether he would live or die. In verse 21 he says "To live is Christ, to die is gain." Why could Paul experience the truth of this kind of confidence and peace? What burdens in your life need an explosion of God's grace to give you freedom?

## **Friday, September 7**

1 Timothy 4

We have received God's grace so that we have new life to offer to others in Christ's name. What are you doing today that will have an impact on those around you?

## **Saturday, September 8**

Psalms 136

His enduring love and grace are yours forever. Into what area of your life does this truth need to penetrate?

*Don't have a Bible? Access these scriptures at [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com).*