

# GOD'S PROTECTION

## A 50 Day Spiritual Encounter & Renewal

### Welcome

New sprouts are so tender and delicate. Harsh weather can kill a crop. Facing hardships in life often creates similar stress and doubts. But, we are not alone.

**Sunday April 26th is Day 15**  
... Growing trust in God.

### A Story

After the May 2013 tornado in Newcastle/Moore, my seven year old son designed an underground storm shelter ... a virtual shelter in the game Minecraft – he proudly protected our family with a shelter that he dug all the way down to bedrock – the deepest place possible. This provided an opportunity for both of us to grow “deeper” reliance on God who is our ultimate bedrock refuge. We talked about God’s hand of protection and our need to express active faith in the midst of danger and threat. And I thanked him. :)

**APRIL 2020**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<del>12</del>	<del>13</del>	<del>14</del>	<del>15</del>	<del>16</del>	<del>17</del>	<del>18</del>
<del>19</del>	<del>20</del>	<del>21</del>	<del>22</del>	<del>23</del>	<del>24</del>	<del>25</del>
26	27	28	29	30		



## Looking Back ...

The season of Easter to Pentecost is a rich biblical rhythm/ journey giving us an opportunity to receive God’s transformation work in our heart and life — to grow greater trust in the Divine Grower. We count the days trusting God to do a mighty work in us — even in dangerous times when threats abound. If you watch seedling sprouts (like our Pentecost pea plants), life has burst through the soil’s surface! God is growing my seeds! Yes, I can trust God to grow seeds. The wonder of growth continues to amaze us. The question now becomes, can God protect the new growth I see bursting through the surface of the soil? What about the new sprouts of faith and hope in my soul? The Apostle Paul participated in the Pentecost season to face the threats he encountered in sharing the Gospel seed, “But I will stay at Ephesus until the day of Pentecost. A door has opened wide for me to do some good work here. There are many people who oppose me” (1 Corinthians 16:8-9). Though not a required observance for Christians, Pentecost offers a three-thousand year old opportunity to experience new life. Facing fears and foes with God is part of the road to Pentecost, the journey.

## This Week ...

- Write brief entries in your journal to remember your journey. **Include a prayer list.**
- Be sure to water your plant and place it in sunlight.
- **Dig Deeper in your Bible.**  
Rev. 1:17-18; 1 Cor. 16:8-9;  
Hebrews 11:1-40.

## Soul Shaping Questions

- What are your greatest fears right now? Health, marriage?
- Where is God when you are worried?
- How might some of your fears prevent you from doing what you know is best? How can your faith in God move you beyond these fears?
- What is your part in the growth process? God's part?
- How can I help others grow deeper trust in times of threats & fears?
- Share a story of when you were afraid and how your trust grew because God helped you face these fears to take action.

## Looking Ahead ...

What resources has God provided to help you boldly face your fears and foes to experience new hope, faith & life?

## Weekly Reflection ...

The seed has awakened! God is transforming the dead seed into a new life form. But now, worries invade our mind. These tiny sprouts are so vulnerable and fragile to external forces. We wonder, "Will it survive?" Life will require cultivation and protection. I commit to do my part, yet there are dangers beyond my control (think about a city block of new sprouts under your care). I worry about these threats because too much or too little — rain, wind, heat — can kill. And its springtime in Oklahoma! Yes, I worry about the many dangers in life. The good news is that God wants to be our God when we are afraid, nervous and uncertain — and these experiences are necessary ingredients to faith. Jesus often said, "don't worry." When John was about 80 years old, Jesus "laid his right hand on me and said, don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last, I am the living one. I died, but look — I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave" (Revelation 1:17-18). These words of Jesus are meant to welcome a growing reliance on his resurrection power. **This is your story too, life threats cause daily stress:** spring weather, COVID-19, unemployment, personal/family health concerns, state/national/world economy. The truth is, I get scared — jobs, health, home, family/friends — all in harms way. How can I manage all the threats that invade my life?

### *A Prayer:*

God of protection, I often worry about so much in life. But I will face my fears with your powerful presence as you grow my soul deeper in your soil of grace. I give my life into your harvest hands.

