

the **QUIET** collection  
 for Christmas

### Day 10: Restore

*When the Lord brought back His exiles to Jerusalem, it was like a dream. We were filled with laughter and we sang for joy. And the other nations said, “What amazing things the Lord has done for them?” Yes, the Lord has done amazing things for us. What joy! Restore our fortunes Lord, as streams renew the desert. Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest.*

—Psalm 126:1-6

This is the word of the Lord. You are one in whom Christ dwells and delights. You live in the strong and unshakable Kingdom of God. The kingdom is not in trouble, and neither are you, because belonging is our birthright. We have made our home in God and God has made a home in us. But still there’s a strange kind of waiting. We arrived here homesick and a longing hasn’t gone away. We remember a time when we were filled with laughter and songs of joy, but these days carry something different, a vague muting of color, a hush muffling of the sounds, like someone hit a cosmic slow motion button. But we wait and hope for the day when we’ll sit together at the banquet table in our Father’s house.

When the winds have calmed, when the shaking has stilled, when the shadows flee with the bright light of morning, even as we wait, we remember what has been made new and that the kingdom isn’t somewhere out there. The kingdom is within us, because God came in humility, lived with empathy, shared His life generously, offered His life completely. Sorrow casts a long shadow, but not so long that it deems us unreachable. Don’t be afraid. God has not forgotten us. God will not abandon us. God invites us to turn to each other as ones in whom Christ dwells.

As living homes of God to confess His goodness, until we begin to believe it, we’ll turn and hope to face each other and whisper words of welcome or we’ll shout them if we must, because even as we long for a home we can’t quite touch, we can regard each other as the home of God because that’s what we are. God moved in and everything changed. And now He’s making all things new in you and in me. This is the joy of the world. This is His Kingdom come. It is just as Isaiah said it would be, “They will call Him Immanuel, which means God with us.” And so they did. And so God is.

Those who plant in tears will harvest the shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest. Now may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. This is the word of the Lord. It is absolutely true. And it’s given to us in love. Merry Christmas.