

# The Disciple

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## A Time for Reflection

By David Perkinson

Some days the waters will not be still and the trees appear distorted in the ripples across the pond. Other days the surface is like glass and perfectly mirrors nature's beauty. So it is with our own self-reflection. Some days we can see clearly that which God would have us see and some days our vision is muddled by the turbulence that buffets our lives.

My daily walk, sometimes around the pond pictured here, has been my reprieve during what has been a most challenging year. The escape into nature stills the waves of fear, outrage, and despair that crash within me and creates space to reflect on the gifts that abound even in difficult times.

There are of course the usual things. I still have a job. I have my health. I have had more time to do those chores and activities that I've put off. Superficial or not, I thank God for each of these "small b" blessings. It is appropriate that 2020 has also been my year of seeing clearly some of the "Big B" Blessings in my life as well. If there is an upside to a global pandemic it is that it has brought about a sustained pause in our normal routines. With this pause there has been an opportunity to find new patterns within our daily lives and to see with more perfect vision how God turns all things towards His good.

In our family 2020 was to have been a year of transitions with our children going their separate ways to start their lives on their own. Time had passed without us realizing it and the end of our time together as a family of four living under the same roof had arrived. I had not contemplated the impending changes or prepared in any way for how our relationships would necessarily have to evolve. I wasn't ready.



Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you."

Psalms 139 NIV

One of my “big B” Blessings of 2020 has been the not insignificant gift of one more year together. In the midst of a world in turmoil Eleanor and I had both our boys with us and time enough to prepare for what comes next. In part because of the external challenges that we faced together, God also gave us the opportunity to strengthen our ties to one another. A mother and father could learn to see and treat their children as the men they were becoming. Brothers could reconcile the space of years that separates them and find a comradeship that will serve them well in years to come.

My other “Big B” Blessing this year has been a shift in perspective. This year I learned the profound impact of thinking about things in terms of “the last time”.

So many of God’s gifts get taken for granted because they are so ubiquitous. The sun rises every day. The flowers bloom in season. The extraordinary becomes ordinary with familiarity. But there is a trick that we can use to refresh our sense of wonder and gratitude and it is this; consider each unique delight as if it is the last time that you will ever do so.

I give you this example. One of my quarantine routines this past year was to cut the grass every Friday afternoon. It was a chore that needed doing, but with “the last time” meditation it also became an opportunity to appreciate God’s “small b” blessings in my life. There will come a day, either because of illness or infirmity, when I can no longer mow my own yard. At that time I will look back and appreciate those times that I could ride around on the mower (perhaps with a cold beverage in the cupholder) and make my yard look beautiful. If done the right way the moment’s reflection is not morbid or morose, but instead sparks joy and invites an appreciation for God’s love. I appreciate the work of my own hands. I can honor my place in nurturing this small part of the world entrusted to my care. I can just savor the smell of fresh cut grass and know that this too is emblematic of God’s grace.

I know that these are difficult times but with this message I invite you too to reflect on your own blessings (both “little b” and “Big B”). Acknowledge that all things pass and every moment presents an opportunity to experience God’s abundant love for us.



**facebook**

Sunday

Mornings

LIVE

On Facebook

Each Sunday morning you can view the 11:00 am Worship Service as it is happening LIVE on Facebook. Simply login to your Facebook account and go to the Louisa Christian Church page.

You can still view the service anytime by following the link on our website, **LouisaChristianChurch.org**.

Each week’s sermon is posted under Worship Resources along with the worship handouts and the newsletter.



*Coram Deo captures the essence of the Christian life. This phrase literally refers to something that takes place in the presence of, or before the face of, God. To live Coram Deo is to live one's entire life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, to the glory of God. To live in the presence of God is to understand that whatever we are doing and wherever we are doing it, we are acting under the gaze of God. God is omnipresent. There is no place so remote that we can escape his penetrating gaze.*

## ***Prayers of Praise***

We practice counting our blessings and giving glory to God.

Contact Sheryl at

saseyart@gmail.com  
with your own praises  
to include.



*Lift Up Your Praises*

## ***In Search of....***

Are you or someone you know in need of prayer or something more tangible? This is the space for us to ask for help from our community. Names will be kept confidential and we will utilize the pastor and other angels to deliver answers to the needs requested. Please send your requests to saseyart@gmail.com or text Sheryl at 540-223-5800 or let Pastor Vincent know of your need.

***Need — LCC needs individuals willing to serve on the technical team (video, audio, social media, etc)***

***Prayer Request for the doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals. May they have continued strength and good health as they care for others.***

## **Announcements**

- Sunday School Classes are meeting and they welcome you.
- Did you know you can join either of our Bible studies from the comfort of your home or face-to-face? We meet on Wednesdays at 10:30 AM and Thursdays at 7:00 PM. Contact Pastor Klüg for more info.
- People have expressed interest in a couple's Sunday School class. - - Whether you are single or married, this class will relate to you. Please contact Pastor Klüg to find out more...
- The Food ministry continues to meet needs. If you would like to receive a meal, please contact Penny Best or Pastor Klüg.
- If you are visiting with us via Facebook Live or Youtube, please sign a visitor card by texting Pastor Klüg your name and favorite way to be contacted.
- If you would like to be on the Prayer list please contact Pat Purcell at pat@jspurcell.com or Pastor Klüg. As names are listed in our bulletin, please contact her to remove names/requests as well.



# One Today

by Richard Blanco

One sun rose on us today, kindled over our shores,  
peeking over the Smokies, greeting the faces  
of the Great Lakes, spreading a simple truth  
across the Great Plains, then charging across the Rockies.  
One light, waking up rooftops, under each one, a story  
told by our silent gestures moving behind windows.

My face, your face, millions of faces in morning's mirrors,  
each one yawning to life, crescendoing into our day:  
pencil-yellow school buses, the rhythm of traffic lights,  
fruit stands: apples, limes, and oranges arrayed like rainbows  
begging our praise. Silver trucks heavy with oil or paper—  
bricks or milk, teeming over highways alongside us,  
on our way to clean tables, read ledgers, or save lives—  
to teach geometry, or ring-up groceries as my mother did  
for twenty years, so I could write this poem.

All of us as vital as the one light we move through,  
the same light on blackboards with lessons for the day:  
equations to solve, history to question, or atoms imagined,  
the "I have a dream" we keep dreaming,  
or the impossible vocabulary of sorrow that won't explain  
the empty desks of twenty children marked absent  
today, and forever. Many prayers, but one light  
breathing color into stained glass windows,  
life into the faces of bronze statues, warmth  
onto the steps of our museums and park benches  
as mothers watch children slide into the day.

One ground. Our ground, rooting us to every stalk  
of corn, every head of wheat sown by sweat  
and hands, hands gleaning coal or planting windmills  
in deserts and hilltops that keep us warm, hands  
digging trenches, routing pipes and cables, hands  
as worn as my father's cutting sugarcane  
so my brother and I could have books and shoes.

The dust of farms and deserts, cities and plains  
mingled by one wind—our breath. Breathe. Hear it  
through the day's gorgeous din of honking cabs,  
buses launching down avenues, the symphony  
of footsteps, guitars, and screeching subways,  
the unexpected song bird on your clothes line.

Hear: squeaky playground swings, trains whistling,  
or whispers across café tables, Hear: the doors we open  
for each other all day, saying: hello / shalom,  
buon giorno / howdy / namaste / or buenos días  
in the language my mother taught me—in every language  
spoken into one wind carrying our lives  
without prejudice, as these words break from my lips.

One sky: since the Appalachians and Sierras claimed  
their majesty, and the Mississippi and Colorado worked  
their way to the sea. Thank the work of our hands:  
weaving steel into bridges, finishing one more report  
for the boss on time, stitching another wound  
or uniform, the first brush stroke on a portrait,  
or the last floor on the Freedom Tower  
jutting into a sky that yields to our resilience.

One sky, toward which we sometimes lift our eyes  
tired from work: some days guessing at the weather  
of our lives, some days giving thanks for a love  
that loves you back, sometimes praising a mother  
who knew how to give, or forgiving a father  
who couldn't give what you wanted.

We head home: through the gloss of rain or weight  
of snow, or the plum blush of dusk, but always—home,  
always under one sky, our sky. And always one moon  
like a silent drum tapping on every rooftop  
and every window, of one country—all of us—  
facing the stars  
hope—a new constellation  
waiting for us to map it,  
waiting for us to name it—together

