DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONAL:

On Sunday we studied 2 Kings 15:32–16:20 and considered how trouble reveals where we place our trust. We saw Jotham order his ways before the Lord while leaving serious sins unaddressed, and we watched Ahaz seek security through idolatry, foreign power, and corrupted worship. Yet the failures of Judah's kings could not overturn God's promise. In Jesus Christ, the promised Son of David and our Immanuel, we have the faithful King we need. This week we will consider how His grace teaches us to repent, to care for those entrusted to us, and to trust Him when obedience feels costly and the future feels uncertain.

Monday: Ordering Our Ways Before the Lord

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 27:1–6

Most of us put some thought into ordering our lives. We keep appointments, pay bills, and try to make sure everyone gets where they need to go. But a full calendar can still leave the most important question unanswered: whose word governs the life we are so busy managing? Jotham wore a crown, yet he understood that he lived under the authority of God.

The Chronicler tells us that Jotham ordered his ways before the Lord. That reaches further than attending worship or occasionally asking God to bless a decision. It means bringing our decisions before His Word and being willing to change course when He shows us that we are wrong. The God we worship on Sunday has authority over the way we speak at home and conduct ourselves at work.

Now, if we look honestly at our lives, we will find places where that obedience is lacking. Our hope rests in Jesus Christ, who always did His Father's will and gave Himself for people whose obedience falls short. Everyone who trusts in Him is accepted by God through His righteousness. We can therefore confess our failures without pretending they are smaller than they are.

From that place of mercy, we can begin putting things in order. Perhaps there is an apology to make, a dishonest habit to abandon, or time we need to give to someone we have neglected. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you obey in the circumstances already before you. The Lord who has received you in Christ also supplies grace for the ordinary work of following Him.

Reflection Questions

1. Which part of your daily life do you most often manage without considering God's Word?
2. How does acceptance through Christ help you admit where you need to change?
3. What specific act of obedience can you undertake today?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You see every part of my life, including the places I have kept from Your correction. Forgive me for treating Your commands as optional when they interfere with my plans. Thank You for receiving me through the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. By Your Spirit, teach me to order my ways before You. Give me willingness to obey You in the ordinary duties of this day. Amen.

Tuesday: The High Places We Leave Standing

Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 15:32–38

There is much to commend in Jotham's reign, but Scripture also tells us what remained undone. The high places were still standing, and the people continued to offer sacrifices there. That detail belongs alongside the account of his faithfulness. God's Word gives us reason to thank Him for the good He works in His people while also taking their remaining sins seriously.

We need that same honesty about ourselves. It is possible to become so accustomed to a particular sin that we stop expecting to put it away. We excuse a bitter spirit because we were badly treated. We defend a harsh tongue because our family has always spoken that way. After a while, we may grow more uncomfortable with someone questioning the sin than with the sin itself.

Jesus Christ shed His blood to forgive us and to free us from sin's dominion. He knows how deeply these habits have taken root, and He has given His Spirit to help us put them to death. When His Word exposes something we have been protecting, we can receive that correction as mercy. We belong to a Savior who is committed to making His people holy.

So bring one of those familiar excuses into the light today. Name the sin plainly before God, and consider what repentance requires. You may need to remove an opportunity for temptation, ask a trusted believer for help, or repair harm you have caused. These steps may be uncomfortable, but Christ has already given you something better than the sin you are afraid to lose: fellowship with Himself.

Reflection Questions

1. What sin have you begun to describe as simply part of your personality or circumstances?
2. How do you usually respond when another believer brings needed correction?
3. What practical change would help you stop making room for that sin?

Prayer

Merciful God, I confess that I have made excuses for things You have called me to put away.

Search my heart and show me where I have grown comfortable with disobedience. Thank You that Jesus died to cleanse me and break sin's rule over me. Give me courage to receive correction and seek help where I need it. By Your Spirit, lead me into honest and lasting repentance. Amen.

Wednesday: Children Entrusted to Our Care

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 16:20–21

The account of Ahaz becomes especially dreadful when we learn that he sacrificed his own son. A father who should have protected his child handed him over to death in the service of false gods. Later, when the Lord condemned this same wickedness in Jerusalem, He called the children who had been slaughtered "my children." Their lives were precious to Him even when those responsible for them treated them as expendable.

Those words remind us that every child is a person made by God, with a life that must be honored and protected. Parents exercise real authority, but they exercise it as stewards who will answer to the Lord. The same is true, in their own responsibilities, of grandparents, teachers, and the church. The weakness and dependence of children place a particular obligation upon those who are able to help them.

We see the goodness of our Savior in the way Jesus welcomed children when others would have sent them away. We see it also in His willingness to lay down His own life for sinners. He gave Himself freely, bearing our judgment so that we might be reconciled to God. His grace calls us to repent of selfishness and teaches us to spend ourselves in the service of those who need our care.

For many of us, that service will take an ordinary form today. It may mean putting aside a distraction to listen, apologizing for an impatient answer, praying with a child, or helping a tired parent. Others may need to speak up when a child is being mistreated. We cannot do everything, but we can take seriously the people God has placed within our reach and ask Him to make our care patient, attentive, and faithful.

Reflection Questions

1. Which children or families has God placed within your reach to encourage or help?
2. Where might your convenience or impatience be getting in the way of faithful care?
3. What would it look like to honor Christ through one concrete act of protection or service this week?

Prayer

Father, You are the giver of life, and every child is precious in Your sight. Forgive our indifference when the weak need our attention and protection. Thank You for the compassion of Jesus Christ

and for His willing sacrifice to save sinners. Make us patient with children and generous toward those who care for them. Give us wisdom and courage to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Amen.

Thursday: When Fear Looks for Another Savior

Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 16:5–9

Ahaz faced a real threat. Enemy kings had come against Jerusalem, and the danger could not be dismissed with a few comforting words. Yet the Lord had spoken through Isaiah and promised that their plan would fail. Ahaz had God's Word before him, but he chose to seek deliverance by declaring himself the servant and son of the king of Assyria.

Fear can make that kind of bargain seem sensible. When we are frightened enough, we may become willing to surrender convictions we once held firmly. We may tell ourselves that dishonesty is necessary to protect our income, or that we must please someone powerful even when doing so requires disobedience. We want relief, and we begin measuring our choices by how quickly they might bring it.

Now, seeking practical help is often wise. The Lord provides through doctors, friends, work, and sound counsel. The question is whether we can receive that help while remaining faithful to Him. Jesus Christ has already secured the salvation we could never obtain for ourselves. Having given His life for us and risen again, He has given us reason to trust His care even when we cannot see how a particular trouble will end.

You may still need to make a difficult phone call, seek advice, or face a situation you would rather avoid. Bring that need before the Lord, and ask Him to help you take the next faithful step. You do not have to purchase safety through disobedience. Even when doing right carries a cost, your life remains in the hands of the King who loved you enough to die for you.

Reflection Questions

1. What present fear is placing the greatest pressure on your obedience?
2. Are you considering a compromise because it seems to promise quick relief?
3. What faithful help could you seek while entrusting the outcome to Christ?

Prayer

Lord, You know the troubles that frighten me and the outcomes I cannot control. Forgive me for looking for security in things that draw my heart away from You. Thank You that Jesus has secured my salvation through His death and resurrection. Give me wisdom to seek good help and courage to refuse sinful bargains. Hold me steady as I take the next step in obedience to You. Amen.

Friday: Worship Under the Authority of God

Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 16:10–16

When Ahaz saw an altar in Damascus, he sent its design to Jerusalem and ordered a copy to be built. Then he moved the bronze altar aside and assigned the daily offerings to his new altar. The king was taking authority over worship that belonged to God. The priest followed his instructions, and the desires of a ruler began to govern what happened in the Lord's house.

We can feel the weight of that warning when we consider our own approach to worship. We all have preferences, and some are deeply attached to memories of people and places we love. Yet we need hearts willing to be instructed by Scripture, including when its teaching challenges something familiar or appealing. The Lord who gathers His people has the right to tell us how we are to honor Him.

Through Jesus Christ, God has opened the way for sinners to draw near. Our Savior offered Himself once for all and now lives to intercede for His people. We come to the Father through Him, depending on His finished work. That is why we can pray with confidence, confess our sins honestly, and hear God's Word with hope. Christ has made us welcome before the holy God.

As we prepare to gather again, ask the Lord to make us attentive to what He has given us. We have His Word to read and hear, His praises to sing, prayers to offer, and His ordinances to receive as He appointed them. These gifts deserve our thankful attention. Come ready to listen, to join your voice with the congregation, and to receive the truth that directs our hearts toward Christ.

Reflection Questions

1. What tends to occupy your attention when you evaluate a worship service?
2. How does Christ's finished sacrifice give you confidence to approach God?
3. How can you prepare your heart to hear and respond to Scripture when we gather?

Prayer

Holy God, You are worthy of reverence, love, and willing obedience. Forgive me when my preferences become more important to me than Your Word. Thank You for opening the way into Your presence through Jesus Christ. Teach our congregation to worship You according to Scripture, with thankful and attentive hearts. By Your Spirit, help us hear Your truth and respond in faith. Amen.

Saturday: Immanuel

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18–23

By the end of Ahaz's story, there is little reason to place confidence in the king of Judah. He has harmed those entrusted to him, surrendered himself to foreign power, and corrupted the worship of God. Yet God's promise to David still stands. The Lord kept His promise through generations whose sins deserved His judgment.

Matthew brings us to their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The child born of the virgin is Immanuel, God with us, and He comes to save His people from their sins. In Him, God has come near to people who have wandered far from Him. The Son of David is also the eternal Son of God, who took our nature, obeyed in our place, and bore our sins upon the cross.

This is the King we need when we begin to recognize our own failures in the kings we have studied. We have left sins unaddressed, allowed fear to govern our decisions, and sought comfort apart from God. Jesus calls us to bring those sins to Him in repentance and faith. His death is sufficient for our forgiveness, and His resurrection assures us that the Savior who receives us is alive forever.

Whatever the coming week holds, we can enter it belonging to Him. Some difficulties may remain, and some prayers may require patient waiting. Immanuel has promised to be with His people through them all. As we prepare for the Lord's Day, let us come with honest confession and grateful hope, ready to worship the faithful King whose mercy has brought us home to God.

Reflection Questions

1. Which failure exposed in this week's readings do you need to confess to Christ?
2. What does the promise of His presence mean for a difficulty that may not soon change?
3. How can you prepare to gather with the church in grateful dependence on Him?

Prayer

Faithful Father, thank You for keeping Your promise and sending Your Son to save us. I confess that my trust has wandered and my obedience has often failed. Receive me through Jesus Christ, whose death has answered for my sin and whose resurrection is my hope. Help me rest in His presence when the future remains uncertain. Prepare my heart to worship with Your people and to follow my King in the week ahead. Amen.