



Daily Might

fuel for the soul

Don't be self-conscious; be Christ-conscious.



SHYNESS IS A COMBINATION OF TWO THINGS: fear and pride. We are afraid of what people think about us. A certain amount of this is all right; we should like to be well thought of. But on the other hand, the Bible says we're not to be worried about the opinions of men, nor to fear what men think or say about us if we're doing what we know is right (Proverbs 29:25; John 12:42–43).

Timidity, shyness, and bashfulness are manifestations of a form of fear, which is the opposite of faith. So to overcome fear you must have more faith. The cure is faith—strong faith in God—and this comes through reading His Word and being filled with His Spirit. If you think about how much He loves you, you become less self-conscious and more God-conscious, and this is the cure.

Keep your mind on Jesus. He will keep you in perfect peace, when your mind is stayed on Him (Isaiah 26:3). Immerse yourself in the Lord, and He will help you forget yourself. Throw your whole heart into pleasing Jesus and sharing Him with others, and He will help you to lose that self-consciousness.

Heaven on earth will one day be a literal reality!



THE PLACE WE'RE GOING TO DWELL WITH GOD AND JESUS FOREVER HEREAFTER is not some fanciful dreamland way off in outer space, but an even more amazing dream city that is going to come down from God, out of space, to earth. God is going to come down and live *with* us and we with Him. Think of that! The dwelling place of God is going to be with men (Revelation 21:2–3).

But first God is going to purge, purify, and renew the whole earth so that it will be perfect and beautiful, like the Garden of Eden. Then the heavenly city is going to come down. Jesus will be restored forever as the King of kings and His kingdom will finally be established “on earth as it is in Heaven” (Matthew 6:10). It will be indescribably beautiful—the most gorgeous sight you’ll ever see, full of precious stones and jewels and, best of all, full of precious souls!

Are you going to be able to walk in that city? The Bible says that only the saved shall walk therein (Revelation 21:24). You don’t want to miss that, do you?—Then receive Jesus as your Savior, if you haven’t already!

“There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty” (Proverbs 11:24).



GOD LOVES TO OUTGIVE US. The more we give, the more He gives us back. But if we're not willing to give, God's apt to take. If you won't give Him an offering when you can, He might take a collection that will far outweigh what you could have given.

It's like the story of a certain rich man in the Bible who had a big harvest and many riches, but instead of sharing with others, he decided to build bigger barns to hold more for himself (Luke 12:16–21). It wasn't the big crop that was his sin; God gave him that. His problem was his selfishness—the barniness of his own soul, his unwillingness to share his blessings with others. God told him that he would die that very night and he couldn't take anything with him, so he lost it all. That's selfishness and its reward. But if you are willing to give, God will reward and repay and bless you with much more than you gave. He's promised that!

Which are *you* doing?—Withholding or scattering? “Whatever measure you use to give—large or small—will be used to measure what is given back to you” (Luke 6:38 TLB).

If we can trust God with our lives, why can't we trust Him with our deaths?



FOR THE CHRISTIAN, thinking ahead about death is not a burden anymore. It's no longer something to worry about. It's a victory, a release, a graduation. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55–57). Death has no sting and the grave is no defeat for the Christian who has salvation and is promised resurrection. Our death will be a victory over the grave and sin and the Devil—a glorious victory and a glorious entry into the heavenlies.

God knows when and how we're supposed to die, and we'd better let God make that decision and leave it in His hands. "For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death" (Psalm 48:14). When it comes time to die, if we are Christians and love the Lord, He'll give us dying grace. We trust God for everything else, so why not trust Him to determine the time, place, and way we die?

God bless and keep you trusting even through death—and don't worry, He will. You'll die like you lived, still trusting!

Nothing is ever going to stop us but Jesus!



THE FORCES OF EVIL WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO COMPLETELY DESTROY GOD'S CHILDREN. In spite of innumerable major persecutions, they have never been stopped. In spite of all the wrath and atrocities bestial man will bring against God's children during the Great Tribulation—the coming three-and-a-half-year worldwide reign of terror against people of all faiths by the devilish dictatorship of the Antichrist and his regime—multitudes of us Christians will still be here to joyously welcome Christ's triumphant re-entry into the earth's atmosphere (Matthew 24:21, 29–31). He's the only One who can stop us, and He *will* stop us then for a little while to take us home for a party, the marriage supper of the Lamb in Heaven! Then we'll come back here and put a stop to the reign of the wicked! (Revelation chapter 19).

So praise the Lord, beloved. Don't feel defeated, don't get discouraged, and don't worry. No matter what the enemies of Christ do, they can never stop us completely. As Martin Luther (1483–1546) said, "We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us!" We can't fail, because Jesus is on our side. There will always be some of His children somewhere in the world as a witness right up to the very end!

Waiting and learning patience is part of your training.



LOOK AT ALL THE EXAMPLES IN THE BIBLE OF PATIENCE, like Job, Moses, and David.

Job lost everything—his family, his fortune, and finally his health—but he kept on believing and obeying. “Though He slay me,” he said, “yet will I trust Him” (Job 13:15). He hung on and would not give up. The patience of Job has given Christians down through the ages a wonderful example to follow.

When Moses was in a hurry to deliver the children of Israel, he killed an Egyptian and had to flee alone for his own life. But after 40 years of humbly and patiently tending sheep in the wilderness, with plenty of time to listen to the voice of God instead of his own impulses, he was finally ready for the slow, laborious, patient work of the Exodus—slow, but sure!

David spent 17 years working under King Saul, and learned from Saul’s mistakes. Saul got all upset and tried to do things in his own strength, and he found he wasn’t strong enough. David learned he had to let God do everything, and wait for Him to work.

Learning patience is one of the most frequent lessons God has for us all, so “let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (James 1:4).

God alone can satisfy your deepest yearning for total love and complete understanding!



DO YOU SOMETIMES FEEL LONELY, EMPTY, DISSATISFIED? Are you longing for love you have never known before, true love, sincere love, genuine love, the truly great love of your life, love that will never leave? The answer is waiting for you if you are willing to receive it!

There is something more than the flesh, there is the spirit—the real you that lives inside your body—and it will never be satisfied with the things of this earth. It must have the things of the spirit; it must have God. Within each heart, God has created a vacuum that can only be met spiritually. Only God and His true love can ever fill that aching spiritual void of your heart, which He created for Himself alone!

If you haven't already, you can receive God's love by receiving the Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, into your heart in a definite, individual decision. He can give you everything you've always longed for, including forgiveness of sins, faith in God, peace of mind, health of body, and joy and happiness and love and laughter now and forever after. He'll meet all your needs and solve all your problems. He's that wonderful, and it's that simple!

Do your best, and God will do the rest.



GOD EXPECTS US TO DO ALL WE CAN, and then He will do what we can't. When Jesus went to raise Lazarus from the dead, He told the people, "Take away the stone" (John 11:39). He could have made the stone roll away by itself, or He could have made Lazarus walk right through the stone, so why did they have to roll it away? Rolling the stone away from the door of the tomb was something *they* could do. They couldn't raise him from the dead, but they could roll the stone away.

Jesus said we are to ask, seek, and knock. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Matthew 7:7–8). But if you don't look, you're not going to find. Maybe nine out of ten doors you try are locked and you're only going to find one open, but you've got to do what you can. You can't just sit there and say, "God, reveal it to me!" God expects you to put feet to your prayers, to get out and do a little hoofing and look.

If you're doing your best to please and obey Him, God will do almost anything for you—some of the most amazing things you could possibly imagine!

Let's not be so self-righteous.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE SO SELF-RIGHTEOUS and holier-than-thou and hypocritical as to think you're better than somebody because they have sinned against you, but oh, no, you've never sinned, therefore you're not going to forgive them, then you are the biggest sinner of all! If you have self-righteous feelings of being better than others and look down on them, like the Pharisee who said, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men" (Luke 18:9–14), then that attitude in itself is the worse sin. In fact, self-righteousness is one of the greatest sins of all.

We should take a kind, loving, sympathetic, and forgiving attitude toward others and *have* mercy as we *want* mercy. We should treat others in their errors as we want God to treat us in ours. We must forgive those who've wronged us, seek forgiveness of those we've wronged, and then take them back into our circle of love and fellowship.

May we all be kinder, more humble, more patient, more loving, more forgiving, and more long-suffering with each other—and may we sincerely pray, "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us" (Luke 11:4 NIV).

Beware of compromise.



THE DEVIL WILL DO EVERYTHING HE CAN TO TEMPT YOU TO FORSAKE GOD'S WAY. If he can't get you to stop, he will try to get you to compromise. He tempts you with half-truths that make you doubt your convictions or not live up to them fully.

Most people don't realize that if they hold one little thing back from God, if they make one little compromise, they are distancing themselves from God. One little disobedience leads to another, one little refusal and denial leads to another, and one bit of selfishness leads to more. You may think, "Oh, just this one little sin, just this one little thing, it's not important," but that crack in your armor is all the Devil needs. His gas of deceit begins to seep in and poison your mind because you disobeyed what you knew God wanted you to do, and pretty soon you're totally off the track.

Don't let that happen to you. Be faithful to the Lord. Be faithful to the voice of His Spirit when He tells you to do this or that, or to not do this or that. Be loyal. "Resist the Devil and he will *flee* from you" (James 4:7). Don't give him an inch, or he'll take a mile—everything you've got. Give *no* place to the Devil (Ephesians 4:27).

You believe in love as much as you love.



IF YOU HAVE REAL LOVE, you can't face a needy situation without doing something about it. You can't just pass by the poor man on the road to Jericho. You must take action, like the Good Samaritan did (Luke 10:30–37). It's not enough to say, "Oh, I'm so sorry, how sad!"

There was a time when Jesus was very tired and He tried to escape the multitude for a little rest, but when He looked on the multitude, the Bible says He was moved with compassion, and taught and healed them (Mark 6:31–34; Matthew 14:13–14). Compassion must be put into action.

You can't say that you believe in something if you don't practice it. We should apply love as God intended for it to be applied—with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind (Matthew 22:37–39). That means to be truly concerned. It's not saying, "I love you," and then walking off and forgetting people in need. It's not saying, "Be warmed and filled," but not giving them the things they need when it's in your power to help (James 2:16; Proverbs 3:28). Love without physical application is like faith without works, which is dead (James 2:26). Show love and compassion by putting kind deeds to your kind words (1 John 3:18).

Lord, help us to be humble and not hardened or bitter.



SOMETIMES THE VERY THING WE DON'T WANT IS WHAT GOD PUTS US THROUGH, because our unwillingness is due to our pride. He does some things to humble us, and sometimes later lets us go through similar things to see if we're still humble. It's a real test when this happens, and it often ends in complaining and holding it against God. "God doesn't love me, because He didn't do what I wanted Him to do."

That seed of resentment or bitterness can grow and grow, and soon it can become a pretty big weed. That's why His Word warns us to watch out "lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble us, and thereby many be defiled" (Hebrews 12:15). That is a serious warning against bitterness! If we let bitterness take root, it can poison our whole spirits.

Sometimes we feel the only way we can bear the hurt is to harden our hearts, but that's not the Lord's solution. His Word says, "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you" (Psalm 55:22).

(Prayer:) Lord, help us to learn our lesson—whatever You're trying to teach us—and to be better for it, not bitter. Help us to thank You in spite of our tests and trials, hurts and disappointments. Help us to come through them more humble and closer to You. Amen.

Every calling is great when greatly pursued for God's glory!



GOD CAN INSPIRE YOU IN ANYTHING YOU DO. No matter what it is, you can do it in the Spirit; He can make every task glorious. Even if you don't have the most talent or experience, God can use you. In fact, that's the way God usually works. He chooses people who aren't strong or wise or anything great in themselves in order to show what *He* can do (1 Corinthians 1:26–29). Although you may not be the greatest in the eyes of the world, if God has called you to serve Him in some capacity and you said yes, you're the greatest in *His* eyes; that's what counts. He can make you strong when you're weak, to show it's His strength and His miraculous power (2 Corinthians 4:7; 12:9).

But before God is able to do great miracles in your life and ministry, you need to realize that it is nothing of you, that it is only a gift from Him. What makes you really great is the greatness God gives you, the Spirit, the inspiration. It's God behind it all—behind and above and underneath and on all sides. He does all of it through you. When you acknowledge this to yourself and others, then He'll be able to show what great things He can do!

First impressions are usually the right ones, if you're truly following the Lord.



IF YOU LOVE JESUS, are filled with the Holy Spirit, and are sincerely seeking God's will, usually your first reaction is the right one. God speaks first. It can just be in that "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12) that you feel inside of you. Sometimes it's not even words, but just an impression. God doesn't have to communicate in words. He can just give you a feeling or a picture or an idea.

When you are in tune with the Holy Spirit and doing your best to stay in His will and obey Him, you have a strong clear channel with Him and pick up His signals—His answers and leadings—loud and clear. You've got to get not only in prayer, but you've got to get in the Spirit. Point your antenna in His direction, tune in, and the Lord will tell you exactly what you're supposed to do.

When you're asking the Lord to speak to you about a question or problem, you have to have faith. When you ask the Lord for an answer, expect an answer and take the first thing that comes. If you really believe and ask the Lord, you won't be disappointed. That thing you see or hear with the eyes or ears of your spirit, that's the Lord speaking to you. Expect God to answer!

Breathe deeply!



LIKE THE FLAME OF A CANDLE, your body needs a continual supply of oxygen in order to stay alive. That is a fact of this natural life that also illustrates an important spiritual truth: If you want to keep burning brightly for the Lord (Matthew 5:16), you need to have a constant supply of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is like your spiritual oxygen supply, the very air that you breathe that keeps you alive spiritually.

The Hebrew word used throughout the Old Testament for “spirit” is *ruwack*, which also means “air” or “breath,” and the Greek word *pneuma*, translated as “spirit” in the New Testament, means the same thing. You need to be breathing that breath of the Spirit constantly or you’ll suffocate and die spiritually. Like the flame of a candle, your spiritual fire will go out.

Just eating is not enough to keep you alive; you also have to have air to burn that food, to give you energy. Just so, the spiritual food of God’s Word is not enough by itself; you have to have the oxygen of the Spirit to make it burn to give you power and energy spiritually. One or the other is not enough. You have to have both—God’s Word, combined with the breath of His Spirit!

“Behold, a king [Jesus] will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice” (Isaiah 32:1).



CHRIST'S COMING IS LITERALLY GOING TO BE AN INVASION FROM OUTER SPACE. When He finally returns to set things right, He is going to take over “with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30). Out of Heaven will come the great hosts of Heaven with Jesus in the lead on a white horse to destroy the Antichrist and his kingdom in the great Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19). Jesus and His saints—all of His children from down through the ages—will take over the world by God’s power and make this world live the way it should have lived (Revelation 20:4).

His Word says we shall then rule and reign with Him over the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 2:26–27). The nations will then be compelled to submit to the laws of God and to recognize His authority. It’s going to be an iron rule over those left on earth; otherwise many of them would never obey. Only then shall all wicked and vengeful men of war be stopped at last, and only then shall the men of peace and the God of peace and the Prince of Peace rule and reign and bring peace on earth.

Hail the heavenly Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.¹

The best ability is availability.



GOD DOESN'T CREATE SAINTS OUT OF THIN AIR; He creates them out of flesh and blood, normal people who love Him and let Him use them. Most of the greatest saints the world has ever known were people who just did what they thought needed to be done, whether or not others heard about it or even knew they were around. They were always there when someone needed them, always willing to see the need and respond.

If you have real love for God and others, you will be aware of the needs around you and do whatever needs to be done. And when God sees that you will do the lowly little tasks lovingly and faithfully and well, He will know He can trust you with bigger, more important jobs (Luke 16:10). But He won't force you. It all depends on you and your yieldedness, your willingness to be made willing. Yieldedness requires humility, which is a manifestation of love—the kind of love that is willing to go anywhere, anytime, and do anything, for anybody, and be nobody, to please God and help others.

Are you ready for anything God wants you to do? “I beseech you therefore, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1 KJV).

Love is the most important thing in our religion.



THE BIBLE PREACHES LOVE—the love of God through Jesus Christ, His Son. He also blesses us with other kinds of love and they are all important, but His is all-important. This is the cornerstone of the religion we Christians are supposed to practice: love for God and love for others. Love is what Jesus Himself taught—the Good News that God is love (1 John 4:8). True love, real love, unselfish love, sacrificial love, God’s love, is all the religion we need.

“Love the Lord your God, and love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:37–40). That’s all the laws of the whole Bible put together—love! If you have love, you have everything. If you do everything out of genuine love for God and others, you are fulfilling all the laws of God.

Herein is our salvation and message: love, true love, the love of God and fellow man, for it is God’s divine love working in us that helps us fulfill His great commandment to love one another. Thank God for such sweet love in the Lord!

Isn’t it wonderful to have love? When you have God you have love, because God *is* love (1 John 4:8).

“See me, feel me, touch me, heal me!”—This is the heartcry of the world!



SO MANY PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS SEARCHING FOR LOVE BUT SELDOM, IF EVER, FINDING IT. People everywhere are looking around for some little ray of hope, some bright spot somewhere, a little love, a little sympathy, a little mercy, some salvation, someplace where they can find relief from their loneliness and heartache. We who have found God and His love have what others have been searching for all their lives and need desperately.

The greatest thing we can give others is love—to show them love. If we can prove to them that *love* exists, then they can believe that *God* exists. Even the little things you do can mean a lot. A little bit of love goes such a long way! The light of your smile or the kindness of your face can have an amazing effect on people, including some you think might be the least likely to be impressed. When people feel your love and you tell them it's God's love, they can't help but think, *Maybe Somebody up there does love me!* It can change their whole outlook on life!

Thank God for Heaven and for the hope of such wonderful things to come!



WOULD^N'T YOU JUST LOVE TO ENJOY ALL THE BLESSINGS YOU HAVE RIGHT NOW without any pain, sickness, death, weariness, or any of the other difficulties of this present life? We will never get to truly enjoy life to the full as long as sin and its results are in the world, but in Heaven there will be none of these (Revelation 21:4). There all of our heart's desires will be fulfilled.

It's going to be a sinless new world where everything will be a joy and a pleasure and perfect, with peace and harmony and cooperation and love for all. Everything there will be true—the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! Everybody there will be like Jesus—good and honest and loving and caring and kind. It will be the perfect society, where everyone will be in perfect fellowship with each other and the Lord. Isn't that beautiful?

God's plan is not going to be defeated. He's going to bring us through to final perfection the way He originally intended. We will have eternal, wonderful happiness, joy, and paradise, similar to what we who love the Lord have now, only it will be far better and it will be forever!

We're always on trial with God, passing tests all our lives.



GOD NEVER ALLOWS US TO BE TEMPTED BEYOND WHAT WE ARE ABLE TO BEAR (1 Corinthians 10:13), but He does allow the Devil to test our faith to see if we will flee to Him and His Word and take a stand of faith.

With every grade, the tests get harder and the choices more difficult. The more God can trust you to stand the test, the tougher it's going to be. But no matter how great your trial may be, if you have faith to trust in God to bring you out of that difficulty, you won't murmur or complain. You'll rejoice and praise God and thank Him for the trial because you know He is able to save you, like He did Job. Job endured his suffering to prove his faith and love for God, but when Job gave the right answer: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," he passed the test and earned his diploma (Job 13:15).

God allows tests and sufferings not only so He can see if we've got faith, which He already knows, but also for *us* and others to see if we've got it. It's a test and a testimony. And when you finally pull through, it makes you stronger in the Lord and brings out the best in you.

The only difference between us and other sinners is that we're saved sinners because we have received Christ.



LET'S FACE IT: All of us are sinners. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). God is not so angry with the sinner for breaking the rules, because He knows the sinner is a sinner and *can't* be perfect. So the great condemnation is not that we're sinful, which God can forgive and does forgive if we receive His pardon through Jesus, but “this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

The only unpardonable sin is rejecting Jesus as your Savior—to have been shown the love of God and resisted it. This is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Mark 3:28–29). He'll forgive every sin in the Book except that.

So you either belong to Jesus or you don't. That's the only difference God sees. God sees nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ and the blood-washed soul.

All glory and praise
To the Lamb Jesus that was slain,
Who hath borne all our sins,
And hath cleansed every stain.¹

“She has done what she could!”



REMEMBER WHAT JESUS SAID about the dear woman who anointed His head with costly, fragrant oil before His death? He said, “She has done what she could” (Mark 14:3–9).

Maybe you feel you can’t do very much, but at least you can do what you can! If you will be faithful to do your best at the job God has given you to do for Him, however great or small it may be, He will greatly reward you one of these days soon when you stand before Jesus at the “judgment seat of Christ” (Romans 14:10). You will reap eternal rewards and everlasting glory, and have a feeling of genuine permanent accomplishment from your investment in His work. “Well done, good and faithful servant,” you will hear Him say. “Because you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matthew 25:21).

Have you done what you could, or are you going to be sorry for your sins of omission? Don’t lose your reward or let another take the crown that God has for you (Revelation 3:11).

I am satisfied with Jesus, but the question comes to me,
As I think of Calvary, “Is my Savior satisfied with me?”¹

¹ B.B. McKinney (1886–1952).

Obedience comes before the anointing.



YOU DON'T GET THE ANOINTING TO OBEY; you get the anointing *because* you obey. Look how much the Lord hinges on your doing what He asks, just because He says so. Even if you don't know all the whys or wherefores, you've just got to do it. But once you do, it will usually become clear why He asked it of you, or He will explain.

Jesus commanded His disciples to wait together in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high" to carry the message of God's love to the world (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5,8). After ten days of obedience, there came that final tremendous explosion on the Day of Pentecost when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. It was such an explosion that thousands gathered to see what in the world was going on, and three thousand people got saved that day (Acts chapter 2).

If you'll believe God's Word, He will give you the faith to take that first step of obedience. The moment you obey by faith, you get the anointing to carry on. The test is to see whether you're going to obey or not, but as soon as you do, God steps in and does His part without fail.

Every day can be a holiday for Jesus!



EVERY DAY CAN BE A HOLIDAY, because every day can be a holy day if we live them all for Jesus. Every day can be holy, sacred, cleansed, and set apart to serve Jesus.

Some esteem one day above another, but we should esteem all days the same (Romans 14:5). They are all the Lord's days, so they are all holy days—not mere holidays, but holy days. We shouldn't love God and Jesus any more on one day than we do every other day of the week. We should love and worship the Lord just as much every day.

We can have Thanksgiving Day every day. We should be thankful and treasure every moment of every day and constantly be praising and thanking the Lord for it. We can have Christmas every day. If Christmas lives in our hearts and minds, we can live each day like Christmas day. We should love Him better every day, grow sweeter every day, and try to be a greater blessing to others every day. Then every day will be Christmas and Thanksgiving and Happy Birthday and New Year all in one!

Jesus saves and keeps me,
And He's the One I'm living for.
Every day with Jesus,
Is sweeter than the day before!¹

¹ Robert C. Loveless.

“I fear, lest ... your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3).



THE FIRST TIME THE DEVIL TEMPTED MAN, he tempted him with something that supposedly would make man wise—knowledge (Genesis 3:1–6). Likewise today, many books are written with the demonic wisdom of the Devil himself, cunningly devised to deceive and lead people astray, to pervert, to warp, and twist them spiritually to where they don’t know what is true.

“God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33). God likes to keep things very simple. That’s why it’s wonderful to have the Bible as a guide. Then you know what’s perverted and what’s normal, what’s right and what’s wrong. “The wisdom of this world is foolishness to God” (1 Corinthians 3:19). You cannot fill your mind and heart with worldly wisdom, the foolishness of man, without it affecting your spirit, just like you can’t wade through the garbage and the gutter without getting besmirched (Colossians 2:8).

Why waste time on complicated and confusing theories and thoughts of man when the Word is right there, so simple and direct to the point? Stick to the refreshing water of the Word that feeds your soul, renews your mind, lifts your spirit, encourages your heart, and purifies your whole being!

God sometimes has to correct us, but He always does so in love.



GOD IS JUST AND MERCIFUL AND LOVING. He deals with us, His children, with much love and long-suffering and patience, but He also deals with us firmly when He sees that we're getting off the track. Like a shepherd with an errant sheep, He sometimes has to let us feel His shepherd's rod in order to turn us off the wrong path. He is a loving God, but He's also a very good Father who knows how to correct us when we need it.

Although God's corrections are sometimes hard to take, they're a token of His love—His "intolerable compliments"—and are good for us if we learn our lessons and are thereby brought into harmony with Him and doing what He knows is best for us and others. Therefore, don't forget "the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens'" (Hebrews 12:5–6). God's chastenings are proof that He loves you.

Let the light in, and the darkness will flee.



THE DEVIL IS THE ACCUSER OF THE SAINTS (Revelation 12:9–10). He accuses us for what we *haven't* done or *could* have done or *should* have done but didn't. He picks at all the lacks and shortcomings and weaknesses and little failures. If you start listening to him, you're beaten, because there will always be something more you could have done or something you wish you hadn't done. There will always be something—some neglect, some oversight, some mistake or fault, some bad habit—that the Devil can pick on if he wants to, and he sure wants to!

But thank God for Jesus! He's the antidote! Jesus always points out the *good* things. He never loses faith in us and He never stops loving us, even when we do make mistakes. So when the Devil descends on you with his dark thoughts about yourself or others, don't listen to him. Listen to Jesus instead. Let the light in! Think positive thoughts. Remind yourself constantly of the good. When you think positively about yourself and others, it chases away the doubts and the fears and nagging little accusations from the Devil. Fill your mind and heart and mouth with positive things. Chase away the Devil and all his shades of night by letting the light in. Count your blessings and put the Devil on the run!

What everybody needs is love!



PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY FOR LOVE—

love they have never known before, true love, sincere love, genuine love, the truly great love of their life, the love of all loves from the Lover of all lovers, who alone can satisfy that deepest yearning of every human soul for total love and complete understanding.

People's hearts are the same the world over. Their longings, loves, hunger for God and His truth, for joy and happiness and peace of mind are God-created and universal. People can never be happy with a heavy heart, a troubled mind, a discouraged spirit, and an unsaved soul. The human soul can never be completely satisfied with anything but utter union with the great and loving Spirit that created it. Flesh can satisfy flesh, but only Spirit can satisfy spirit.

Do you want the key to every heart?—Try love! It never fails, because God is love and it's impossible for Him to fail!

Ah, sweet mystery of life, at last I've found thee!
Ah, at last I've found the reason for it all!
Ah, 'tis love and love alone the whole world yearns for,
And 'tis love that bids us heed Thy call!¹

¹ Rida Johnson Young (1869–1926), "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life," paraphrased.

Every day, Jesus has to cleanse us.



BELIEVE IT OR NOT, everybody who believes in Jesus is a saint. Most people think that to be a saint they must be made perfectly and permanently holy, but actually the ancient Greek words *hagios* and *hagiazō*, which are translated as “saint” and “sanctify” in the New Testament, both mean to be cleansed and separated and set aside for further use. We may not be perfect or sinless saints, but we’re cleansed and made holy by His blood. Jesus takes us, dirty as we are with sin, and He washes away our sins with His blood and our evil thoughts with His Word (1 John 1:7; Revelation 7:14; Ephesians 5:26).

Sanctification is not just a one-time thing that takes place when you receive salvation. It is a constant process. When Jesus washed His disciples’ feet at the Last Supper (John 13:4–12), He was illustrating that even after we get saved and He cleanses us of our sins, if we wade through the filth of this world as we serve Him, we have to have a little bit of washing every day. Is there ever a day that passes that we don’t sin?—Not really. We’re human, so daily He has to cleanse us—our minds, our thoughts, our bodies, our actions, our words. If we want Him to continue to use us, we have to be washed and set aside again and again.

If we're going to grow and mature spiritually, then we need to grow in love.



LOVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING (1 Corinthians chapter 13). That's really the whole purpose for living, to love God and others. That means not only winning the lost wherever they are, but winning our brothers and sisters in Christ who are right beside us. The whole purpose for everything is love.

Some of our relationships are directly between the Lord and us, like praise and prayer and obedience to His Word, but most of our relationships are on a personal level with others. And the main lesson we're supposed to learn from these is to love one another. If we haven't learned to work well with others or how to treat them in love, then we're missing one of the major lessons of life.

We're not going to grow very much or learn very much unless we learn to interact lovingly with other people, and that's not always easy. It takes patience, love, and humility. Jesus gave the simple key when He instructed us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us (Matthew 7:12). It takes a lot to learn how to carry that out, but that's what we're here to learn. Do you want to grow?—Then love!

Life itself is proof of God, because life is a miracle.



ONE HUMBLE LITTLE CHICKEN out in some poor man's yard is proof of God because it produces a marvel of His creation every day—an egg, new life from the hand of God.

God's marvelous creation is alive, life giving, creative, and regenerative. It is constantly multiplying and being reborn and repairing itself. This is true of all forms of plant and animal life. When God created the world, He ordained it that each variety and species "whose seed is in itself" would bring forth more life of the same kind (Genesis 1:12, 21–22).

God's production system is the most effective there is in the world. God has a plan for everything, and His plan is perfect. Nothing is wasted and there is no pollution. Everything that God produces is pure and good. If it weren't for sin, there wouldn't even be any dying (Romans 5:12). There would be absolutely no waste and no destruction, only God's original all-life, no-death, can't-lose system. That's the way it will all be again one day soon for all those who receive God's love in Jesus and love Him in return. Isn't that wonderful?

May you always be known by your love!



WHAT WAS JESUS' MESSAGE TO HIS DISCIPLES AT THE LAST SUPPER, before He was arrested, beaten, and killed? "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). He talked about love, that love was the most important thing.

The early Christians turned the world upside down with the love of God that they found in Jesus Christ. Even their Roman rulers marveled at the love of the Christians and said, "Behold, how these Christians love one another!" The way the Christians lived convinced the Romans that their faith was real, and the Romans wondered, "Who is this Christ and how does He make you so happy? Even though you have nothing, you've got everything! How can I find this kind of happiness that I don't have?"—And within 200 years, when Christianity was still outlawed, one out of every five people in the Roman Empire was a professing Christian and the known world had been saturated with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Just a little love can go a long way—much further than you could ever dream—so love the Lord and others, and be faithful in your witnessing to others of the love of Jesus Christ!

**“Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the
earth” (Matthew 5:5).**



THE WHOLE WORLD IS GOD’S. In a sense, the Devil has stolen it away for a little bit, but it will soon be back fully in the hands of its rightful owner. Then at last the meek shall inherit the earth. Right now the ungodly powers of this world reign by their cruel, selfish, dog-eat-dog philosophy that gives the world to the strongest, but during the coming kingdom of Christ on earth it will be given to those who really have the right to govern because of their love and meekness and forgiveness and faith in God and His Word. Then, under the supreme reign of Jesus Himself, the pitiful little bands of persecuted Christians and believers are going to inherit the earth and run it by love and the power of God (Daniel 7:27).

These weakest and meekest will become the most powerful influences on the earth, and will rule the world with both love and a “rod of iron”—love and loving force, when necessary, to compel the nations to submit to the laws of God and to obey His rules of life, love, health, and happiness. Then at last will there be peace on earth toward men of good will (Revelation 2:26–27; Luke 2:14).

**Our labors are not in vain;
they're going to last a lot
longer than some of us
think.**



WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW IS IMPORTANT, and it's not going to be wasted. The preparation we, God's saved children, are doing now is all a part of His plan to prepare us for bigger and better things to come.

There's going to be a lot that's the same in the coming world, especially during the coming thousand-year kingdom of Christ on earth, known as the Millennium. This may come as a disappointment, but we won't be absolutely perfect in the next world. We'll be partly human and partly divine, and we'll still be using a lot of the knowledge, experience, talents, languages, and skill that we have gained in this world. God's not going to waste all these years of training.

What we're doing is of eternal value. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven" (Matthew 6:20). What treasures? The Bible tells us that we brought nothing into this world with us, and we can't take anything out of it—no material things, that is (1 Timothy 6:7). We're going to take our children and all the souls we win to Jesus, and that's not all. We'll also take the knowledge and experience we gain in this life.

Are you getting ready here and now for there and then? It won't be lost, but used forever.

Never underestimate the advantage of a handicap.



GOD KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING. He has a reason and a purpose for everything. We don't always understand, and we don't have to. All we have to do is let each thing that He sends our way accomplish His purpose.

“All things work together for good to those who love God” (Romans 8:28), no matter what they are or how “good” they seem to us. It may not always seem like it at the time, but in the long run God often gets His greatest victories out of seeming defeat. Perhaps that handicap is meant to strengthen you in other areas, such as faith and love, and to equip you to impart those strengths to others.

When William Moon (1818–1894) of Brighton, England, was stricken with blindness, he said, “God gave me the talent of blindness to use for His glory. Without blindness I should never have been able to see the needs of the blind.” Then God enabled him to invent the Moon alphabet for the blind, by which thousands of blind people were able to read the Word of God, and many of them were gloriously saved.

So don't give up! Don't drown in your sorrows. Make an advantage out of your handicap. Build a bridge out of your broken dreams, and set those ships a sail again. That handicap need not be the end. In fact, it may only be the beginning!

Little things can make us or break us—they're that important!



ALTHOUGH SOME THINGS MAY SEEM UNIMPORTANT TO US, they may be very important to God and very important to our happiness and success. Look at what resulted from one wrong decision in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1–11), one tiny boat in a worldwide flood (Genesis chapter 7), and one little deal that brought death to the Savior (Matthew 26:14–16).

Little mistakes and little lacks can be costly. It's like the maxim: For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost; and for want of a horse, the rider was lost.¹ —All because of one tiny nail! “A little leaven leavens the whole lump” (Galatians 5:9), and it's the little foxes that spoil the vines (Song of Solomon 2:15).

Conversely, little things can also lead to great things. One little stone brought down a giant (1 Samuel chapter 17), one little manger changed the destiny of mankind (Luke 2:7), and a little mustard seed of faith can move mountains (Matthew 17:20).

“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10). Be diligent and faithful in the little things, and God will use you for greater things.

¹ Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), maxims prefixed to *Poor Richard's Almanac*, 1757.

Enjoy yourself and enjoy life—but enjoy the Lord most of all!



GOD INTENDS FOR YOU TO ENJOY LIFE. He made all things for you to enjoy, and He created the very senses with which to enjoy them. Every good and perfect gift that God has sent down from above, He created for you, His child, to enjoy (James 1:17).

Enjoy the pleasures that God has given you as much as you please and as much as you need. Just don't enjoy them more than Him. If you have an inordinate desire for too much of certain things, then it becomes a form of worship, and that's a sin. "Do not love the world or the things in the world," the Bible cautions us. "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). Don't let the blessings of God take first place in your life, because God will not take second place. He wants your love above all else. He says, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3).

Be sure that you put God first. Love and worship Him above all, and thank Him for all of these other things that He has given you to enjoy. Then you can have all this and Heaven too!

When you first decide to serve God, all hell breaks loose!



IF THE DEVIL CAN SCARE YOU OUT BEFORE YOU EVEN BEGIN, you'll never accomplish what God wants you to do. So the Devil pulls out all of his big guns and everything in his bag of dirty tricks to try to keep you from starting to serve God, because he figures that if he can keep you from starting, you'll *never* serve God.

It's your witness the Devil fears. He knows he's going to lose others from his clutches because of you and your influence and testimony. Every person you win to Jesus is a threat to hundreds of others that the Devil has claimed as his, so he's out to stop each one as best he can.

In the testing time before the beginning of His ministry, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert where He fasted for 40 days and afterward was tempted by the Devil. Imagine, the Devil was allowed to test even Jesus! But Jesus never yielded under the attack. Instead, He resisted the Devil with the Word of God. When the Devil saw that Jesus wasn't going to give up, that He claimed the Scriptures, then the Devil quit.

So for God's sake, the sake of others, and your own sake, don't let the Devil bluff you out of what God wants you to do. "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

The best way is the love way.



THIS IS WHAT GOD'S BEEN WORKING ON ALL THE TIME: to persuade us to do things with the right motivation, because we love Him and others and therefore want to do what is right. Following God's example, we also should try to persuade others to do the right thing out of love.

A horse can either love and obey its master, or it can be stubborn and willful. A horse that is gentled through love takes a lot more time and patience to train, but it will be a far better horse and much more obedient than if its will is broken and it's forced to obey for fear of punishment.

If you teach that horse to *want* to obey you and follow your every instruction because it loves and trusts you, it will be the best mount you could ever ride. But a horse that's had to be broken because it was stubborn will continue to want to break the rules whenever it gets a chance. The best way is the gentle way, not the breaking way.

Certainly God has to have a lot of patience and love with us, so we, in turn, should have patience and love with others. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

God's sinning saints give hope to you and me.



GOD LETS US HAVE A FEW GREAT SAINTS AS EXAMPLES, but nearly every great man or woman of God in the Bible was a hero with clay feet and just as human as we are.

Many consider this proof that the Bible was written by God and not man, because when man writes history he covers up all of the mistakes and sins of his heroes, whereas God's book, the Bible, tells the whole story, not just the good parts. God's Word tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. God paints the picture just as black as it really is sometimes to show how bad man can be without knowing Him or being in His will. We're to learn from the things that He taught others in the past. These things didn't happen for their sakes only, He says, but were written for *our* sakes, that we might learn God's ways (1 Corinthians 10:11).

God's Word always portrays its heroes as they really were—ordinary men and women like you and me. They made big mistakes just like you and I have, and some committed horrible sins. Yet when they repented, God forgave. That gives all of us sinners hope!

**“Do you not know that
you are the temple of God
and that the Spirit of God
dwells in you?”
(1 Corinthians 3:16).**



WE OURSELVES ARE THE VERY
TEMPLE OF GOD—you and me, His children who live with
Him day by day and worship Him in our own hearts.

God’s true Church has always been the body of believers, the fellowship of the saints, the assembly of the saints. The word “church” comes from the ancient Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning the called-out ones, or the separated ones. The church is not the building; it’s the people. Christian worship in the early days needed no buildings, no great temples built with hands of men, which could not contain God anyway (Acts 7:48). They worshiped Him in homes, in upper rooms, in basements, in the marketplace, beside the river, and in the forest under the trees—wherever they happened to be. And Christianity soon covered the earth because the apostles obeyed and went out. Instead of building buildings, they went out and built the true Church of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men, a temple built of “living stones,” as Peter calls us (1 Peter 2:5).

God dwells within the human heart. Buildings cannot contain Him, but your heart contains the Lord Jesus Christ if you have received Him (Galatians 4:6).

Conscience is God's presence in man.



IT'S AN AMAZING AND WONDERFUL THING THAT THE WORLD OVER, in nearly every culture and even in the most remote places, everyone seems to know the difference between right and wrong. People understand that certain things are sins, and they have laws against them. God's basic moral standards are pretty universal.

The Holy Spirit is faithful and speaks to the hearts of all, telling them when they're doing wrong. They know the difference between good and evil. They may not know their Master or the whole truth, the Good News of salvation, but they know the difference between right and wrong. "God's laws are written within them; their own conscience accuses them, or sometimes excuses them" (Romans 2:12 TLB). God gives everybody *some* light, and God is going to judge each one according to how they follow the light he or she is given.

God created man as a free moral agent. He gives each of us the majesty of personal choice to choose between good and evil, between obeying the guiding voice of God and obeying the voice of Satan. Which will you do?

You don't have to be a millionaire to give what you've got.



THERE IS NOT ONE OF GOD'S CHILDREN who cannot afford to give something to His work. You may think you can't afford to give, or you may not be able to give a lot at first, but God blesses everybody that gives. If you're *not* rich, that's all the more reason to give, so God can bless you and help you have more.

God's finances work the opposite from the world's. The world says, "When I've got my million, *then* I'll start giving." But the Lord says, "Start giving what you've *got* now, and then I'll give you more." Man says, "Me first. Self-preservation is the first law of nature." But God says, "Put Me and Mine first, and I'll take care of you afterwards" (Matthew 6:33).

God's way to plenty is to give sacrificially of what you now have. "There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty" (Proverbs 11:24). The faster you give it away and share it, the more He'll heap it on and the richer you'll become so you can share more. Covetousness hoards itself poor, but charity gives itself rich.

It's better to stay healthy than to have to be healed.



REMEMBER, AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE. A fence at the top of the cliff is better than a hospital at the bottom. The best way to prevent illness is to obey God's natural laws: Live right, eat right, work right, play right, rest right, love right, and maintain a right relationship with Him.

You cannot violate God's health rules or abuse your body and expect to be healthy, because God made you with built-in self-destruct mechanisms to punish you if you do. It's not that God enjoys punishing you or seeing you suffer. To the contrary, He made His health rules because He loves you and wants to protect you from harm. The rules are to help you be happier and get more out of life by making sure you do what you can to keep yourself healthy and whole. It's a case of, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:17 KJV).

God created you, and He knows what is best for you. So work on the ounce of prevention now, rather than worrying about the pound of cure later. Take care of God's creation by following His commonsense rules, and God will bless you with good health.

What a wonderful place to meet, at Jesus' feet.



JESUS SAID THAT WE SHOULD SIT AT HIS FEET AND LEARN FROM HIM, like Mary in the Scripture (Luke 10:39–42). Mary hungered for His words of love and wisdom, gave Jesus her full attention, and received this commendation and promise: “Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

“Where two or three are gathered together in My name,” Jesus promises, “I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20). Jesus is in our midst every time we’re together in His name, so we always meet at His feet.

Jesus always rewards those who unite in His love, when we give our time and attention to Him and His Word. He loves to give the answers we need when He sees we’re united in love and prayer and purpose and mind and heart and spirit, of one mind (1 Corinthians 1:10). This is the marvel of the Day of Pentecost. Jesus was in the midst of them, and the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them (Acts chapter 2).

As we read His Word, study it, share it, pray over it, and follow the light of its truth, we are melted together in His love, blended together in His truth, joined together as one body, fitly joined together according to His Word.

God loves a mystery!



GOD HAS FILLED LIFE FULL OF PUZZLES AND PROBLEMS and mysteries and suspense to challenge our intellect, our faith, and our trust in Him as we set out to try to find the answers.

In trying to show us His will, God sometimes sets a mystifying puzzle before us. He sometimes speaks in riddles and mysteries that are hard to understand in order to get us to think and pray, but He almost always gives us a starting clue. Then He leads us on step by step. We never know what's going to happen until we take the next step.

He likes to make us seek His answers, because this causes us to exercise our faith in Him and His Word and His divine guidance and magnanimity, His parental love. It shows we trust in Him when we obey Him, even if we don't know what's at the end of the road. We may not see the answer, we may not know the solution or the place He's leading to or what we're going to find, but we're trusting God to fulfill His promises, like Abraham did when he obeyed God and went out, not even knowing where he was going (Hebrews 11:8).

“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10).



EACH TIME ANOTHER SOUL IS BORN INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD when someone accepts Jesus as their Savior, it's similar to the birth of a child. Although a baby is delivered in pain, afterwards the pain is forgotten in the delight of a new soul born into this world. The same joy, only greater, is experienced at the birth of a new spiritual baby into the kingdom of God. One saved soul makes all Heaven rejoice, and is certainly sufficient payment for whatever work or sacrifice or difficulties we may go through to help bring that about.

All Heaven rejoices and all the angels rejoice more over one lost “sheep” that's found, over one soul that's saved, than over the ninety-nine—all the rest who are already found and saved and rescued (Luke 15:7).

If the angels of Heaven rejoice over every soul that's saved, they certainly must also rejoice over our service for the Lord because of what that ultimately leads to—more souls for the kingdom of God. When your time of reward and recognition comes, are the angels of Heaven going to jump for joy over your sacrificial giving of yourself so others could also find God's love in Jesus and be won to His eternal kingdom?

Keep on believing.



MANY OF US HAVE GONE THROUGH DRY, DESERT-LIKE EXPERIENCES, wandering about in the spiritual wastelands of this world, feeling lost and seemingly separated from God. If you find yourself in such a state, instead of lamenting that you have somehow missed His will, keep on believing and praising the Lord. Encourage your faith with His Word. Repent of any wrongdoing and ask God to forgive you, so you can have another chance at His highest will for you. Then, like a bird whose pinion once was broken but now is healed, you may fly even higher than before.

Don't ever quit! Don't ever give up! Don't be discouraged! Maybe you missed the first opportunity, but maybe you haven't missed the last one.

Keep on believing, Jesus is near,
Keep on believing there is nothing to fear,
Keep on believing, this is the way
Faith in the night as well as the day.¹

Ask God for another chance, and He will send along another golden opportunity to encourage you and carry you along in the power of His Spirit to the glorious victory of your heavenly destination. Keep on holding on to His promises, and whatever you do, keep on going for Jesus!

¹ Milward Booth-Hellberg (1868–1953).

A tree is a vision of perfection.



DO YOU KNOW WHY A TREE IS PERFECT?—Because it does nothing but obey God. It grows just for His glory and according to His will, and produces exactly what God has ordained it to produce. It's fruitful and flowering, strong and beautiful, fulfilling its mission in life. It never resists, it just yields and bends and nods its head to the will of God. It smiles all day, and lifts its leafy arms in praise to the Lord.

“Blessed is the man ... whose delight is in the law of the Lord. ... He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:1–3).

(Prayer:) Lord, help us to be like sturdy, healthy trees, planted strong in Your earth, watered by Your Word, and fertilized with the food of Your very body. You are like the earth in which we grow and on which we stand. Without You, we couldn't exist. Help us to be strong and true, like the trees, growing only for Your glory, fruitful and performing the mission for which You've ordained us: to bear fruit and be a blessing to others. Amen.

“Abide in Me, and I in you” (John 15:4).



IN THE BEAUTIFUL 15TH CHAPTER OF JOHN, Jesus says, “I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned” (John 15:5–6). If ever you, as a branch, don’t abide in the Vine, Christ—if you don’t abide in His love, His Word, and His service—then you will become unfruitful and withered, and you will be pruned from the tree as a dead branch. You won’t lose your salvation, but you will be cast aside as being no longer useful to God and His kingdom.

Without the flow of God’s Spirit there is no life. You must be firmly implanted in the Vine where you’re receiving the spiritual sap and life and nourishment that you need directly from the Lord Himself. A lot of how you grow is up to you and how much nourishment you receive, so don’t cut yourself off from the Vine.

Jesus said, “Without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). But if you are dwelling in the Vine, as one of the branches, then you can produce beautiful leaves and beautiful fruit so that He and the Father may be glorified and have much fruit (John 15:8).

“Wait on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14).



WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, “Wait on the Lord”? A lot of people take it to mean that they’re supposed to sit around doing nothing while they wait for God to do something. They’re waiting for God to do something *for* them rather than *with* them. That’s one form of waiting on God and there’s a time for that, but it just might be that God is waiting *for them* to get *busy*.

Very often the best way to find God’s will is to get busy doing what we can and what we know we should do. So think about it like that. “Wait on the Lord,” like a servant who waits on his master, or like a waiter or waitress waiting on a customer, where the customer is king. Don’t just stand around or sit there; put yourself at His service. Get busy *servicing* the Lord and He’ll tell you what He’d like for you to do next.

That’s what we’re supposed to be: servants in the house of God, tending to His business, caring for His children, and doing His bidding. He is very grateful for our help, and admires us for our loyalty and faithful, cheerful service. He always has plenty for us to do, and is happy to tell us how He would like it done. How is that for a picture of waiting on the Lord?

Jesus is better to us than He was to Himself.



“FOXES HAVE HOLES AND BIRDS OF THE AIR HAVE NESTS, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head” (Matthew 8:20). Jesus never owned a home, He never had a wife or children, and it seems the only material thing He owned on earth was His clothes.

Jesus said that it was enough that a disciple be like his master (Matthew 10:25), and Paul said, “Having food and clothing, with these we shall be content” (1 Timothy 6:8). Yet look at all that Jesus has given us besides that! All the rest are extras.

Jesus loves us and wants us to be happy and comfortable. He also knows what we need and what’s good for us. He’s pretty smart about that because He knows that when He’s extra good to us we’ll want to show our appreciation by working harder and doing a better job for Him.

Jesus believes in happy employees. To Him, our happiness is worth more than money. He’s willing to let you have almost anything you want as long as you put Him first (Matthew 6:33). Look how Jesus tries to make it easy for us to be good and serve Him. As long as we delight ourselves in Him, He gives us the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4).

He that would win some must be winsome.



IN ORDER FOR PEOPLE TO COMMUNICATE WELL, they must have some things in common. So in your witnessing, approach others in a positive way with a positive attitude. Establish points of contact. Develop a rapport. Be friendly, loving, understanding, compassionate, and sympathetic. Find as much common ground as you can. The apostle Paul said that he became all things to all men in order to win some (1 Corinthians 9:22).

Fighting false systems and false doctrines can be a temptation when you know you're so right and others are so wrong, but that's a negative type of witnessing—the kind that doesn't show love or win people. The best way to handle points of disagreement is not by refuting what the other person says, but by hearing them out and then presenting the truth in a loving and positive way. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15 KJV).

Dwell on the positive, not the negative. Instead of preaching *against* things, preach Jesus. Then He will draw all men unto Himself (John 12:32).

Healing is a sample of resurrection.



PAIN IS A TOUCH OF HELL; healing is a touch of Heaven. Healing is a sample of everlasting life, renewal of the body, and cure of disease. It's a touch of resurrection.

When we experience salvation, we get a little sample of what eternal life and Heaven are going to be like. We have tasted of the heavenly gift and the powers of the world to come (Hebrews 6:4–5). Likewise, when we get healed we get a little sample of what God is going to do for us one of these days. We don't have the full resurrection yet, but we can have a little touch of it once in a while (Romans 8:11). We already have His healing power manifest in our bodies but it won't be complete until we receive our eternal, supernatural, indestructible bodies on which death no longer has any power or claim whatsoever.

When Jesus returns for us and we're transformed as we receive our new bodies, that will be the best healing of all. That will be the final healing. Then we won't have any more diseases, or sickness, or pain. That's permanent healing, final resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:51–57).

Life is like a garden.



IN THE BEGINNING, Adam was the first gardener. Even the Garden of Eden, as perfect as it was, had to have somebody taking care of it, and God gave that job to Adam. God expected man to tend and, in a sense, improve on His creation.

Gardening never ends. You've constantly got to keep fighting the weeds, the bugs, the varmints, the pests, the rot, the fungus, the mold, the blights, and all kinds of the Devil's attacks. God's garden is constantly fighting with the Devil's garden. The Devil's garden is hellish, and the Devil is trying to transfer it to earth. He's trying to create hell on earth. His whole idea is to try to defeat God's plan by overrunning and destroying God's garden, but he's not going to succeed.

Life is like one big garden and we've all got a lot to learn about it. No gardener knows everything. Only God, the Creator of the garden, knows everything. Like every gardener, the rest of us have to study and learn from other gardeners and from God, the owner and the head of the estate. There's plenty to learn and plenty of work to keep us busy from now to eternity!

God's love knows no boundaries.



GOD'S LOVE IS SO GREAT that it will descend to any depth to save, go to any length to rescue. He can love man in his lowest state and save him in his hour of need from his most pitiful plight. For God there is no stopping place, no limit to which He will not go to save a poor lost soul with His infinite love and mercy. He stoops to the level of our need.

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And even to the lowest hell.¹

Look at the mercy of Christ: He even went down into the bowels of the earth in order to preach the Gospel of deliverance to the spirits that were in prison there (Matthew 12:40; 1 Peter 3:18–20).

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me” (Psalm 139:7–10).

¹ Frederick M. Lehman (1868–1953).

**We cannot hold a torch
to light another's path
without brightening our
own.**



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PERSONAL WITNESSING to not only win people to Jesus, but also to inspire and encourage your own heart and keep you alive spiritually. “The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself” (Proverbs 11:25). Witnessing in itself is a form of reward. It will inspire your own heart as you watch the Lord work. It will not only be worth it all when you see Jesus, but it will be worth it all right now when you see the wonderful, thrilling, and satisfying results of your labors.

Everyone you witness to, you're wooing in the Spirit—wooing and loving and sowing the seed of God's Word in the Spirit. You can't win them all, but those you do win are worth it all! Like the shepherd who rejoiced at finding his one lost sheep, and the angels of Heaven who rejoice over one lost sinner who finds forgiveness, others' happiness becomes your happiness and their victories your own.

Seldom can a heart be lonely,
If it seeks a lonelier still—
Self-forgetting, seeking only,
Emptier cups of love to fill.¹

Honest, open-minded scientists throughout history have acknowledged the existence of God.



TRUE SCIENCE POINTS TO THE FACT that there had to be something, somebody, some planner, some designer behind the creation of the universe.

James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879), the Scottish mathematician and physicist who did revolutionary work on electromagnetic fields and the electromagnetic theory of light, said, “Science is incompetent to reason upon the creation of matter itself out of nothing.”

Lord William Thomson Kelvin (1824–1907), another Scottish mathematician and physicist who devised the absolute scale of temperature, declared, “We must pause, face to face, with the mystery and miracle of the creation of living creatures.”

Sir William Herschel (1738–1822), the German-born English astronomer and discoverer of the planet Uranus, said, “All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truth contained in the Bible.”

Today God is giving man more and more evidence of His existence through the marvels of His creation, and all that we see teaches us to trust the Creator for all we have not seen!

Nothing is more important to your spiritual life and health than the Word.



THERE IS A SAYING ABOUT HEALTH: You *are* what you *eat*." That's true in the physical sense, but it's also true of our spirits. We are spiritually what our minds and spirits take in. There is plenty to take in these days through the mass media, advertising, and the Internet, but most of it is spiritual junk food—or worse yet, spiritual poison.

That's why it's so important to make sure you're getting the right spiritual food—the good, wholesome, nourishing, faith-building, uplifting, encouraging, inspiring, truth of the Word of God. Jesus said, "The Words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). The prophet Jeremiah said, "Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jeremiah 15:16). Job said, "I have treasured the Words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). The apostle Peter admonished, "Desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

Just like you have to eat in order to stay alive and have physical strength, you have to feed from the Word to stay alive spiritually and have the spiritual strength to overcome the problems of life. A balanced diet of God's Word is essential if you are to grow and stay healthy spiritually.

A baby illustrates faith.



HOW DO WE RECEIVE THE SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT WE NEED FROM GOD?—It's simple: We just have to have the faith of a little baby.

When a baby is crying to be fed, he knows his mother wouldn't think of refusing him. God put it in that baby to know that if he calls, she will answer. He expects the answer and he gets it. Likewise, if we, as children of our heavenly Father, ask for milk, He's surely not going to give us a serpent or something else (Luke 11:10–13).

What is it that brings the milk out of the mother's breast? When the baby sucks, he creates a vacuum inside his mouth, which pulls the milk out. Prayer is creating a vacuum, an empty space inside our hearts, which God fills.

When the baby is very young, his mother has to bring the nourishment to him and show him where it is. But as he gets older, he automatically knows where to find the milk and he can reach out for it himself. Likewise, the more we practice receiving nourishment from God, the better we know where to find it. And as long as we keep sucking, we'll get more, because God has unlimited capacity to give!

Jesus is the Word of God.



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN begins with one of the most profound statements in the entire Bible: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:1–3 KJV). That’s one of the deepest truths in the Bible—that Jesus is the Word of God, the *expression* of God, as well as the *Son* of God.

What is a word? It’s a means of communication. When God wanted to communicate His love to the world, what did He do? You can’t see love and you can’t see God, so He sent His Word. He said it in Jesus. He showed it in Jesus. He expressed it in Jesus. He communicated it in Jesus. Jesus was all of that. He was the expression of God’s love. He was the meaning of God’s love. He was the communication of God’s love. He said God’s love. He showed God’s love. He symbolized God’s love. He manifested God’s love. He was and *is* God’s own message of love to us!