

**EMBRACING AGE**

Later life in all its fullness



# WE ARE...

Christian devotions to share with a loved one living with dementia

by Tina English

The Making Moments Series

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# INTRODUCTION

These devotions are designed to be shared with a loved one living with dementia, particularly those in the more advanced stages who may benefit from a more sensory approach.

Each devotion contains:

- a Bible verse
- a short devotional based on the verse
- a sensory idea: something to feel or smell that relates to the theme
- a picture to look at together
- suggested songs: singing well known songs can be a wonderful activity for those living with dementia. Hopefully you'll have more of an idea of the hymns and songs your loved one knows, but I have suggested a few that relate to the theme. Choose one that is familiar to your loved one.
- A prayer



# WE ARE... SECURE

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness."  
Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV

## Sensory idea:

a rock or pebble to hold.

## Devotional:

In the Psalms David often describes God as his rock. A rock is so solid and secure.

Life brings change, and sometimes with that change comes uncertainty. But God never changes and His word and His promises are a rock on which we can stand firm.

I'm reminded of an old chorus:

"Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same  
All may change but Jesus never  
Glory to his name"

The Bible is full of truth about who God says we are, and these truths are unchanging, whatever our circumstances.

## Song Suggestions:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases  
Yesterday, today, forever  
Great is thy faithfulness

## Prayer:

Thank you Lord that you never change. You are a constant in our changing world. Thank you that you will never leave us or forsake us and that we can rest in you.

**TRULY HE IS MY ROCK AND MY SALVATION;  
HE IS MY FORTRESS,  
I WILL NEVER BE SHAKEN.**

**PSALM 62:2.**



# WE ARE... LOVED

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!  
And that is what we are! ."

1 John 3:1

## Sensory idea:

a scented paper or fabric heart

## Devotional:

The Bible is the story of God's love for each of us. Paul tells us in Romans that God demonstrated his love for us by sending Jesus to die for us, while we were still sinners. He wants us to be in a loving relationship with him.

Even as believers we can become distant from God - whether through unforgiveness, anger, busyness, or a host of other reasons. And God still reaches out to us in love, to restore the relationship and welcome us with open arms.

Romans also tells us that NOTHING can separate us from God's love. He lists many things that might try to: death, life, angels, demons, the present, the future, height, depth. What might you add to that list? Whatever it might be, Paul tells us that nothing in creation can separate us from God's love.

## Song Suggestions:

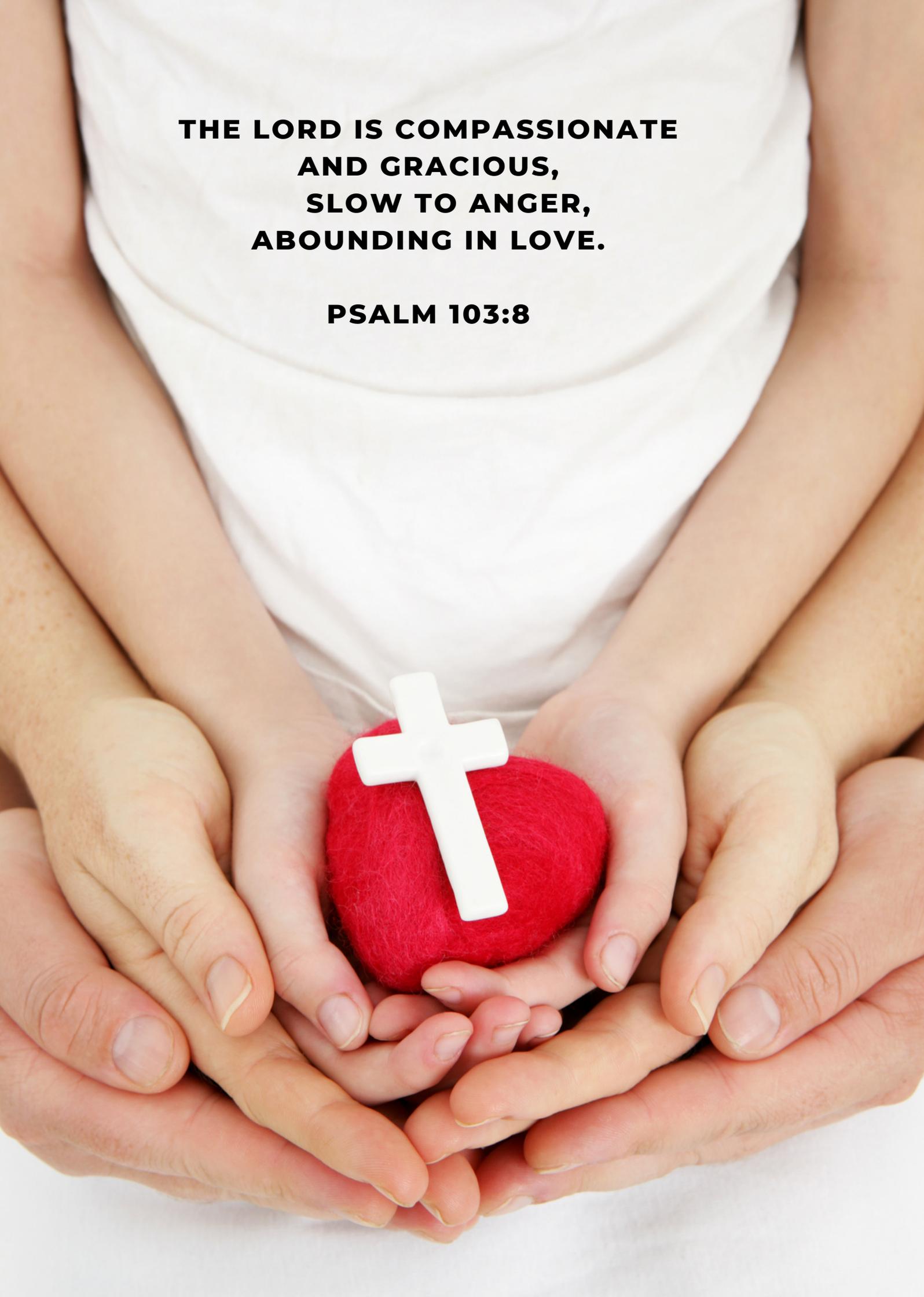
Love Divine, all loves excelling  
Jesus love is very wonderful

## Prayer:

Father, we receive your love afresh today. Thank you Lord that nothing can separate us from your love. Envelope afresh in your arms of love. Amen.

**THE LORD IS COMPASSIONATE  
AND GRACIOUS,  
SLOW TO ANGER,  
ABOUNDING IN LOVE.**

**PSALM 103:8**



# WE ARE... FORGIVEN

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9

## Sensory idea:

a wooden or knitted cross

## Devotional:

A few weeks ago I was wallowing in self pity, thinking about all the things I had done wrong. I was expecting God to show me a bit of sympathy, but instead he just agreed with my self assessment! But before I could object, he reminded me that he loved me despite my faults, and that Jesus had died so I might be forgiven.

He gave me a choice - I could keep wallowing, or I could leave all my unrighteousness at the cross and receive the forgiveness Jesus paid for. I chose the latter!

Perhaps you are carrying guilt today, or negative feelings about yourself. Whatever you are carrying, it is no surprise to God. You too can leave your baggage at the cross and receive his forgiveness afresh.

## Song Suggestions:

Praise my soul the king of heaven  
Just as I am

## Prayer:

Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross that I might be forgiven. I confess my sin to you today and leave all my guilt and shame at the cross. I receive your forgiveness afresh.

**Come to me, all you who are  
weary and burdened, and I will  
give you rest.**

**Take my yoke upon you and  
learn from me, for I am gentle  
and humble in heart, and you  
will find rest for your souls.**

**For my yoke is easy and my  
burden is light.**

**Matthew 11:28-30**



# WE ARE... CHILDREN OF GOD

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God"

John 1:12

Sensory idea:

A ring

Devotional:

In the story of the prodigal son, his loving Father runs out to meet him on His return and puts a ring on his finger. The son was expecting to come home and be treated as a slave, realising that he had let his father down. But by placing a ring on his finger the father reaffirms his identity as his son. Nothing that the son has done can stop the father loving him, or rob him of his position as a son.

In the same way, God calls us his sons and daughters. It is an identity we haven't earned and don't deserve, but God the Father gives it to us all the same. And it is an identity that will never change - nothing and no-one can take it from you - you are a child of God. Remind yourself of that truth today and rest in the arms of your loving Heavenly father.

Song Suggestions:

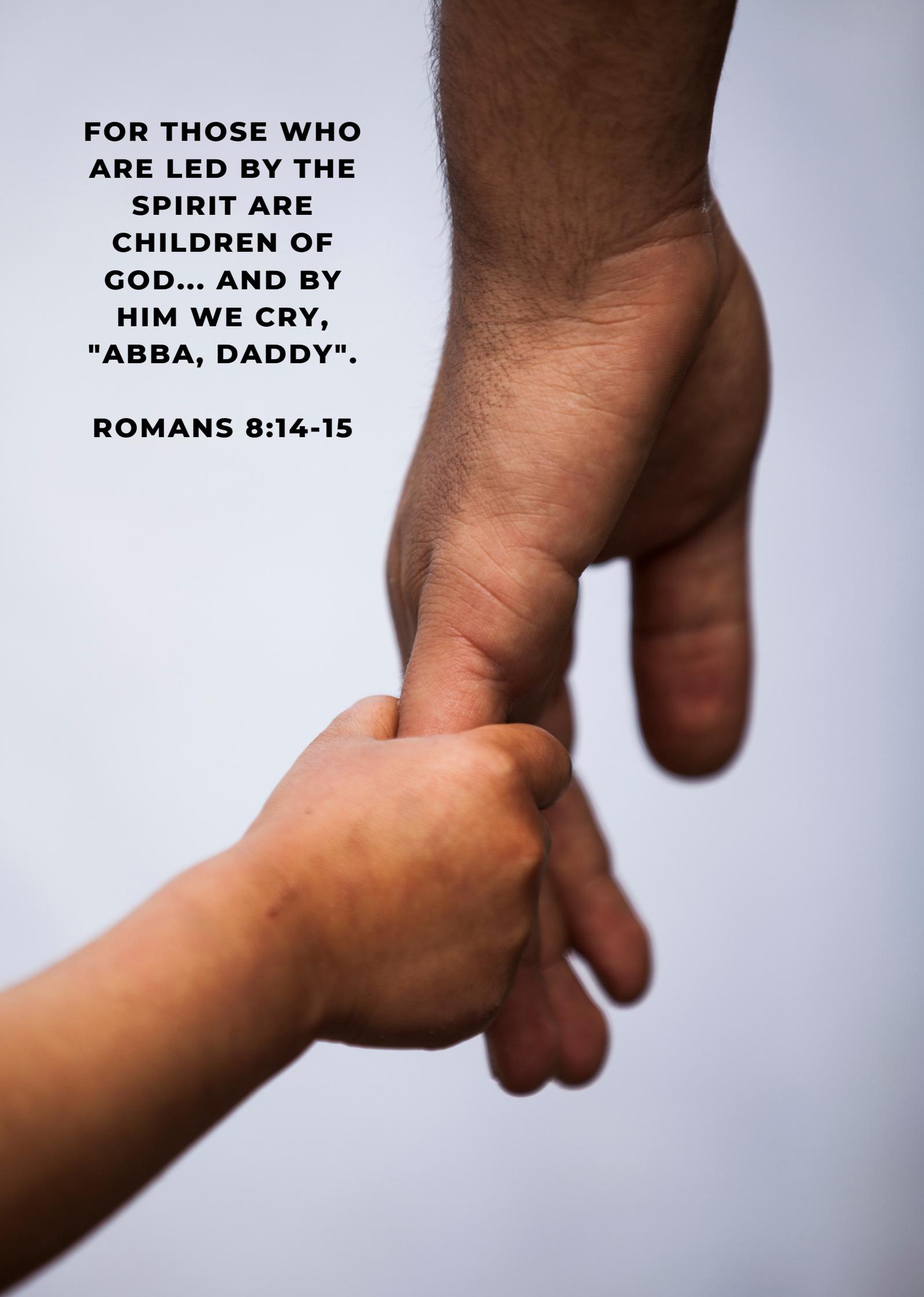
Father God I wonder (I will sing your praises)  
Great is thy Faithfulness, O God my father

Prayer:

Father God, thank you that we are your children, and that nothing can change this identity we have as part of your family.

**FOR THOSE WHO  
ARE LED BY THE  
SPIRIT ARE  
CHILDREN OF  
GOD... AND BY  
HIM WE CRY,  
"ABBA, DADDY".**

**ROMANS 8:14-15**



# WE ARE... HELD

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Isaiah 41:10

## Sensory idea:

A teddy or soft toy to hold

## Devotional:

When I think of being held as a Christian I am reminded of the famous Footprints story:

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the LORD. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to him, and the other to the LORD.

He also noticed that at the very lowest and saddest times in his life there was only one set of footprints in the sand. This really bothered him and he questioned the LORD about it:

"LORD, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me."

The LORD replied: "My precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints in the sand, it was then that I carried you."

## Song Suggestions:

He's got the whole world in his hands

## Prayer:

Thank you Lord that you hold us, and never let us go. Thank you that you carry us through the difficult seasons of life.



# WE ARE... PRECIOUS

"You are precious and honoured in my sight, and I love you."

Isaiah 43:4

## Sensory idea:

A feather

## Devotional:

Jesus tells us in Matthew 10 that we are worth more than many sparrows, that even the very hairs on our head are numbered. For some of us that might not be too difficult to count!

But perhaps the greatest demonstration of how precious we are to God is Jesus coming to earth and dying in our place, so that we could be in right relationship with God. As Jesus said, "Greater love has no man than this, that he lays down his life for his friends." You are so precious to God, He loves you so much, that Jesus died in your place.

Of course, we know the story doesn't end there - he was raised to life three days later and ascended to heaven. But he didn't leave us on our own - He has sent his Holy Spirit to be with us and to help us in our every day lives, and to give us a taster and reminder of heaven, that there is more to life than our earthly lives.

## Song Suggestions:

Thank you Jesus, Thank you Lord for loving me

## Prayer:

Thank you Lord that we are precious in your sight and that Jesus died so that we could be in right relationship with you. We come with confidence into your presence and rest in you.

A photograph of four sparrows perched on a branch with green leaves. The background is a soft, light blue sky. The sparrows are in various poses, some facing forward and others in profile. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of their feathers.

**SO DON'T BE  
AFRAID; YOU  
ARE WORTH  
MORE THAN  
MANY  
SPARROWS.**

**MATT 10:31**

# WE ARE... KNOWN

"You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways." Ps 139:1-2

## Sensory idea:

Something with your loved one's name on, e.g. a hankie

## Devotional:

In Psalm 139 David describes how God knew us even before we are born. He knows us intimately, every detail of our lives, and despite that he still loves us!

Sometimes memories fade and we forget details of our lives, but the Lord doesn't forget us, and he holds us and our memories when we forget.

It's amazing to think that the creator of the universe knows us each by name and cares about us so deeply. David pondered this in Psalm 8: "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, The moon and stars which you have set in place, What is mankind that you are mindful of them, Human beings that you care for them?" Today God wants to call you by name and remind you that He knows you and loves you.

## Song Suggestions:

Amazing Grace

How Great thou Art

## Prayer:

Lord, thank you that you know us, every detail of our lives and that you still love us and call us by name.

**FEAR NOT, FOR I HAVE  
REDEEMED YOU; I HAVE  
CALLED YOU BY NAME, YOU  
ARE MINE.**

**ISAIAH 43:1**



# WE ARE... HEARD

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

1 John 3:1

## Sensory idea:

Incense or scented candle or lavender bag

## Devotional:

The Bible likens our prayers to incense that rises before the throne of God. In Ephesians we're encouraged to pray on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests, but sometimes it can be hard to know what and how to pray, especially when we're going through difficult situations.

Paul tells us that at these time the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And Paul goes on to tell us that "the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

So when words fail you and you find yourself groaning in prayer, you can be assured that you are praying in tune with God's will, and that He hears you.

## Song Suggestions:

I love you Lord and I lift my voice  
What a friend we have in Jesus

## Prayer:

Thank you Lord that we can come before you with confidence, knowing that you hear our prayers, even when we pray with groans that words can not express.

**May my prayer  
be set before  
you like  
incense**

**Psalm 141:2**



# WE ARE... CITIZENS OF HEAVEN

For our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philippians 3:20

## Sensory idea:

a key

## Devotional:

In ancient times being given a key to the city was a mark of citizenship. We have an even greater citizenship - the Bible calls us citizens of heaven. And we have been given the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come.

This assurance of heaven gives us hope for the here and now. Paul says that our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

Sometimes our troubles don't seem light or momentary, but though weeping may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning. The Bible tells us that in heaven there will be no more mourning or crying or pain, and that God will wipe every tear from our eyes.

Let's allow God promises of heaven to encourage us today.

## Song Suggestions:

Blessed Assurance

Lord of all hopefulness

## Prayer:

Father, help us to fix our eyes on you and meditate on your promises today.

A rustic wooden background with a dark, ornate iron key and a weathered wooden heart. The key is positioned vertically on the right side, and the heart is on the left. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the upper left quadrant.

**“NO EYE HAS SEEN, NO EAR  
HAS HEARD, AND NO MIND  
HAS IMAGINED WHAT GOD  
HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE  
WHO LOVE HIM.”**

**1 COR 2:9**