

# Love's Braided Dance Study Guide Week 2

This week's reading: Chapters 3 Resonant Hope & 4 Hope Grows in Places of Belonging

## Spiritual Practice

Praying [The Prayer of Jesus](#), using the [First Nations Version](#)

## Scriptures

### Colossians 1:15-18 The Message

We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—everything got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment. And when it comes to the church, he organizes and holds it together, like a head does a body.

### [Doctrine & Covenants 161:3a-b](#)

3a. Open your hearts and feel the yearnings of your brothers and sisters who are lonely, despised, fearful, neglected, unloved. Reach out in understanding, clasp their hands, and invite all to share in the blessings of community created in the name of the One who suffered on behalf of all.

b. Do not be fearful of one another. Respect each life journey, even in its brokenness and uncertainty, for each person has walked alone at times. Be ready to listen and slow to criticize, lest judgments be unrighteous and unredemptive.

## Discussion

1. **Meaningful Connections** - "Silicon Valley was creating a world of unceasing self-expression and self promotion in search of meaningful connections with others. And yet so many of these efforts were coming up short," Wirzba explains on pg 47, and continues on page 52, "people still feel lost, alone, exhausted."
  - a. What types of interactions and connections feel meaningful to you? What kinds of interactions leave you feeling drained or alone?
  - b. Take a few minutes to make a list of people that you care about: friends, church members, family, coworkers. When was the last time you had more than a superficial conversation, a "like" on social media, etc. with them?
2. **Stop Striving** - On pg 56, Wirzba says of the ancient Israelites, as they were preparing to enter the promised land, "They saw up close how the drive to control others depends on violence and how the unbridled pursuits of wealth and glory ultimately fail to satisfy. But to live this other way, they were going to have to learn to think about their lives and the point of all their striving in a radically new way. Their instruction took the form of a

command from God, a command in which God models a resonant way of relating to the world: Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy.”

- a. Why does God say that the key to proper striving is to regularly stop striving?
  - b. What does God’s resting on the seventh day teach us about the world we are in and the possibility of a hopeful life?
3. **Places that Nurture Us** - “The remedy for a broken, lonely, and commodified world is fairly straightforward: nurture the places and creatures that nurture us. It is a simple remedy, but it is hardly an easy one ...” pg 70.
- a. What places and creatures nurture you?
  - b. What are your experiences with taking care of plants or animals?

## Weekly Practices

- Journaling - Wirzba urges us to shift our question from “What gives me hope?” to “What do I love” and “How does this love change what you hope for?” (pg 17). Take a few minutes to consider these questions and journal about them. Reflect on what you’ve written throughout the week and add to your lists.
- Review your list of people you made earlier. Who can you reach out to this week? Reach out to a few people in a way that is meaningful to you: a phone call, text, card, email.
- Find a way to connect to a garden of some kind: Find out if there is a community garden in your area and if they need help with “off season activities.” Talk to your congregation about starting a community garden or building a labyrinth. Volunteer to clean up a public space or church building grounds in preparation for winter. Take a class from your local extension.
- Read, watch or listen to one of the resources listed below. Think of ways you can use this piece of media to start a conversation that goes beyond the superficial. Share it with a friend or family member.
- Read a different version of the Prayer of Jesus each day this week. Share the spiritual practice from this week with your family, congregation, or small group.

## Closing Poem

### Today

By Mary Oliver

From *A Thousand Mornings*

Today I’m flying low and I’m  
Not saying a word.  
I’m letting all the voodooos of ambition sleep.

The world goes on as it must,  
The bees in the garden rumbling a little,  
The fish leaping, the gnats getting eaten.

And so forth.

But I'm taking the day off.

Quiet as a feather.

I hardly move though really I'm traveling

A terrific distance.

Stillness. One of the doors

Into the temple.

## Other Resources

- Podcast: [The art of choosing what to do](#) from the TED Radio Hour.
- Article: [Seven Barriers to Building More Meaningful Connections](#)
- Article: [The parasocial power of AI | The Christian Century](#)
- Article: [Practicing Democracy with Your Faith Community](#)
- Prayer: [First Nations Version - The Lord's Prayer](#)
- Poem: ["The Peace of Wild Things" by Wendell Berry, A Poetry Film](#)