

Mid-Week Devotion

On a long hike through an Indiana forest, I stumbled upon a spindly tree that had tumbled off a cliff. Walking in the cool caverns below, I could see how the wind and the rain had eroded the ground under its tangled roots. But the tree did not simply fall. It snapped at the base, and tipped over into the chasm beneath. But, the tree didn't die.

At first, the tree grew straight down, as it surrendered to gravity. After all, there was nowhere to go. But at the point of breaking, the remnant began to thicken. It must have taken years, but its roots grew wider and deeper. Then, in a shocking act of hubris, the tree decided to try growing sideways. It added a few wobbly branches sticking out horizontally. But at the some point, the tree decided sunlight was a good idea, and the only direction to go was up.

Perhaps you know what it's like to be pushed off the edge. The human condition is all thin roots and rocky soil, and so you fall. When your life is snapped at the stem, there is almost nothing to do but watch yourself break. The best we can do is survive. Nothing will feel possible, but there you are. Another day.

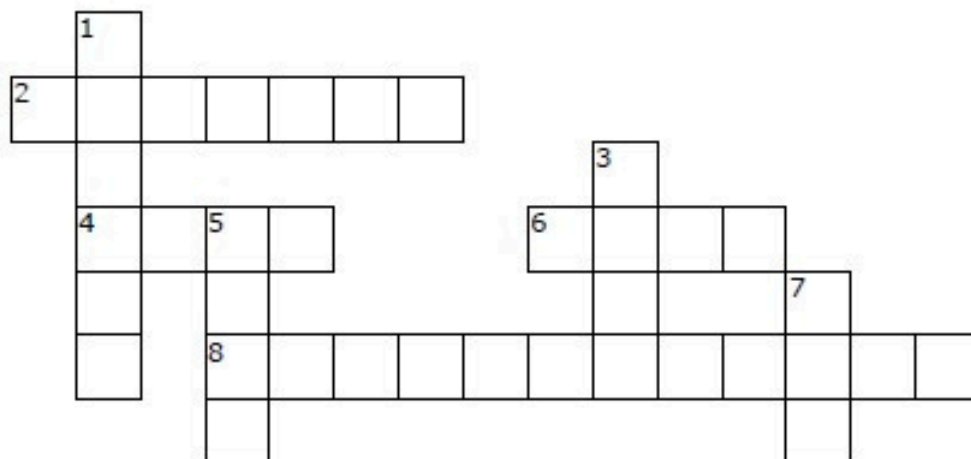
Our self-help culture will try to explain to you this is the time to become better than before. After all, this is an opportunity.

The deep evil inherent in the Perfectibility Paradigm is on full display. Your humanity is now a liability. Please hear me say - you are not a loser, just lost. And God is with you. This is God's magic act. The more we suffer, the more we can't get away from God. **adapted from "Good Enough" by Kate Bowler**

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."
John 11:25 (NIV)

This puzzle is based on John 11:1-45 (NIV)



ACROSS

2. A man that Jesus raised from the dead
4. A place where someone is buried
6. To be physically ill; not well or healthy
8. Rising from the dead or returning to life

DOWN

1. One of Lazarus' two sisters
3. To be alive or have life
5. Woman who poured perfume on Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair
7. To stop living

TOMB
LIVE

MARTHA
RESURRECTION

DIE
LAZARUS

MARY
SICK



"Our _____ Lazarus has fallen asleep;
but I am going there to wake him up."
John 11:11b (NIV)

LFIE

3 1

DEDA

6 4

RSIE

2

STNOE

5

1 2 3 4 5 6

Unscramble each word, then arrange the circled letters to form a word that will complete the statement that Jesus made about himself.

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
F	L	B	R	I	Z	A	G	T	W	H	J	U	M	X	C	K	Q	P	O	Y	N	V	D	E	S

1. 4-5-16-11 _____

2. 11-25-2-2 _____

3. 7-22-8-25-2-26 _____

4. 24-5-25-24 _____

5. 19-13-4-19-2-25 _____

6. 2-5-22-25-22 _____

7. 8-7-9-25 _____

8. 3-25-8-8-7-4 _____