

Monday, March 17, 2025



*Day 11*

*“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”*

—PSALM 63:1 (NKJV)

## Reflect

There’s a long tradition of gospel blues songs dedicated to acknowledging our deep sadnesses. The ones too hard to name directly. Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson sings “Troubles of the World” in a way that made one anonymous commentator say, “Sing this at my funeral, or I ain’t comin’!” When we find ourselves in the unwelcome place of sadness, suffering, or drought, it might be time to sing the blues. Somehow, the combination of the words, chords, and rhythms becomes like water for our parched souls, allowing space for honesty and hope to co-exist.

## Respond

Play the blues—or whatever style feels right for you. You might start with soulful classics or heartfelt tunes like “Just as I Am,” “Amazing Grace,” “Riverside,” or “Give Me Jesus.” Or maybe you’re drawn to contemplative music like the meditative songs from the Taizé community, or artists like Wendell Kimbrough, who has beautifully set many Psalms to music.

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# Blessing for when you need a little hope

*These days feel heavy and dark,  
like hope packed up and left,  
and forgot to send a postcard.  
We cry: Where are the good things?  
And honestly, where are the good people—  
the sensible ones  
fighting for what matters?*

*Why does it feel like bad stuff  
always elbows its way  
to the front,  
pushing everything good to the sidelines?*

*We're tired. Exhausted, really.  
Desperation is knocking,  
and it's tempting to surrender.*

*Blessed are you,  
who see the world as it is:  
the sickness and loneliness,  
the injustice that never seems to end,  
the greed and misuse of power,  
the violence and intimidation,  
the mockery of truth,  
and disdain for weakness,  
and worse—  
the seeming powerlessness  
of anyone trying to stop it.*

*Blessed are you,  
worn down by  
hard-earned cynicism,  
running on fumes,  
with no promise of a destination.*

*Maybe hope isn't so distant.  
Maybe it's there—small, persistent,  
and stubborn.*

*May you grasp something  
in the heaviness.  
A glimmer of what could be,  
and walk, step by step,  
toward the possibility  
that goodness exists.  
Hope is an anchor dropped into the future  
pulling you forward,  
toward something better—  
even if it doesn't feel like it right now.<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. "For When You Need a Little Hope" in *The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2023). 40-41.