174. PRAYING WITH OPEN HANDS - THURSDAY - OCTOBER 29, 2026

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

It's a cold and drizzly morning this morning. It took me going out in my raincoat with Luke to get him to go outside for a quick potty trip. Now he's curled up at my feet, and our cat Sophie is in a similar ball over on the chair.

They've been getting along better lately, but it's rare to see them in such close proximity. Usually, when Luke enters the room, Sophie gets up and runs out. But I think they've called a truce in the spirit of... well... getting cozy? We'll see how long this lasts.

I'm hoping the rain tapers off later today. We've got a few errands to run this afternoon, and we're planning to include a stop at the Village Green to drop off our family logs for the Harvest Bonfire.

Speaking of the bonfire, do you remember how on Monday I told you that my daughter wanted to find something *she* could give for the event? She didn't feel like a log from the family pile or a can from our pantry was good enough since she didn't do anything to help get it. She hasn't said anything more about it, and I haven't asked, so maybe I was wrong about her spending the week figuring out a creative solution.

On the one hand, I really don't want her to worry about it. Everyone is welcome to enjoy the warmth of the fire and

the fun of the event, whether or not you bring something. Plus, since she's most definitely a member of our family, she's a part of our family contribution.

But, on the other hand, I'm proud that she wanted to take seriously the practice of generosity. Will the event happen without a contribution specifically from her? Yes, it absolutely will. But generosity is about more than just the impact we might make on others. Generosity makes an impact on *us* too!

Practicing generosity teaches us to see everything we have as a gift from God. And the things we have, we're saving them for a purpose that is more than just hanging on to them as long as we can. Some of it, we are meant to keep and enjoy for ourselves, some we share with our family and friends, and some of it is meant to make an impact on the world around us.

There's a story early on in the Bible where God identifies a guy named Abraham and decides to make him the father of a great nation. In order to help accomplish this, God is going to give him a ton of blessings. But God makes very clear by saying directly to Abraham, "I will bless you, so that you will be a blessing."

On Tuesday, we learned a simple gratitude practice using our fingers. Well today, I want to teach you a simple prayer practice you can do using your hands.

We're first going to hold our hands open in our lap with our palms facing up. This represents us receiving blessings

from God. We offer God our open hands and ask God to put into our hands whatever God wants to give us.

Second, we will close our hands into fists. This represents the things we're hanging onto. We acknowledge to God that there are things we don't want to share. It might be a favorite toy, the last cookie, or a turn on the swings. And what we do is ask God to help us loosen our grip on them.

And third, we will open our hands again. This represents holding everything we have loosely, so that we're ready to share and be generous when the time is right or the need arises.

Ok, go ahead and get comfortable, and place your open hands in your lap, as we start our prayer.

Dear God, we thank you for this day and for all of your blessings. We offer to you our open hands because everything we are and everything we have is from you. You are a generous God, and whenever you're ready to give, we're ready to receive. For the next few moments, we're going to think about your love for us and the way you've shown it through your many gifts.

[SHORT PAUSE]

Now, we close our fists. Sometimes it's easy to be generous with the blessings you've given us, but sometimes we want to hold onto them tightly. While you certainly want us to enjoy the blessings you've given, they're not only for us. For the next few moments, help us think about

something we might be holding onto tighter than we need to.

[SHORT PAUSE]

Finally, we open our hands again as a sign that we want to be generous people. We want to use the blessings you've given us in ways that are wise, ways that share your love with the world, and ways that generate joy! We thank you that you have blessed us to be a blessing. Amen.

Alright, Grace Harbor, have a great Thursday, and I'll catch you tomorrow.

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