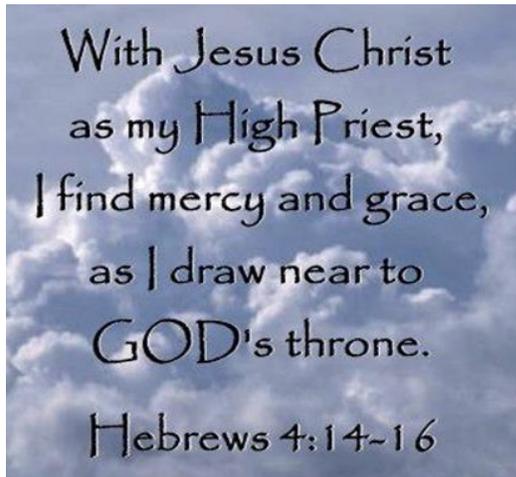


## Devotional for the Week – Week 15 (February 3, 2021)

### *The Gift That Keeps on Coming*

*Now that we know what we have – Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God – let's not let it slip through our fingers. We don't have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all – all but the sin. So let's walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.*

Hebrews 4: 14-16, *The Message*



Listen to this story from Julie Price:

I stood in front of a conference room full of hotel workers. I always felt confident teaching these seminars. In fact, my work provided me with stability in a turbulent period in my life. At age thirty-two, I was on my own for the first time.

When I dismissed the class for a break, Jim, my boss, steered me into the lobby. There he informed me that the police had contacted my office to let me know that my house had been burglarized. As I headed to my hotel room to pack, I felt a growing sense of violation and fear. Sure, I had put up a strong front after Steve left me. But inside I knew I'd only been trying to convince myself that I could take care of myself and live on my own.

On the flight home, I couldn't stop thinking about what the thieves might have taken. The jewelry box on my dresser held a snapshot of my mother as a young girl – and the gold cross that my grandmother had presented to me when I was a year old. That necklace had always made me feel loved and cherished.

When I arrived, I was glad I'd asked my friend Melissa to come with me. The sight of my splintered front door behind the crisscrossed yellow crime scene tape nearly floored me. The inside was even worse than I had pictured. Everything had been overturned, my precious possessions scattered haphazardly on the floor. And then it struck me: "My jewelry box." It was gone.

I spent that night at Melissa's. The next morning, per the policeman's advice, I numbly went to the hardware store for a new door – the sturdiest one I could find. The cashier asked brightly, "Is your husband going to install it?" I just nodded. What was the use of explaining? *I'll do it myself*, I thought. *I do everything else for myself these days.*

At home, I studied the instructions. *Wow, I can do this*, I thought. Once I got the hinges on, it was time to cut a hole for the doorknob. I made the measurements and carefully began cutting. Almost immediately, I heard the tortured sound of wood splitting. With one slip, I had ruined it all.

I sat on the ground in defeat as tears spilled down my face, turning the sawdust into pulp. *Lord, I prayed, I obviously can't take care of myself. Why aren't YOU helping me?* I thought God was supposed to stay close to me, but I felt abandoned, vulnerable, and alone. I was angrily stuffing the mess I'd made into the trashcan when, directly at my feet, something gold glinted – my cross!

I picked up the delicate necklace and held it in my palm. It must have fallen out of my jewelry box as the burglars ran off. But there was nothing accidental about it – I had never needed my cross the way I needed it at that moment. "Thank you, Lord," I whispered tearfully. "I am sorry for doubting you. You never turn your back on any of your children. With you, I am never alone."

I put the cross around my neck and called the hardware store to arrange to have someone come and install a new door. An incredibly reassuring sense of security enveloped me. I would stay in my own bed that night, safe in the certain knowledge that the Lord was watching over me – an assurance that wouldn't be stolen from me again.

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When we get to the end of our own strength, realizing that we need God to make it in life and keep our soul tender and true, it's good to remember –

- God sent a rainbow to Noah as a symbol that his love for man would never waiver (Gen. 9: 14-15).
- God spoke to Moses in a burning bush (Ex. 3: 2-6) and parted the waters of the sea with his breath to provide deliverance (Ex. 14:21).
- God allowed a young shepherd boy to conquer a mighty warrior with only a sling shot and a single stone (I Samuel 17:49).
- Jesus healed a blind man (Mk. 8: 22-25), a person with leprosy (Mt. 8: 2-3), a man who had never walked (Mt. 9: 2-7), and even raised a young girl from death to life (Lk. 8: 51 – 55).
- The Holy Spirit came upon the followers of Jesus so they could proclaim God's love in languages they'd never spoken before (Acts 2: 4-8)

Never doubt that God is at work in our world – and in YOUR life. Sometimes all we need is to open our eyes to see his tender mercies in our lives. May God touch you this week and may you have no doubt who loves and cares for you.

**May God bless and keep you this day and every day,**

*Carol*

**God will...**

**Give you rest (Mt. 11:29)...Keep his promises (2 Chron. 16:15)...Take care of you (Ps. 37:5)...  
Knows the things you need before you ask. (Mt. 6:8)**