

80. YOU ARE LOVED - FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. Happy Friday!

Ok, I won't keep you waiting for the big reveal like I did yesterday!

I stopped into the Fruit of the Earth Bakery right before they wrapped up yesterday. I had the new "Closed" sign with me, and on the back, below where it says "We love you, Brie! Get some rest!" I had already collected 37 signatures earlier this week.

But before I could pull it out of my bag or even say anything, Brie said, "I'm so glad you stopped by. I've been meaning to text you."

She then told me that she's been thinking and praying about the conversation we had on Monday about the importance of rest. She talked with her team because the decision would affect them too. And she even floated the idea to a couple of her customers who come in every Monday to see how they feel about it.

The feedback was pretty much unanimous. She felt like God was telling her to slow down, her team liked the idea of having Monday off, and her Monday regulars all said they were more than happy to come another day if it meant she could better take care of herself and her team.

She took a deep breath and said, "Honestly, I don't think I'm ready to commit to being closed every Monday. But I

do think I'll try doing the first and third Mondays of the month to see how it goes. I could always add more."

"Yes, you can," I replied. "And I have something for you that will hopefully help you feel like you're making the right decision."

I gave her the sign, and when she noticed the message and signatures on the back, she started crying. I'm sure they were happy tears, but I also hope she felt a sense of relief.

That leads me to the last idea I'd love to share with you about Sabbath this week. Sabbath is meant to show us that our work is important, but if God is the one inviting us to rest, the world won't fall apart when we take a break. Sabbath rest is meant to be a time when we recognize that God and the people around us love us for who we are and not just what we do.

For Brie, she feels a deep responsibility to her customers and community. She shows us love by working hard, doing her best, and sharing her gifts with us. And while we love what she bakes, we love *her* even more!

I hope that by practicing Sabbath, you might get the same feeling. It's good that you work hard at school or your job. The things you do for others make an important impact. Your family, your friends, your neighbors, your teammates – those folks are counting on you to do your part – but hopefully they also make sure you know that you're loved just for being you.

Ok, let's move to our Friday reflection questions. If you have time to think about them and answer them now, great. You can also pause the podcast and pick back up tonight if that works better. I'll be here when you get back.

Our first question is this: now that we're at the end of the week, how are you feeling? Has this been a long week, and you're really tired? Has it been an easy week, and you're feeling good? Are you feeling like you're ready for an exciting weekend, or do you think you're going to need one that's more lowkey? Go ahead and share your answer with your family now.

[PAUSE]

You might remember that my family had a lowkey weekend last weekend, so we all went into the week with a little extra pep in our step. The last couple of days have been busy, especially trying to track down all those signatures for Brie's sign, but it felt so good to give it to her as a gift from the town. And so I'm ending the week physically tired, but my heart feels great!

Our second question is related to that experience: was there anything you did this week that felt like it filled you back up? It could have been something like a nap or a really good night's sleep, but maybe there was a time with your friends that felt fun and energizing. Was there a favorite meal that left you feeling great – either due to the good food or the people you shared it with? Or, like with my delivering the sign to Brie, was there anything you

did that made someone else feel special or helped them out, and it gave you a boost too? Take a few moments to talk about that together.

[PAUSE]

Our final question is: who is someone you know who is appreciated mostly for what they do? And how might you let them know that they're also loved for who they are? I think of people like my kids' teachers or the principal at the school. Or our firefighters and other first responders. Or even the guys who drive the garbage trucks! Maybe we could wrap a package of cookies with a note or drawing and leave it on top of our trash can next week. When you've thought of someone, go ahead and share your answer.

[PAUSE]

Ok, let's wrap up our time together this week with a prayer. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, we thank you for this week and for all of your blessings. We thank you for all that we were able to do, but we also thank you that you love us regardless of our achievements. Help us to find moments to rest this weekend so we can head into next week ready to follow wherever you lead us. Amen.

Ok, Grace Harbor! Next week, we'll wrap up this series we've been doing about spiritual practices by talking about

service. We also have a pretty important holiday in the middle of the week that kicks off the season that leads us to Easter! But for now, have a great weekend, and I'll talk to you Monday.

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