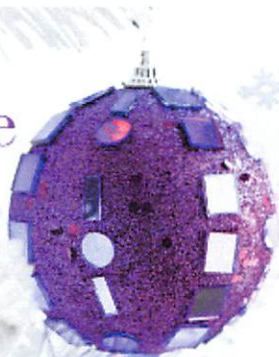


Daily
Treasure



*Touches of Christmas
Encouragement
with Sharon Betters*

We have a winner...



The winner of this week's
Touches of Christmas Encouragement book giveaway,



Sammy and His Shepherd, Seeing Jesus in Psalm 23 by Susan Hunt is...
Harley. Congratulations!

Treasures of Christmas Encouragement



Note from Sharon

Christmas is 3 ½ weeks away! Is your to do list getting longer or shorter? Is it too early to start cutting unnecessary tasks? As I frantically tried to finish my lists over the years, my husband often gently suggested, “Is this really important? Or is this something you can let go?” If you’re feeling stressed and anxious, write down everything you need to do – no matter how small (even unloading the dishwasher or doing the laundry. As you cross off completed tasks, you will feel a sense of accomplishment and a guide for how to proceed with the remaining tasks. Make your list before you go to bed and anything you didn’t accomplish, move to the next day. And, this is where it gets hard, start cutting unnecessary projects.



Treasured by Him,
Sharon

“Christmas Grief Relief”

In this week’s Touches of Christmas Encouragement, we welcome Vaneetha Rendall Reissner as our Grief Relief Guest Writer. Vaneetha knows what it is to repeatedly experience loss as you can hear in our Help & Hope podcast: [How Does God Meet Us In Suffering](#) – A conversation with Vaneetha Risner.

Her devotional is adapted from her blog post Choose Hope. Find this entire article on [Vaneetha’s blog](#).



Choose Hope

Vaneetha Rendall Reissner

A friend who lives with intractable pain mentioned that the phrase, “choose joy” isn’t as appropriate to deep suffering as “choose hope.” Sometimes it’s hard to feel joy, and hearing others glibly state, “choose joy” can feel like pouring vinegar into an open wound. (Proverbs 25:20 NIV). It’s painful. But hope is different.

Hope is clinging to the Lord and his promises, trusting that he is with us, is

using our trials for something greater than we can imagine, and that our pain will end one day.

Hope acknowledges that while what we see and feel may be excruciating right now, it will not always be this way. Our hope is guaranteed because it's a living hope, in a person not an outcome, but we must wait patiently for it to unfold.

While we wait, we lament. In lament we turn to God, pouring out our pain, trusting that he is listening, cares and will respond. The Lord isn't honored by our sanitized words of insincere praise but by our genuine response, whether it be anguish or agony, as we look to him in hope.

We can trust that he is writing a good story with our lives even though the pages, or even chapters, we've been living in feel dark. The God who is with us, walking closely beside us, even carrying us in our suffering, is guaranteeing a hope for the future. But there are some promises of reward and redemption that we haven't received yet.

Even when every day feels like a struggle, in Christ we all have a beautiful inheritance and a glorious future. We will see our Savior face-to-face and will be filled to overflowing with a soul-satisfying joy that cannot be taken away. We aren't promised a reprieve from suffering in this life, though many of us will have one, but we are promised crowns of glory and unending delight in the next.

No matter what you are struggling with today, Jeremiah can speak to your pain. Even when life feels desperate and hopeless, you can lament to the Lord and choose hope. A hope that is Spirit-breathed and will never disappoint. A hope that will sustain you when you feel bereft of peace and have forgotten what happiness is. A hope that will remind you that the steadfast love of the Lord will never end and that his mercies will be new every morning.

In keeping with our theme of encouragement, Vaneetha wants to give you a free PDF copy of her book—[Helping the Hurting: Practical Ways to Help a Suffering Friend](#)

Comments of Encouragement...

From Diane: *Today's message was just beautiful. How reassuring that those who are climbing the mountain ahead of us call down to us to encourage us to keep climbing!*

From Faith: *...I am encouraged to see how **Daily Treasure** shares the beauty and relevance of the Old Testament for today by highlighting God's Covenant faithfulness and unchangeableness.*

Touches of Christmas Encouragement



Sometimes I think of the *Daily Treasure* devotions and podcast as “healthy spiritual snack food”. Though they only take a few minutes to read or listen to, they are packed with spiritual protein, vitamins, minerals, and more designed to strengthen us in our walk of faith.

One reader said she starts her day with *Daily Treasure*, expecting the Lord to pull out one nugget that applies to her specific needs. Whether she faces a mundane or stressful day, she says she always finds a truth to take with her. Often that truth is just what she needs to equip and remind her to make glorifying God her priority. *Daily Treasure* goes beyond the United States and I loved hearing about women in Scotland who look forward to reading the devotionals and then discussing them with one another.

If you are one of those who are better equipped to face your day because of the biblical message of the devotions, would you consider praying and paying it forward? Join us in praying for *Daily Treasure* subscribers to help underwrite the annual production costs of about \$22,000 for 2022. This is a grand adventure for our tiny team as we pray and watch for how the Lord will meet the needs of this ever-growing *Daily Treasure* family.

For your gift of any size, we will send you two *Treasures of Encouragement Planners*, one for you and one to give. You can safely give at markinc.org. Thank you for carefully considering if the Lord wants you to partner in ministry with others so we can continue to offer this special devotional as a free resource.

Give and Pay it Forward!

A Few Good Books

Roberta Dosa

Daily Treasure Narrator

We often hear about the importance of slowing down and soaking in the real meaning of Christmas. Homeschooling eight children over the years made this challenge feel impossible. But where there is a will there is a way and I found Christmas literature as one means of not only keeping my eyes on Jesus during the holidays but also helping my children experience a few minutes of remembering the “reason for the season”. Now that we are grandparents, books and story-telling remain a special part of our Christmas festivities. Our children and now our grandchildren never tire of our tradition of reading the same stories year after year.



A favorite is ***The Three Trees*** retold by Angelica Hunt. We received the gift of this book twice and it is no wonder! It tells the salvation story in a unique way.

The Story Book Bible by Sally Lloyd Jones is another favorite because it includes many of the well-loved stories from the Bible in story form. Each makes the clear connection of pointing to Jesus.

For my personal reflection, I have read the same two advent selections over the past few years: ***The Greatest Gift*** by Ann Voscamp and of course ***Daily Treasure*** devotionals, ***Journey to Christmas with the Midwives of the Messiah*** by Sharon Betters. Though I have read them before, I find new reasons for keeping my eyes on Jesus throughout the holidays.

A family favorite recipe for all year round but especially during Christmas when you're on the run and just need a pick me up snack is our Granola Fit for Giving. I love to give this granola in a mason jar to my son's teachers. Everyone loves it!

Granola Fit for Gifting

Combine:

8 cups Old fashion oats
1 teaspoon of salt
1/4 cup brown sugar or sucanat
1 1/3 cup unsweetened coconut

Heat the following and mix.

1 cup real maple syrup
3/4 cup coconut oil
1/4 cup water
4 teaspoons vanilla
Pour over the oat mix.
Bake for 2 hours at 275 on a cookie sheet or two.
Stir.



Add

1 1/3 cup slivered almonds
And bake 1/2 hour.
Cool and stir in air tight container.

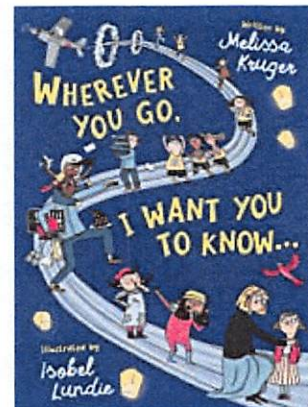
Week 3 ~ Touches of Daily Encouragement!



Alisa shared... *"This is a hard season of life for me now! My friend introduced me to your daily message-I thank her so much for that! Thank you!"*

Invite a friend to subscribe to Daily Treasure!

Be a blessing to your friend as Alisa's was to her. Share the link below and invite your friend to subscribe to the *Daily Treasure* Devotional. Ask her to write your name and email in the comment section, "I was invited to subscribe by _____". She will start to receive the *Daily Treasure* Devotional to her inbox, and both of you will be entered into this week's special *Christmas Book Giveaway* drawing and have a chance to win, *Wherever You Go, I Want You to Know*, by Melissa Kruger.



Check next week's special, *Touches of Christmas Encouragement* enews to see if you won. The more friends who subscribe and mention that you invited

them, the more opportunities to win! (Paying it forward... the following week, maybe your friend will invite a friend to subscribe). This is a fun way to help spread the word about *Daily Treasure* and we appreciate you participating.

My friend invited me to subscribe!

**Daily
Treasure**



MARK INC. If you are encouraged by this special weekly enews, and are not sure if you are a subscriber to the [Daily Treasure](#) Devotional, click below to subscribe. You will begin to receive daily words of encouragement in your inbox and other resources to help turn your heart toward Jesus, as well as details on how to participate in the devotional *Book of the Month Giveaway*.

SUBSCRIBE

Help & Hope Stories

As we journeyed through grief we longed for someone ahead of us in this dark place to come alongside and help us navigate this foreign land of sorrow. The Lord provided bereaved parents who stepped back into their own pain to encourage and help us. Sooner than we felt ready, we became those “seasoned” by grief and broken parents asked us to come alongside of them. It was difficult to meet the needs of so many grieving moms and dads so we recorded what would become the first Help & Hope podcast, Loss of a Child.



The response to this conversation overwhelmed us with the need to address other life crises. We now have an extensive library of conversations with people who have experienced some of life’s darkest seasons. Each conversation is designed to help turn hearts toward Jesus and equip others to come alongside their hurting friend or loved one.

Go to [Help & Hope Stories](#) where you will find conversations about grief, pornography, alcoholism, betrayal, adultery, forgiveness, parsex trafficking,

abuse, loss of a spouse and many more.

Subscribe to the [Help & Hope Podcast](#) on your favorite podcast platform or download the free [Help & Hope App](#).

Did you miss last week?

If you joined us late for this special, Wednesday series, we will be adding a PDF copy for you here!



You are receiving this special edition of the *Touches of Christmas Encouragement* enews because you are subscribed to *Daily Treasure* or you have shared your email with Sharon at a speaking event. Feel free to unsubscribe below - no worries! Otherwise, look forward to next Wednesday's edition.

