

CHRISTIAN WOMEN NAVIGATING MIDLIFE WITH PURPOSE AND GRACE

OH WONDROUS GRACE MAGAZINE



QUIET MY MIND | JULY/AUGUST | SEASON 1



photo by Kimberly Irish

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Oh Wondrous Grace Magazine encourages women in midlife to use the gifts they have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace (based on 1 Peter 4:10).

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Letter from the editor



Welcome to Oh Wondrous Grace Magazine. I'd first like to thank all our wonderful subscribers for the overwhelming support and encouragement as we launched our premier issue in May 2020. Our first issue celebrated many firsts, including some of our writers who were published for the first time.

We experienced such a moment of joy at seeing our words and art come to life on the printed page. God called us to do his important work, and we gratefully followed his lead.

The theme of this issue is "Quiet My Mind," in which we celebrate making space for God and spending quiet time in his presence. When I was young, our youth group went on several backpacking trips, something I couldn't quite appreciate until I experienced the peace of open spaces firsthand. Through those memorable trips, hiking in places so far removed from society, I truly established a lifelong relationship with Christ.

At first, you might need to become used to moments of quietness. You will soon turn off your car radio; you will hardly switch on your TV. You'll likely delight in a quiet walk in the countryside or a moment of calm by the water's edge more than you ever imagined.

This month, we had the pleasure of interviewing Sue Donaldson, an energetic lady with a heart for hospitality and a mission for spreading God's Word. God has a beautiful way of speaking through her, and her zest and passion for life are contagious. I think you'll enjoy getting to know her more.

As we delve into the beautiful art and stories in this issue, I ask you to consider, "What fills your time?" and "How can you best use your gifts to serve the Lord?"

The world can be so loud, but with quiet reflection, we open ourselves up to hear the Lord more clearly. By making space, we are better equipped to take on his plan for us.

In faithful stewardship of God's grace,

Claire

Claire Kerrigan
Founder and Editorial Director

*"I glorified you on the earth,
having accomplished the work which you have given me to do."*

~ John 17:4



QUIET MY MIND

“Peace I leave with you; my peace
I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.
Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

~ John 14:27

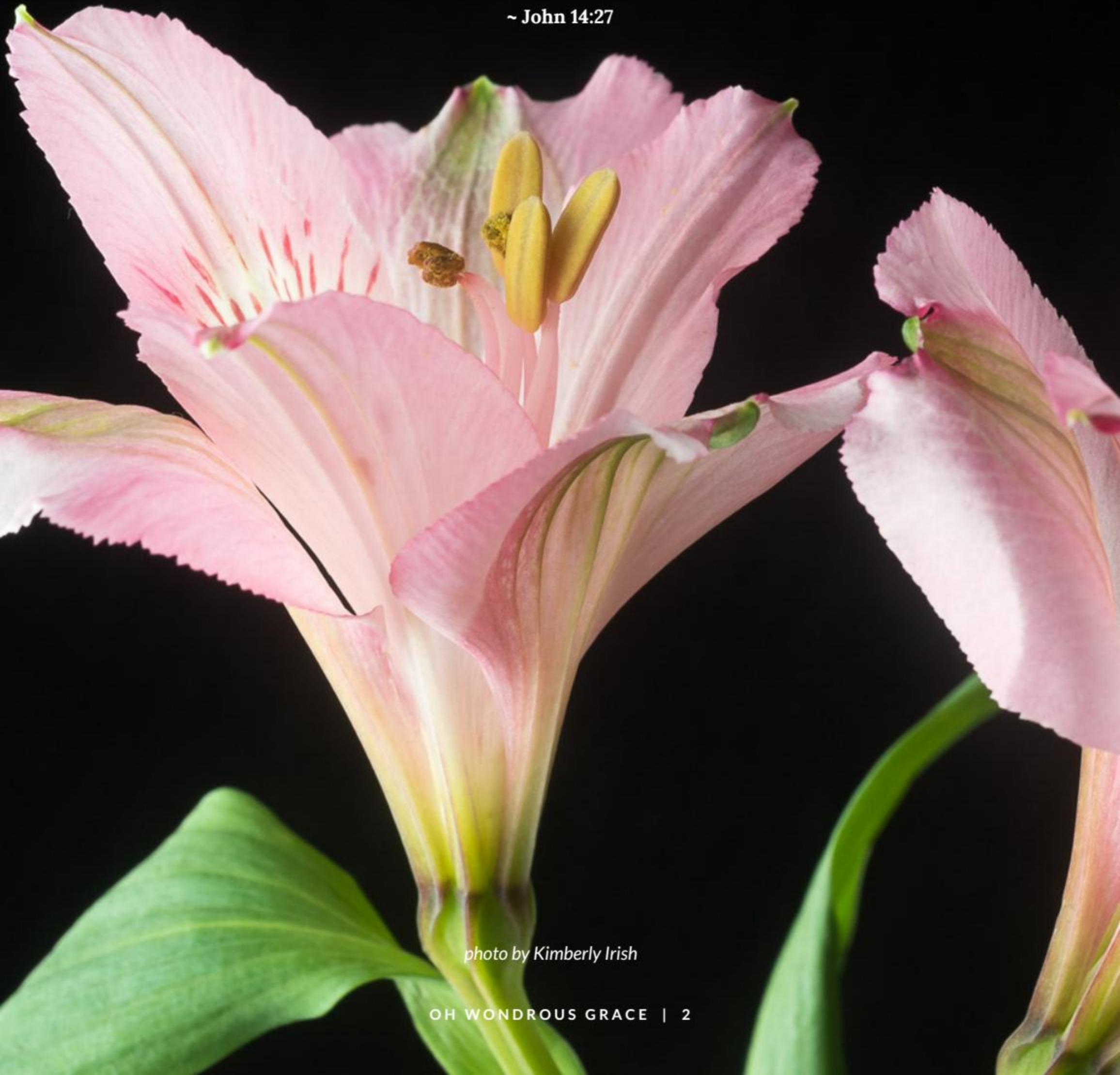


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Eight-Week Devotional- Quiet My Mind



I Wait

by Anna Jensen

Conscious ramblings –
 My own internal musings –
 Usually so well-formed
 Defined
Now slide and melt;
 S. Dali's clocks as they drip
 Laced with surreal
 Non-comprehension.

The big black dog
 Chasing his tail
Yipping and yapping
 Growling, snarling, snapping.

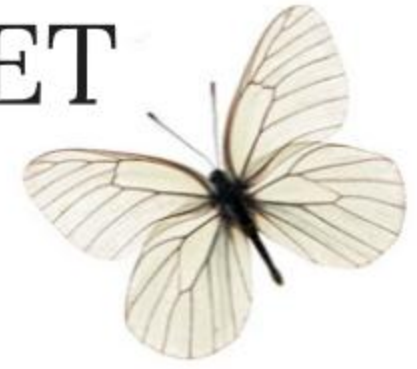
Dim flame flick'ring in the densest of dark.

When will tranquility again
 Drape her gossamer threads
 Of silken repose?
Or peace tiptoe lightly
 Through the home of my heart
 Infusing me gently with grace?

Immanuel beside me
 The King I've forgotten to crown
Whispers with calm in the roar of the storm
 I wait
 In silence.

INSTRUCTED TO QUIET

BY ANNA JENSEN



“My soul waits in silence for God only” ~Psalm 62:1

Have you ever found yourself in a situation so daunting and so overwhelming that your soul is anything but silent? It could be work or family issues, finances, health or any number of loud and frightening problems that leave you in a jumble of confusion, grief and exhaustion. Maybe you're there right now, struggling to find peace amidst the chaos.

I've been there too. I recently felt overwhelmed by circumstances beyond my control. They were not negative circumstances but were huge and daunting, and I was panicking a bit. For a while, I tried to push the panic away and focus on doing other things to drown it out. Eventually, I knew I needed to take a proper look, with the Holy Spirit at my side to guide me, at what was happening.

My home overlooks the Indian Ocean. We have a large enclosed verandah from where I can watch waves rise and fall, birds soar and dip, ships patiently wait for entrance into our harbor. I walked out there with a cup of coffee and my Bible to see if I could sift my feelings.

One of my Bible readings for that day happened to be Psalm 62. Verses 1 and 2 read, “My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.” And I realized I had a choice, a choice to tell my soul, the voice of my emotions, to wait in silence. Rather than pour out an unstoppable stream of words, I needed to instruct myself to be quiet.

As I chose to still the clamor of the terrifying unknown, my breathing began to slow and deepen. Tears of release oozed from my eyes, and a deep calm replaced the hectic chasings of my heart. All that had seemed so urgent and pressing was suddenly of no significance whatsoever. The Holy Spirit had said and done all that was needed: “deep calls to deep” (Psalm 42:7).

Moments like these can bring us to a point of irrevocable change. That's certainly been the case in my own life. Just as the caterpillar must at some

point start to spin its cocoon and commence a metamorphosis, so we sometimes have to let go of what was and endure a wait for the new. The caterpillar will never again be a creeping, wriggling, leaf-chomping specimen; our life circumstances may never be the same as they were before whatever upheaval we now face. But just as the caterpillar becomes a beautiful flitting, flying, nectar-sipping butterfly, so we can be assured that our transformation will end in a beauty and grace we can hardly even imagine.

And yet, even with this belief that we are being transformed from “glory to glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18) by a loving and compassionate heavenly Father, the noise in our souls may not immediately quiet down. Amid change and uncertainty, I might struggle to carve out the time and space I know I need. I am busy trying to control the situation or the people involved.

But perhaps there's a better way. Regardless of all the obstacles and frustrations, I have no real reason why I cannot as before tell my soul to “wait in silence”; I just have to choose to do so. I may need to do this several times a day, or even in an hour, but I know it's my only option. When caught in a small boat in a wild storm, the disciples had a couple of alternatives — struggle along, trying to ride out the wind and the waves on their own while hoping for the best or wake the sleeping Jesus and urge his assistance although fearful with little faith (Matthew 8:23–25). I love that once awake, Jesus doesn't panic or become confused about what's going on. He doesn't bark out orders to the disciples, telling them to pull in that rope or grab this set of oars. Rather, he calmly rebukes the weather, knowing that it will have to obey his authority.

God is my fortress, my salvation, my unshakeable safe place. In the storm of churning thoughts and noisy emotions, I will only breathe more deeply and rest more securely when I call on the Prince of Peace, this Jesus, and ask him to rescue me.

