# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/15/25

# The Failure To Pay Close Attention



The high places were not removed from Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was loyal all his days. —[2 Chronicles 15:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Chronicles+15%3A17)

Asa was not completely obedient in the outward, visible areas of his life. He was obedient in what he considered the most important areas, but he was not entirely right. Beware of ever thinking, “Oh, that thing in my life doesn’t matter much.” The fact that it doesn’t matter much to you may mean that it matters a great deal to God. Nothing should be considered a trivial matter by a child of God. How much longer are we going to prevent God from teaching us even one thing? But He keeps trying to teach us and He never loses patience. You say, “I know I am right with God”— yet the “high places” still remain in your life. There is still an area of disobedience. Do you protest that your heart is right with God, and yet there is something in your life He causes you to doubt? Whenever God causes a doubt about something, stop it immediately, no matter what it may be. Nothing in our lives is a mere insignificant detail to God.

Are there some things regarding your physical or intellectual life to which you have been paying no attention at all? If so, you may think you are all correct in the important areas, but you are careless— you are failing to concentrate or to focus properly. You no more need a day off from spiritual concentration on matters in your life than your heart needs a day off from beating. As you cannot take a day off morally and remain moral, neither can you take a day off spiritually and remain spiritual. God wants you to be entirely His, and it requires paying close attention to keep yourself fit. It also takes a tremendous amount of time. Yet some of us expect to rise above all of our problems, going from one mountaintop experience to another, with only a few minutes’ effort.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

God engineers circumstances to see what we will do. Will we be the children of our Father in heaven, or will we go back again to the meaner, common-sense attitude? Will we stake all and stand true to Him? “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” The crown of life means I shall see that my Lord has got the victory after all, even in me.  The Highest Good—The Pilgrim’s Song Book, 530 L

# CCEL – 4/15/25

**Their Redeemer is strong.**—[JER. 50:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.50.html" \l "Jer.50.34)

I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins.—I have laid help upon one that is mighty.—TheLord. . . thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob.—Mighty to save.—Able to keep you from falling.—Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.—He is able . . . to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.

Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[Amos 5:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Amos.5.html" \l "Amos.5.12). -[Psa. 89:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.89.html" \l "Ps.89.19). -[Isa. 49:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.26). -[Isa. 63:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.63.html" \l "Isa.63.1). -[Jude 24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24). -[Rom. 5:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.20).[John 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.18). -[Heb. 7:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.25).[Isa. 50:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.50.html" \l "Isa.50.2).[Rom. 8:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.35),[38,39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.38).

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” **[Psalm 22:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.1)**

We here behold the Saviour in the depth of his sorrows. No other place so well shows the griefs of Christ as Calvary, and no other moment at Calvary is so full of agony as that in which his cry rends the air—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” At this moment physical weakness was united with acute mental torture from the shame and ignominy through which he had to pass; and to make his grief culminate with emphasis, he suffered spiritual agony surpassing all expression, resulting from the departure of his Father’s presence. This was the black midnight of his horror; then it was that he descended the abyss of suffering. No man can enter into the full meaning of these words. Some of us think at times that we could cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” There are seasons when the brightness of our Father’s smile is eclipsed by clouds and darkness; but let us remember that God never does really forsake us. It is only a seeming forsaking with us, but in Christ’s case it was a real forsaking. We grieve at a little withdrawal of our Father’s love; but the real turning away of God’s face from his Son, who shall calculate how deep the agony which it caused him?

In our case, our cry is often dictated by unbelief: in his case, it was the utterance of a dreadful fact, for God had really turned away from him for a season. O thou poor, distressed soul, who once lived in the sunshine of God’s face, but art now in darkness, remember that he has not really forsaken thee. God in the clouds is as much our God as when he shines forth in all the lustre of his grace; but since even the thought that he has forsaken us gives us agony, what must the woe of the Saviour have been when he exclaimed, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

# Word Live – 4/15/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/15/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/15/25

# Raised to Belong

A person with his hand up

AI-generated content may be incorrect.[Read Romans 7:1–6](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Romans+7:1%e2%80%936)

**Released From the Law, Bound to Christ**

7 Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? 2For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

4So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. 5For when we were in the realm of the flesh,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%207%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28097a)] the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. 6But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

**Footnotes**

1. [Romans 7:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%207%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#en-NIV-28097) In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.

We serve in the new way of the Spirit. [Romans 7:6](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Rom.7.6)

In traditional wedding vows, a husband and wife pledge themselves to one another “till death do us part.” As long as they are both alive, the marriage contract will be intact. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul explains that, just as the legal obligations of marriage cease when one’s spouse dies, Christ’s death freed the believer from being bound to the Law. In chapter 7, Paul helps us understand how the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ forever changed our relationship to the Law.

Does this mean we no longer have any obligation to God? Not at all. Paul explains that we have been released from the Law so that we can serve God in a new and more powerful way. As verse 6 puts it, “we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.” Paul’s message is not a gospel of subtraction but of addition. Something new has been added to our nature to provide life where there once was none. It is the resurrection power of the Spirit.

It is clear that verse 4 has both Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection in view. Those who are united by faith to Christ in His death have “died to the law through the body of Christ” so that they “might belong to another.” Because they belong “to him who was raised from the dead” they are now able to “bear fruit for God.” This contrast reveals an important limitation in the Law that enables us to understand why nobody could be made righteous by it. The Law set a standard of holiness, but because “we were in the realm of the flesh,” it could not empower anyone to comply with its demands (v. 5).

**Go Deeper**

What does it mean to be free from the Law? Do we no longer have to obey God’s original commands? Why or why not?

**Pray with Us**

Father, thank You for the assurance in today’s reading that we are not under Law, but under grace. You called us out of our sin into Your covenant family. Those coming out of hopelessness receive a new life. Glory to Your name!

# Our Daily Bread – 4/15/25

# GOING WITH GOD

A movie poster with a person in a suit

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: RUTH 1:6-17**

**Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem**

6When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. 7With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

8Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. 9May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.”

Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud 10and said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.”

11But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? 12Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— 13would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord’s hand has turned against me!”

14At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

15“Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.”

16But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.”

Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. RUTH 1:16

In *The Courier,* a film inspired by true events, the main character, Greville: is confronted with a difficult decision. He learns that a close friend is going to be arrested and will likely face a grueling imprisonment. Greville can save himself from the same fate if he flees the country immediately and denies association with his friend. Moved with compassion, Greville loyally refuses to leave and is imprisoned, suffering the same agony as his friend. Neither man betrays the other. In the end, Greville is released a broken, but true and faithful companion.

Naomi needed a friend like that. When her husband and sons died, Naomi faced destitution and a long journey to her homeland. Naomi told her widowed daughter-in-law Ruth to remain in Moab and find a new life for herself (RUTH 1:8-9). Ruth responded, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go' (v. 16). Ruth loyally accompanied Naomi to a foreign land and helped provide for their family. Ruth's faithfulness transformed their broken family into an incredible legacy. Much later, her great-grandson David would become king of Israel and was called a man after God's own heart.

Facing suffering with others is daunting. But if we surrender our own will and seek God's strength, He enables us to love people in extraordinary ways. In His power, we can choose to say, “Where you go, I will go.”

**KAREN PIMPO**

**Reflect and Pray**

Who around you is walking a difficult road? How can you choose to walk alongside that person?

Thank You, Jesus, for never abandoning me.

**INSIGHT**

Throughout Scripture, we find statements declaring the necessity of commitment to God or Jesus (DEUTERONOMY 6:S; MARK 8:34). Ruth's statement of commitment is remarkable, however, because in addition to a commitment to her mother-in-law Naomi, she includes a commitment to Israel's God: "Your people will be my people and your God my God" (RUTH 1:16). This is surprising because she's a Moabitess and a foreigner. Her declaration echoes that of Rahab (JOSHUA 2), the Roman centurion (MATTHEW 8:5-13), and the Canaanite woman (15:21-28). All these foreigners expressed confidence in or a commitment to God. Their acceptance shows hints of His love for the whole world.

**BILL CROWDER**

# God Calling – 4/15/25

# Never Feel Inadequate

Obey My demands. They are steps in the ladder that lead to success. Above all, keep calm, unmoved.

Go back into the silence to recover this calm when it is lost even for one moment. You accomplish more by this than by all the activities of a long day. At all cost keep calm, you can help nobody when you are agitated. I, your Lord, see not as man sees.

Never feel inadequate for any task. All work here is accomplished by My Spirit, and that can flow through the most humble and lowly. It simply needs an unblocked channel. Rid yourself of self and all is well.

Pray about all, but concentrate on a few things until those are accomplished. I am watching over you. Strength for your daily, hourly task is provided. Yours is the fault, the sin, if it is unclaimed, and you fail for lack of it.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" 2 Corinthians 12:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/16/25

# Can You Come Down From the Mountain?



While you have the light, believe in the light… —[John 12:36](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+12%3A36)

We all have moments when we feel better than ever before, and we say, “I feel fit for anything; if only I could always be like this!” We are not meant to be. Those moments are moments of insight which we have to live up to even when we do not feel like it. Many of us are no good for the everyday world when we are not on the mountaintop. Yet we must bring our everyday life up to the standard revealed to us on the mountaintop when we were there.

Never allow a feeling that was awakened in you on the mountaintop to evaporate. Don’t place yourself on the shelf by thinking, “How great to be in such a wonderful state of mind!” Act immediately— do something, even if your only reason to act is that you would rather not. If, during a prayer meeting, God shows you something to do, don’t say, “I’ll do it”— just do it! Pick yourself up by the back of the neck and shake off your fleshly laziness. Laziness can always be seen in our cravings for a mountaintop experience; all we talk about is our planning for our time on the mountain. We must learn to live in the ordinary “gray” day according to what we saw on the mountain.

Don’t give up because you have been blocked and confused once— go after it again. Burn your bridges behind you, and stand committed to God by an act of your own will. Never change your decisions, but be sure to make your decisions in the light of what you saw and learned on the mountain.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Am I becoming more and more in love with God as a holy God, or with the conception of an amiable Being who says, “Oh well, sin doesn’t matter much”?  Disciples Indeed, 389 L

# CCEL – 4/16/25

**I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.**—[PSA. 31:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html" \l "Ps.31.22)

I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.—Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off. I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.—I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

[Psa. 69:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.69.html" \l "Ps.69.2). -[Lam. 3:54-57](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.54).[Psa. 77:7-11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.77.html" \l "Ps.77.7). -[Psa. 27:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.13).

“The precious blood of Christ.” **[1 Peter 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.19)**

Standing at the foot of the cross, we see hands, and feet, and side, all distilling crimson streams of precious blood. It is “precious” because of its redeeming and atoning efficacy. By it the sins of Christ’s people are atoned for; they are redeemed from under the law; they are reconciled to God, made one with him. Christ’s blood is also “precious” in its cleansing power; it “cleanseth from all sin.” “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Through Jesus’ blood there is not a spot left upon any believer, no wrinkle nor any such thing remains. O precious blood, which makes us clean, removing the stains of abundant iniquity, and permitting us to stand accepted in the Beloved, notwithstanding the many ways in which we have rebelled against our God. The blood of Christ is likewise “precious” in its preserving power. We are safe from the destroying angel under the sprinkled blood. Remember it is God’s seeing the blood which is the true reason for our being spared. Here is comfort for us when the eye of faith is dim, for God’s eye is still the same. The blood of Christ is “precious” also in its sanctifying influence. The same blood which justifies by taking away sin, does in its after-action, quicken the new nature and lead it onward to subdue sin and to follow out the commands of God. There is no motive for holiness so great as that which streams from the veins of Jesus. And “precious,” unspeakably precious, is this blood, because it has an overcoming power. It is written, “They overcame through the blood of the Lamb.” How could they do otherwise? He who fights with the precious blood of Jesus, fights with a weapon which cannot know defeat. The blood of Jesus! sin dies at its presence, death ceases to be death: heaven’s gates are opened. The blood of Jesus! we shall march on, conquering and to conquer, so long as we can trust its power!

# Word Live – 4/16/25

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# Scripture Union – 4/16/25

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# Today in the Word – 4/16/25

# Raised by the Spirit

A close up of a plant

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[**Read Romans 8:1–14**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Romans+8:1%e2%80%9314)

**Life Through the Spirit**

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28119a)] free from the law of sin and death. 3For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28120b)] God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28120c)] And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. 8Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

9You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28127d)] because of righteousness. 11And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28128e)] his Spirit who lives in you.

12Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. 13For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

14For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

**Footnotes**

1. [Romans 8:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-28119) The Greek is singular; some manuscripts *me*
2. [Romans 8:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-28120) In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit; also in verses 4-13.
3. [Romans 8:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-28120) Or *flesh, for sin*
4. [Romans 8:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-28127) Or *you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive*
5. [Romans 8:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-28128) Some manuscripts *bodies through*

He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. [Romans 8:11](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Rom.8.11)

*Antinomian* is a word that combines a Greek preposition that means “against” with the Greek word for “law.” It may seem as if this is a good way to describe Paul’s view. Yet in Romans 3:31 Paul asserts the opposite: “Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.” How does faith uphold the Law? By the Spirit!

In Romans 8:2, Paul says that “the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” This is a contrast between two “laws” or controlling principles that shape behavior. One operates in the realm of flesh, which “cannot please God” (v. 8). The other is the rule of the Spirit, who “gives life because of righteousness” (v. 10). Those who are in Christ are still subject to mortality. We will die. However, when we are indwelt by the same powerful Spirit who raised Christ from the dead, death is not our ultimate destiny because “if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you” (v. 11).

The hope of resurrection lies in the future, but its power is something that those who belong to Christ have already begun to experience. The reality of the indwelling presence of the Spirit obligates those who belong to Christ to live out of the realm of the Spirit (v. 12). The Law, even though it is “holy, righteous and good,” can only operate externally (7:12). It reveals the standard but does not enable us to meet it. Its weakness is the flesh, which “does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so” (8:7).

Go Deeper

Is Paul “against” the Law? How does a life lived in the power of the Spirit differ from an “external” Law-oriented approach?

Pray with Us

Holy Spirit, You are our Advocate, Comforter, and Helper! Echoing today’s devotional, we ask You, the Spirit of Life, for Your help and strength to live lives worthy of God’s kingdom.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/16/25

# A PASTRY WAR

A group of soldiers in uniform

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**Read: ECCLESIASTES 7:3-9**

3Frustration is better than laughter,  
    because a sad face is good for the heart.  
4The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,  
    but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure.  
5It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person  
    than to listen to the song of fools.  
6Like the crackling of thorns under the pot,  
    so is the laughter of fools.  
    This too is meaningless.

7Extortion turns a wise person into a fool,  
    and a bribe corrupts the heart.

8The end of a matter is better than its beginning,  
    and patience is better than pride.  
9Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit,  
    for anger resides in the lap of fools.

Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools. ECCLESIASTES 7:9

Of all the foolish things that have led to nations going to war, could a pastry be the worst of all7 In 1832, amid tensions between France and Mexico, a group of Mexican army officers visited a French pastry shop in Mexico City and sampled all the baker's goods without paying. Though the details get complicated (and other provocations compounded the troubles), the result was the first Franco-Mexican War (1838-39) - known as the Pastry War in which more than three hundred soldiers died. It's sad what a moment of anger can incite.

Most human conflicts-shattered marriages and ruined friendships-are likely rooted in some form of unmanaged anger. Selfishness and power plays, unresolved misunderstandings, slights and counter-aggression-it's all foolishness. So often, our ill-advised perceptions or reactions lead to destructive anger. Yet Ecclesiastes offers wisdom: "Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools" (7:9).

It's. foolish to have a short fuse and be easily provoked to anger, especially when God offers a better way-perhaps through "the rebuke of a wise person"(v. 5) . Pursuing wisdom, we can "let the peace of Christ rule in [our] hearts" (COLOSSIANS 3:15). We can live in wisdom and forgiveness as He helps us.

**WINN COLLIER**

**Reflect and Pray**

Where have you given in to foolish anger? How did it hurt you or others?

Dear God, I don't want to allow foolish anger to control me or harm others. Please help me release my anger and receive Your peace.

**INSIGHT**

Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes, asks: "Who knows how our days can best be spent? Our lives are like a shadow" (6:12 NLT). The book contains some odd and morbid advice about life's brevity, adversity, and festivity (7:1-14). One's death is better than one's birth (V. l), attend funerals, not parties {v. 2); and think about life's pains, not pleasures (V. l). Since "death is the destiny of everyone" *(V.* 2), Solomon advises us to live life with our end in mind, pondering life's brevity instead of pursuing festivity, "for sadness has a refining influence on us" (v. 3 NLT). ln light of life's brevity and adversity and death's reality, we're to decide how to wisely spend our time. Even as we experience the uncertainties of life-adversity and prosperity, good times and bad times-God is in control (vv. 13-14).

Visit OCBU.org/OT022 and dive deeper into the wisdom of Ecclesiastes.

By: [**K. T. Sim**](https://odb.org/author/ktsim/)

# God Calling – 4/16/25

# Love Your Servants

Love, love, love. Tender Love is the secret. Love those you are training, love those who work with you, love those who serve you.

Dwell on that thought -- God is Love. Link it up with My "I and my Father are one." Dwell on My actions on earth. See in them Love in operation.

If it was God who so acted, then it was Love, Perfect Love, performed those actions, those wonders. Then you, too, must put Love (God) into action in your lives. Perfect Love means perfect forgiveness. Lo, my children, you see that where God is there can be no lack of forgiveness, for that is really lack of love.

God is Love . . . no judging.   
God is Love . . . no resentment.   
God is Love . . . all patience.   
God is Love . . . all power.   
God is Love . . . all supply.

All you need to have is love to God and man. Love to God ensures obedience to every wish, every command. Love is the fulfilling of all law.

Pray much for love.

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/17/25

# All or Nothing?



When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment…and plunged into the sea. —[John 21:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+21%3A7)

Have you ever had a crisis in your life in which you deliberately, earnestly, and recklessly abandoned everything? It is a crisis of the will. You may come to that point many times externally, but it will amount to nothing. The true deep crisis of abandonment, or total surrender, is reached internally, not externally. The giving up of only external things may actually be an indication of your being in total bondage.

Have you deliberately committed your will to Jesus Christ? It is a transaction of the will, not of emotion; any positive emotion that results is simply a superficial blessing arising out of the transaction. If you focus your attention on the emotion, you will never make the transaction. Do not ask God what the transaction is to be, but make the determination to surrender your will regarding whatever you see, whether it is in the shallow or the deep, profound places internally.

If you have heard Jesus Christ’s voice on the waves of the sea, you can let your convictions and your consistency take care of themselves by concentrating on maintaining your intimate relationship to Him.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The emphasis to-day is placed on the furtherance of an organization; the note is, “We must keep this thing going.” If we are in God’s order the thing will go; if we are not in His order, it won’t.  Conformed to His Image, 357 R

# CCEL – 4/17/25

**Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.**—[PSA. 50:23.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.50.html" \l "Ps.50.23)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.—Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Ye are a royal priesthood . . . that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.—Ye . . . as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.—By him . . . let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.

[Col. 3:16,17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.16). -[I Cor. 6:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.20).[I Pet. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9). -[I Pet. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.5). -[Heb. 13:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.15).[Psa. 34:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.2).

“Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” **[Hebrews 12:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.24)**

Reader, have you come to the blood of sprinkling? The question is not whether you have come to a knowledge of doctrine, or an observance of ceremonies, or to a certain form of experience, but have you come to the blood of Jesus? The blood of Jesus is the life of all vital godliness. If you have truly come to Jesus, we know how you came—the Holy Spirit sweetly brought you there. You came to the blood of sprinkling with no merits of your own. Guilty, lost, and helpless, you came to take that blood, and that blood alone, as your everlasting hope. You came to the cross of Christ, with a trembling and an aching heart; and oh! what a precious sound it was to you to hear the voice of the blood of Jesus! The dropping of his blood is as the music of heaven to the penitent sons of earth. We are full of sin, but the Saviour bids us lift our eyes to him, and as we gaze upon his streaming wounds, each drop of blood, as it falls, cries, “It is finished; I have made an end of sin; I have brought in everlasting righteousness.” Oh! sweet language of the precious blood of Jesus! If you have come to that blood once, you will come to it constantly. Your life will be “Looking unto Jesus.” Your whole conduct will be epitomized in this—“To whom coming.” Not to whom I have come, but to whom I am always coming. If thou hast ever come to the blood of sprinkling, thou wilt feel thy need of coming to it every day. He who does not desire to wash in it every day, has never washed in it at all. The believer ever feels it to be his joy and privilege that there is still a fountain opened. Past experiences are doubtful food for Christians; a present coming to Christ alone can give us joy and comfort. This morning let us sprinkle our door-post fresh with blood, and then feast upon the Lamb, assured that the destroying angel must pass us by.

# Word Live – 4/17/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/17/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/17/25

# Prayers from Heaven

A close-up of a person's hands

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

[**Read Romans 8:26–39**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Romans+8:26%e2%80%9339)

26In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

28And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28145a)] have been called according to his purpose. 29For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

**More Than Conquerors**

31What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;  
    we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28153b)]

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28155c)] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Footnotes**

1. [Romans 8:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#en-NIV-28145) Or *that all things work together for good to those who love God, who*; or *that in all things God works together with those who love him to bring about what is good—with those who*
2. [Romans 8:36](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#en-NIV-28153) Psalm 44:22
3. [Romans 8:38](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A26%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#en-NIV-28155) Or *nor heavenly rulers*

Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us .[Romans 8:34](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Rom.8.34)

When I announced my retirement, the thing most people wanted to know was what I would do with my time. “I am going to sit on the beach and think about God,” I told them. It was an exaggeration, of course. I live in Michigan, so the beach is too cold in the winter! But have you ever wondered how Jesus occupies Himself now that He has risen from the dead?

Paul reveals that one of the things Jesus does is pray. This was something He did even before His resurrection. But now Jesus does so from a position of complete victory. His sacrifice for sin is complete. He has been raised to life and restored to His rightful place at the Father’s right hand (v. 34). The apostle reminds us of these things to encourage us in the present and reassure us about the future. For those who belong to Christ, God “works for the good” in every circumstance (v. 28). Christ’s death and resurrection have guaranteed the believer’s complete transformation into His image (v. 29). What is more, as Christ prays for us from heaven, the indwelling Holy Spirit “intercedes for us through wordless groans” (v. 26).

No wonder Paul concludes that nothing we face can “separate us from the love of Christ” (v. 35). Since the entire Trinity is at work in our salvation to make us “more than conquerors through him who loved us,” why should we have any doubt about what the future holds (v. 37)? The level of certainty that Paul describes in these verses is absolute. The ultimate outcome depends on God, not our situation. God’s accusing Law was the chief impediment that stood in our way. Now that Jesus has died and risen for us, there is no longer any charge that can be brought against us (v. 33).

Go Deeper

How would you use the assertions Paul makes in these verses to reassure another believer who was worried about their salvation?

Pray with Us

What can separate us from the love of Christ? Paul gives a definitive answer in today’s passage: Nothing! What a wonderful assurance! Holy Spirit, guide us into life rooted in God’s enduring love.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/17/25

# LIFE AND DEATH IN CHRIST

A group of people standing in front of a crowd

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**Read: JOHN 12:20-27**

**Jesus Predicts His Death**

20Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. 21They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” 22Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

23Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

27“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. JOHN 12:24

Facing a firing squad, Fyodor Dostoevsky quietly counted the last moments of his life. Dostoevsky, a believer in Jesus, is considered one of the greatest writers in all of literature. His monumental novel *The Brothers Karamazov* explored themes about God, life, and death. It was said of Dostoevsky, “He spoke about Christ ecstatically." The rifles raised. "Ready!...Aim ... "

Jesus, alluding to His own execution, speaks to His disciples and to us of the eternal value of life and death when He said, "The hour has come" (JOHN 12:23). The image is a seed (our life), which produces a great harvest through its own sacrifice *(v.* 24). Jesus tells us not to love this life too much, for it is those who are willing to sacrifice this present life who will find "eternal life" (v. 25).

Being His disciple requires sacrifice. But we find our hope in His words, "My Father will honor the one who serves me" (V. 26).

Fyodor looked death in the face. But a letter from the Czar was delivered at the last second. A reprieve. Dostoevsky's life was spared, yet this experience would infuse all his later works. Indeed, the epigraph of *The Brothers Karamazov* is this verse, John 12:24: "Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

**KENNETH PETERSEN**

**Reflect and Pray**

How does your faith affect your thoughts about life and death? What's your joy for the future?

Father God, please help me accept the challenge of discipleship and understand the meaning of life through death.

**INSIGHT**

The gospel of John uses words for "life" more often than any other gospel, yet almost half of his gospel is devoted to the passion of Christ-the events of His final week on earth, including His suffering and death. It was only by His death and resurrection that new life became available to us. And that new life would follow a death to our old life. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die" (JOHN 11:25). The paradox of the life of the believer in Christ is that our spiritual "dying" is what produces the fruit of spiritual living (12:24-25).

The day of Jesus' resurrection occurred on the very day during Passover when the first sheaf of the grain harvest was waved in the temple. It was the sign of a coming harvest only possible because each seed first dies its necessary death.

By: [**Tim Laniak**](https://odb.org/author/timgustafson/)

# God Calling – 4/17/25

# The Two Joys

My children, I come. Hearts eager to do My Will, send out a call that ever I find irresistible. I know no barrier then.

Resignation to My Will keeps Me barred out from more Hearts than does unbelief. Can anything be such a crime against Love as being resigned? My Will should be welcomed with a glad wonder if I am to do My Work in the heart and life.

The only resignation that could possibly be acceptable to Me is when Self, ousted by My claims, accepts the inevitable and resigns the throne for Me, leaving My Disciple free to carry out My Will, to welcome My Will gladly, rapturously.

In all true discipleship, and in the true spiritual development of each disciple, there is first the wonder and the joy of first acquaintance, then comes the long plain stretch of lesson-learning and discipline, when Joy seems so much a thing of the past as never to be recaptured again.

But the constant experience of Me, the constant persistent recognition of My Work  in daily happenings — the ever accumulating weight of evidence in support of My Guidance —  the numberless instances in which seeming chance or wonderful coincidence can be, must be, traced back to My loving forethought -- all these gradually engender a feeling of wonder, certainty, gratitude, followed in time by Joy.

Joy is of two kinds. The Joy born of Love and Wonder, and the Joy born of Love and Knowledge, and between the experience of the two Joys lie discipline, disappointment, almost disillusion.

But combat these in My Strength, or rather cling blindly, helplessly to Me and let Me combat them, persevere in obeying My Will, accept My discipline, and the second Joy will follow .

And of this second Joy it was that I said, "Your joy no man taketh from you."

Do not regret the first, the second is the greater gift.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make your free." John 8:31, 32

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/18/25

# Readiness



God called to him….And he said, "Here I am." —[Exodus 3:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Exodus+3%3A4)

When God speaks, many of us are like people in a fog, and we give no answer. Moses’ reply to God revealed that he knew where he was and that he was ready. Readiness means having a right relationship to God and having the knowledge of where we are. We are so busy telling God where we would like to go. Yet the man or woman who is ready for God and His work is the one who receives the prize when the summons comes. We wait with the idea that some great opportunity or something sensational will be coming our way, and when it does come we are quick to cry out, “Here I am.” Whenever we sense that Jesus Christ is rising up to take authority over some great task, we are there, but we are not ready for some obscure duty.

Readiness for God means that we are prepared to do the smallest thing or the largest thing— it makes no difference. It means we have no choice in what we want to do, but that whatever God’s plans may be, we are there and ready. Whenever any duty presents itself, we hear God’s voice as our Lord heard His Father’s voice, and we are ready for it with the total readiness of our love for Him. Jesus Christ expects to do with us just as His Father did with Him. He can put us wherever He wants, in pleasant duties or in menial ones, because our union with Him is the same as His union with the Father. “…that they may be one just as We are one…” ([John 17:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:22)).

Be ready for the sudden surprise visits of God. A ready person never needs to get ready— he is ready. Think of the time we waste trying to get ready once God has called! The burning bush is a symbol of everything that surrounds the person who is ready, and it is on fire with the presence of God Himself.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To read the Bible according to God’s providential order in your circumstances is the only way to read it, viz., in the blood and passion of personal life. Disciples Indeed, 387

# CCEL – 4/18/25

**I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.**—[DEUT. 18:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.18.html" \l "Deut.18.18)

[Moses] stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid.—There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.—Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

[Deut. 5:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.5.html" \l "Deut.5.5). -[I Tim. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.2.html" \l "iTim.2.5).[Num. 12:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.12.html" \l "Num.12.3). -[Matt. 11:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.11.html" \l "Matt.11.29). -[Phi. 2:5-7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.5).[Heb. 3:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.3.html" \l "Heb.3.5).

“She bound the scarlet line in the window.” **[Joshua 2:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Josh.2.html" \l "Josh.2.21)**

Rahab depended for her preservation upon the promise of the spies, whom she looked upon as the representatives of the God of Israel. Her faith was simple and firm, but it was very obedient. To tie the scarlet line in the window was a very trivial act in itself, but she dared not run the risk of omitting it. Come, my soul, is there not here a lesson for thee? Hast thou been attentive to all thy Lord’s will, even though some of his commands should seem non-essential? Hast thou observed in his own way the two ordinances of believers’ baptism and the Lord’s Supper? These neglected, argue much unloving disobedience in thy heart. Be henceforth in all things blameless, even to the tying of a thread, if that be matter of command.

This act of Rahab sets forth a yet more solemn lesson. Have I implicitly trusted in the precious blood of Jesus? Have I tied the scarlet cord, as with a Gordian knot in my window, so that my trust can never be removed? Or can I look out towards the Dead Sea of my sins, or the Jerusalem of my hopes, without seeing the blood, and seeing all things in connection with its blessed power? The passer-by can see a cord of so conspicuous a colour, if it hangs from the window: it will be well for me if my life makes the efficacy of the atonement conspicuous to all onlookers. What is there to be ashamed of? Let men or devils gaze if they will, the blood is my boast and my song. My soul, there is One who will see that scarlet line, even when from weakness of faith thou canst not see it thyself; Jehovah, the Avenger, will see it and pass over thee. Jericho’s walls fell flat: Rahab’s house was on the wall, and yet it stood unmoved; my nature is built into the wall of humanity, and yet when destruction smites the race, I shall be secure. My soul, tie the scarlet thread in the window afresh, and rest in peace.

# Word Live – 4/18/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/18/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/18/25

# Confessing Resurrection

A person standing in front of a mountain

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[**Read Romans 10:1–13**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Romans+10:1%e2%80%9313)

10 Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. 2For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. 4Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

5Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28194a)] 6But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28195b)] (that is, to bring Christ down) 7“or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28196c)] (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28197d)] that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28200e)] 12For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28202f)]

**Footnotes**

1. [Romans 10:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28194) Lev. 18:5
2. [Romans 10:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28195) Deut. 30:12
3. [Romans 10:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28196) Deut. 30:13
4. [Romans 10:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28197) Deut. 30:14
5. [Romans 10:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28200) Isaiah 28:16 (see Septuagint)
6. [Romans 10:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2010%3A1%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-28202) Joel 2:32

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [Romans 10:9](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Rom.10.9)

When we hear the word “confession,” we automatically think of bad behavior or an admission of guilt. To confess can also mean to declare. Many churches align themselves with statements that are known as confessions of faith.

In verses 9–10, the apostle Paul articulates the central confession of the Christian faith. These verses express the “message of faith” that Paul preached everywhere he went (v. 8). This message does not contradict the Law God gave to His Old Testament people, nor does it denounce the Law. Rather, it is a gospel that recognizes: “Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes” (v. 4).

Israel’s refusal to acknowledge this led to a misguided zeal for the Law. Paul observes: “Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness” (v. 3). The “righteousness of God” is a righteousness that can only come to us as a gift. It cannot be earned by human effort, no matter how zealous it is (Rom. 5:17). As one commentator explains, “It was in Jesus Christ that God’s gift of righteousness was offered, and Israel’s ignorance of God’s righteousness was identical with their failure to recognize Jesus Christ.”

Confessing the death and resurrection of Christ is more than merely acknowledging that these events were historical facts. It is a declaration of dependence upon Christ’s work as the basis for our righteous standing before God. It is the opposite of trying to obtain eternal life by what I do (v. 5). Faith is a matter of trusting that what Jesus has done on my behalf has earned that righteousness for me. Christ opens the door of access to people from all backgrounds, both Jews and Gentiles (vv. 12–13).

**Go Deeper**

What does it mean to “call upon the name of the Lord”? Who does Paul say can receive righteousness as a gift in this way?

**Pray with Us**

We lift up in prayer the Jewish people who zealously try to fulfill the Law and, like Israel in today’s reading, do not recognize that “Christ is the culmination of the law” (Rom. 10:4). God, open their eyes to Your love and grace!

# Our Daily Bread – 4/18/25

# LAMENT TO PRAISE

A group of blue flowers

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**LUKE 23:32-34**

32Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. 34Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2023%3A32-34%2C%2039-43&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25970a)] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

**Footnotes**

1. [Luke 23:34](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2023%3A32-34%2C%2039-43&version=NIV#en-NIV-25970) Some early manuscripts do not have this sentence.

**LUKE 23:39-43**

39One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

40But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? 41We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

42Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2023%3A32-34%2C%2039-43&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25978a)]”

43Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

**Footnotes**

1. [Luke 23:42](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%2023%3A32-34%2C%2039-43&version=NIV#en-NIV-25978) Some manuscripts *come with your kingly power*

He said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." LUKE 23:42

Several legends surround the naming of the beautiful five petaled flower the forget-me-not. Among those stories is one from a German legend. According to the story, as God named all the plants He'd created, one little flower worried that it would be overlooked. So the flower called out, "Forget-me-not, O lord." And that's the name God gave to it.

Though this is only a story, the forget-me-not has become a symbol of love and remembrance. Yet all of us have experienced what it feels like to be forgotten. To be *remembered -*especially to be remembered by our God-is our heart's true desire. We find just such a story in the account of the crucifixion of Jesus. Luke tells us, "Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with [Jesus) to be executed" (23;32). As they were being crucified, one criminal next to Christ suddenly understood. He said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (v. 42). Christ's response was unforgettable: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (V. 43).

What an amazing moment! In his darkest hour, that criminal learned what it meant to be remembered by the Son of God.

We too are remembered in our hour of need. The God who loved us enough to die for us will never forget us.

**BILL CROWDER**

**Reflect and Pray**

When have you felt forgotten? How will you turn to Jesus today and permit Him to turn your lament into praise?

Dear Father, in these moments when' may feel forgotten, please remind me of Your abiding, loving presence in my life and encourage me with Your grace.

**INSIGHT**

As Jesus hung on the cross, He made several statements that are now referred to as "The Seven Last Words (Sayings) from the Cross." Three are found in Luke 23: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (V. 34); ''Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (V. 43); "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (V.46). The other four sayings are found in Matthew 27:46 and John 19:26-27, 28,30. Jesus didn't lose perspective during His distress, pain, and agony. He remained focused on His Father and His mission. Though the voices around the cross were many, including the criminals crucified with Him (LUKE 23:39-42), Christ's words were clear, focused, and intentional. His conduct under duress remains the standard for those called to endure suffering. "Christ suffered for you, leaving

you an example, that you should follow in his steps." (1 PETER 2:21).

By: [**Arthur Jackson**](https://odb.org/author/arthurjackson/)

# God Calling – 4/18/25

# No Dark Days

Such light, such joy flows out from this house. It affects all who come here.

Do not feel that you have to try and help them. Just love them, welcome them, shower little courtesies and love-signs on them, and they must be helped.

Love is God. Give them Love, and you give them God. Then leave Him to do His Work. Love all, even the beggars. Send no one away without a word of cheer, a feeling that you care. I may have put the impulse to come here into some despairing one's heart. Think if you failed Me!

Besides, you have no choice. You told Me it was My Home. I shall use it. Remember this. There would be no dark winter days were Love in the hearts of all My children.

Oh! My children, can you not feel the joy of knowing, loving, and companying with Me?

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Roman 13:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/19/25

# Beware of the Least Likely Temptation



Joab had defected to Adonijah, though he had not defected to Absalom. —[1 Kings 2:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Kings+2%3A28)

Joab withstood the greatest test of his life, remaining absolutely loyal to David by not turning to follow after the fascinating and ambitious Absalom. Yet toward the end of his life he turned to follow after the weak and cowardly Adonijah. Always remain alert to the fact that where one person has turned back is exactly where anyone may be tempted to turn back (see [1 Corinthians 10:11-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+10:11-13)). You may have just victoriously gone through a great crisis, but now be alert about the things that may appear to be the least likely to tempt you. Beware of thinking that the areas of your life where you have experienced victory in the past are now the least likely to cause you to stumble and fall.

We are apt to say, “It is not at all likely that having been through the greatest crisis of my life I would now turn back to the things of the world.” Do not try to predict where the temptation will come; it is the least likely thing that is the real danger. It is in the aftermath of a great spiritual event that the least likely things begin to have an effect. They may not be forceful and dominant, but they are there. And if you are not careful to be forewarned, they will trip you. You have remained true to God under great and intense trials— now beware of the undercurrent. Do not be abnormally examining your inner self, looking forward with dread, but stay alert; keep your memory sharp before God. Unguarded strength is actually a double weakness, because that is where the least likely temptations will be effective in sapping strength. The Bible characters stumbled over their strong points, never their weak ones.

“…kept by the power of God…”— that is the only safety. ([1 Peter 1:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+1:5)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

When we no longer seek God for His blessings, we have time to seek Him for Himself.  The Moral Foundations of Life, 728 L

# CCEL – 4/19/25

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.**—[JOHN 10:7.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.7)

The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.—Christ . . . hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.—The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.—Through him we . . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.—Having . . . boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.—We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

[Matt. 27:51](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.27.html#Matt.27.51). -[I Pet. 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.3.html" \l "iPet.3.18). -[Heb. 9:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html" \l "Heb.9.8).[John 10:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.9).[John 14:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.6). -[Eph. 2:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.18). -[Heb. 10:19,20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.19). -[Rom. 5:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.1).

“Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” **[Matthew 27:51](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.27.html" \l "Matt.27.51)**

No mean miracle was wrought in the rending of so strong and thick a veil; but it was not intended merely as a display of power—many lessons were herein taught us. The old law of ordinances was put away, and like a worn-out vesture, rent and laid aside. When Jesus died, the sacrifices were all finished, because all fulfilled in him, and therefore the place of their presentation was marked with an evident token of decay. That rent also revealed all the hidden things of the old dispensation: the mercy-seat could now be seen, and the glory of God gleamed forth above it. By the death of our Lord Jesus we have a clear revelation of God, for he was “not as Moses, who put a veil over his face.” Life and immortality are now brought to light, and things which have been hidden since the foundation of the world are manifest in him. The annual ceremony of atonement was thus abolished. The atoning blood which was once every year sprinkled within the veil, was now offered once for all by the great High Priest, and therefore the place of the symbolical rite was broken up. No blood of bullocks or of lambs is needed now, for Jesus has entered within the veil with his own blood. Hence access to God is now permitted, and is the privilege of every believer in Christ Jesus. There is no small space laid open through which we may peer at the mercy-seat, but the rent reaches from the top to the bottom. We may come with boldness to the throne of the heavenly grace. Shall we err if we say that the opening of the Holy of Holies in this marvellous manner by our Lord’s expiring cry was the type of the opening of the gates of paradise to all the saints by virtue of the Passion? Our bleeding Lord hath the key of heaven; he openeth and no man shutteth; let us enter in with him into the heavenly places, and sit with him there till our common enemies shall be made his footstool.

# Word Live – 4/19/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/19/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/19/25

# Raised to Be a Temple

A person holding a cross

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[**Read 1 Corinthians 6:12–20**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+6:12%e2%80%9320)

**Sexual Immorality**

12“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 15Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206%3A12%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28484a)] 17But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206%3A12%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28485b)]

18Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 6:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206%3A12%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#en-NIV-28484) Gen. 2:24
2. [1 Corinthians 6:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206%3A12%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#en-NIV-28485) Or *in the Spirit*

By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.[1 Corinthians 6:14](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.6.14)

The Christian hope is a hope with skin on it. From the moment He left the tomb, Jesus took pains to prove that the resurrection He underwent was bodily in nature. “Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself!” Jesus told the disciples in Luke 24:39. “Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” Why did Jesus do that?

The bodily resurrection of Jesus is proof not only of Jesus’ continued life but of the important role of the body in God’s plan for redeemed humanity. Jesus’ resurrected body is the guarantee that our physical bodies will one day be resurrected. This means that Christian spirituality is embodied spirituality. God’s plan for the body in the life to come underscores the importance of the body in the present. Some of the Corinthian believers felt that the body was incidental to their spiritual lives. They believed they could do whatever they pleased with it because it was only a body. Paul captures their philosophy with two of their own slogans. One was an extreme view of liberty: “I have the right to do anything” (v. 12). The other denied the moral importance of bodily behavior: “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both” (v. 13).

The apostle corrected both errors by pointing to the body’s future destiny and what that implies about its present use. The body is meant “for the Lord” and even now functions as His temple through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (vv. 13, 19). The indwelling Holy Spirit is a mark of God’s ownership. Those who are in Christ have been united to Christ by the Spirit. Their body belongs to Him. Our freedom is the freedom to obey and not do whatever we want.

**Go Deeper**

Why does Paul say that our body is not our own? How can you glorify God with your body today?

**Pray with Us**

Lord, You had a real human body when You walked the earth, and Your resurrection was bodily in nature. This tells us a lot about our own bodies: You created them and have a plan for them in Your kingdom. Teach us to value our bodies.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/19/25

# CLOTHED IN CHRIST

A close up of a toy

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: ISAIAH 61:4-11**

4They will rebuild the ancient ruins  
    and restore the places long devastated;  
they will renew the ruined cities  
    that have been devastated for generations.  
5Strangers will shepherd your flocks;  
    foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.  
6And you will be called priests of the Lord,  
    you will be named ministers of our God.  
You will feed on the wealth of nations,  
    and in their riches you will boast.

7Instead of your shame  
    you will receive a double portion,  
and instead of disgrace  
    you will rejoice in your inheritance.  
And so you will inherit a double portion in your land,  
    and everlasting joy will be yours.

8“For I, the Lord, love justice;  
    I hate robbery and wrongdoing.  
In my faithfulness I will reward my people  
    and make an everlasting covenant with them.  
9Their descendants will be known among the nations  
    and their offspring among the peoples.  
All who see them will acknowledge  
    that they are a people the Lord has blessed.”

10I delight greatly in the Lord;  
    my soul rejoices in my God.  
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation  
    and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,  
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,  
    and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
11For as the soil makes the sprout come up  
    and a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness  
    and praise spring up before all nations.

He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness. ISAIAH 61:10

Rose Turner, a fashion psychologist at the London College of Fashion, studies the Impact clothing has on how people think, how they behave, and even how clothes affect their mood. As the closest thing to our bodies, clothing forms a type of "second skin" and girds us for whatever the day might hold. For example, donning professional attire can "help with motivation and concentration'" at work, and wearing vintage pieces with sentjmental value can bring comfort during stressful situations.

This psychological phenomenon offers an insight into Isaiah's prophetic words about Jesus' sacrificial act. He records the future deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, assuring them they would one day "rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated" in their absence (ISAIAH 61:4). In that day, they would wear "a robe of his righteousness" (V. 10).

Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled first in the nation's return to Jerusalem and then fully when "God made [Jesus) ... sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 CORINTHIANS 5:21). Righteousness describes our right relationship with God when we trust in Christ's sacrifice. God doesn't see us outfitted in shame or disgrace because of our sin; instead, He sees us clothed in Jesus' enduring righteousness-a "second skin" that girds us with joy today and for eternity.

**KIRSTEN HOLMBERG**

**Reflect and Pray**

What shame do you "put on" every day? How can you better remember your robe of righteousness?

Thank You, Jesus, for clothing me in Your righteousness.

**INSIGHT**

Isaiah 61 speaks of the redemption and restoration of God's people as "the year of the LORD'S favor" (v. 21. They will experience God's grace when He sends them the "anointed" one-Jesus (SEE LUKE 4:18-19) – to rescue and deliver them from their captivity to sin (ISAIAH 61:1-3). God will bless them as His covenant people, and they will rejoice in His faithfulness, grace, goodness, and glory (vv.4-11). In thankfulness for God's salvation, the prophet Isaiah declared on behalf of the redeemed people: "He has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness" (V. 10 NLT). God's redeemed people will be a witness to the world that God has blessed His people with new life (v. 9).

By: [**K. T. Sim**](https://odb.org/author/ktsim/)

# God Calling – 4/19/25

# Life Is A Love Story

You need Me. I need you.

My broken world needs you. Many a weary troubled heart needs you. Many a troubled heart will be gladdened by you, drawn nearer to Me by you both.

Health -- Peace -- Joy -- Patience -- Endurance, they all come from contact with Me.

Oh! It is the glorious way, the upward way, the wonderful discoveries, the tender intimacies, the amazing, almost incomprehensible, understanding. Truly the Christian Life -- Life with Me -- is a Love story. Leave all to Me.

All you have missed you will find in Me, the Soul's Lover, the Soul's Friend, Father -- Mother -- Comrade -- Brother. Try Me.

You cannot make too many demands upon Me -- nor put too great a strain upon My Love and Forbearance.

Claim -- claim -- claim -- Healing -- Power -- Joy -- Supply -- what you will.

"He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Song of Solomon 2:4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/20/25

# Can a Saint Falsely Accuse God?



All the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen… —[2 Corinthians 1:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+1%3A20)

Jesus’ parable of the talents recorded in [Matthew 25:14-30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+25:14-30)  was a warning that it is possible for us to misjudge our capacities. This parable has nothing to do with natural gifts and abilities, but relates to the gift of the Holy Spirit as He was first given at Pentecost. We must never measure our spiritual capacity on the basis of our education or our intellect; our capacity in spiritual things is measured on the basis of the promises of God. If we get less than God wants us to have, we will falsely accuse Him as the servant falsely accused his master when he said, “You expect more of me than you gave me the power to do. You demand too much of me, and I cannot stand true to you here where you have placed me.” When it is a question of God’s Almighty Spirit, never say, “I can’t.” Never allow the limitation of your own natural ability to enter into the matter. If we have received the Holy Spirit, God expects the work of the Holy Spirit to be exhibited in us.

The servant justified himself, while condemning his lord on every point, as if to say, “Your demand on me is way out of proportion to what you gave to me.” Have we been falsely accusing God by daring to worry after He has said, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”? ([Matthew 6:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:33)). Worrying means exactly what this servant implied— “I know your intent is to leave me unprotected and vulnerable.” A person who is lazy in the natural realm is always critical, saying, “I haven’t had a decent chance,” and someone who is lazy in the spiritual realm is critical of God. Lazy people always strike out at others in an independent way.

Never forget that our capacity and capability in spiritual matters is measured by, and based on, the promises of God. Is God able to fulfill His promises? Our answer depends on whether or not we have received the Holy Spirit.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Always keep in contact with those books and those people that enlarge your horizon and make it possible for you to stretch yourself mentally. The Moral Foundations of Life, 721 R

# CCEL – 4/20/25

**There shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand.**—[DEUT. 13:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.13.html" \l "Deut.13.17)

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.—Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.—Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God . . . And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.—The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

[II Cor. 6:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.6.html" \l "iiCor.6.17). -[I Pet. 2:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.11). -[Jude 23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.23).[I John 3:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.2). -[Tit. 2:11-14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.2.html" \l "Titus.2.11).

“That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death.” **[Hebrews 2:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.14)**

O child of God, death hath lost its sting, because the devil’s power over it is destroyed. Then cease to fear dying. Ask grace from God the Holy Ghost, that by an intimate knowledge and a firm belief of thy Redeemer’s death, thou mayst be strengthened for that dread hour. Living near the cross of Calvary thou mayst think of death with pleasure, and welcome it when it comes with intense delight. It is sweet to die in the Lord: it is a covenant-blessing to sleep in Jesus. Death is no longer banishment, it is a return from exile, a going home to the many mansions where the loved ones already dwell. The distance between glorified spirits in heaven and militant saints on earth seems great; but it is not so. We are not far from home—a moment will bring us there. The sail is spread; the soul is launched upon the deep. How long will be its voyage? How many wearying winds must beat upon the sail ere it shall be reefed in the port of peace? How long shall that soul be tossed upon the waves before it comes to that sea which knows no storm? Listen to the answer, “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” Yon ship has just departed, but it is already at its haven. It did but spread its sail and it was there. Like that ship of old, upon the Lake of Galilee, a storm had tossed it, but Jesus said, “Peace, be still,” and immediately it came to land. Think not that a long period intervenes between the instant of death and the eternity of glory. When the eyes close on earth they open in heaven. The horses of fire are not an instant on the road. Then, O child of God, what is there for thee to fear in death, seeing that through the death of thy Lord its curse and sting are destroyed? and now it is but a Jacob’s ladder whose foot is in the dark grave, but its top reaches to glory everlasting.

# Word Live – 4/20/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/20/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/20/25

# The Gospel of Resurrection

A group of crosses on a hill

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[**Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–11**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+15:1%e2%80%9311)

**The Resurrection of Christ**

15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28722a)]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28724b)] and then to the Twelve. 6After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

9For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. 11Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-28722) Or *you at the first*
2. [1 Corinthians 15:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-28724) That is, Peter

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance.[1 Corinthians 15:3](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.15.3)

If you took a poll of favorite holidays, Easter might not be first on most people’s lists. Christmas would probably rank higher. While the early church might reverse this order, they recognized the fundamental connection between the two events. There could be no resurrection without the incarnation and death of Christ. If there was no resurrection, His birth would have little meaning.

Paul speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ as being “of first importance” in the gospel message (v. 3). The proclamation that Jesus died for our sins, was raised on the third day, and appeared in the flesh to the apostles and disciples was the foundation of everything Paul taught (vv. 3–7). Even though it was something that happened in history, this was more than just a summary of historical facts. Paul says this is the message that we must stand upon, hold to firmly, and by which we are saved (vv. 1–2). It is the only message that can actually save us because it calls us to believe in the One who has died for our sins and rose again.

Paul preached this gospel of resurrection both as something he had “received” and as a fact that he had witnessed. Both are important. The gospel that Paul proclaimed was handed down to him, not by the other apostles but by revelation from Christ (Gal. 1:12). Although Paul spoke of it as “my gospel,” it is really Christ’s gospel (see Rom. 2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim. 2:8). Paul also encountered the living Christ who called him to be His special messenger or apostle (vv. 9–11). We do not believe in fables but in something that is a matter of history *and* revelation. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!

**Go Deeper**

As you celebrate with family and friends, we invite you to reflect on what the death and resurrection of Jesus means to you. Happy Resurrection Day from all of us at *Today in the Word*!

**Pray with Us**

Jesus, Your death sentence from the Sanhedrin was “reversed” by a Higher Authority. By “God’s deliberate plan” (Acts 2:23), You rose from the dead. Because You live, we live! Hallelujah!

# Our Daily Bread – 4/20/25

# THE BEST EVIDENCE

A book cover of a hand

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**Read: ACTS 2:29-36**

29“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“‘The Lord said to my Lord:  
    “Sit at my right hand  
35until I make your enemies  
    a footstool for your feet.”’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS%202%3A29-36&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26985a)]

36“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

**Footnotes**

1. [Acts 2:35](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS%202%3A29-36&version=NIV#en-NIV-26985) Psalm 110:1

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ACTS 2:32

Lee didn't believe in God, and he didn't believe in the resurrection of Jesus. But Lee was a journalist with an analytical mind. When his wife believed in Jesus, he decided to study her new faith for himself. After two years of research, he gave in-to God, to the resurrection, to faith in Christ.

The change in him was noticeable. After a few months, his five-year old daughter said to his wife, "Mommy, I want God to do for me what he's done for Daddy." And the daughter of Lee Strobel put her faith in Jesus too.

Many people refuse to believe in the resurrection. But reputable eyewitnesses saw the risen Jesus. One of those eyewitnesses, the disciple Peter, told a large crowd that King David was certainly dead and buried (ACT 2:29). Then Peter pointed to a prophecy David had made. “[David] spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah," he said (V. 31). Peter concluded, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it" (v. 32).

The best evidence for the resurrection is the changed lives of the eyewitnesses, including Peter. At the crucifixion, the disciples had gone into hiding. Peter actually denied Christ (JOHN 18:15-17, 25-27). Once they saw Jesus alive, everything changed. Filled with courage, they began to share the truth of the one great hope of the world-the risen Christ.

**TIM GUSTAFSON**

**Reflect and Pray**

What do you believe about the resurrection of Jesus? How does that belief affect your life?

Father, I'm so grateful for the reality of Jesus' resurrection that changes my life and gives me real hope.

For further study, read Hunting for Resurrection Hope at DiscoverODB.org.

**INSIGHT**

In Acts 2:34-35, Peter quotes Psalm 110:1 in his Pentecost message: The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' " James Montgomery Boice, in his commentary *Psalms, Volume..3,* notes that this verse "is quoted directly or alluded to indirectly at least twenty-seven times," making it the most quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament. Peter was likely in the audience when Jesus quoted this psalm in Matthew 22:44 as He challenged the Pharisees' understanding of the Messiah. While Christ was the son of David and therefore human He was also David's "Lord” - He was Himself divine. Convinced of Jesus' resurrection and exaltation to the Father's right hand, Peter proclaimed that Christ is "both Lord and Messiah" (ACTS 2:36). Such is the message that believers in Jesus proclaim on Easter and every day.

By: [**Arthur Jackson**](https://odb.org/author/arthurjackson/)

# God Calling – 4/20/25

# Heart's Agony

There is a Calvary-Cross on which one hangs alone, untended by even the nearest and dearest.

But beside that Cross, there stands another, and to My dear ones I say little, I hang there afresh beside each one through the hours of the heart's agony.

Have you ever thought of the Joy that the patient, gentle, loving obedience of My disciples brings to My heart? I know no Joy such as the Joy I feel at the loving trust of a dear one.

The wounds of the Hands and Feet hurt little compared with the wounds in the Heart that are the wounds, not of My enemies, but of My friends.

Little doubts, little fears, little misunderstandings. It is the tender trifles of a day that gladden My Heart. I that speak unto you, am He -- your Master.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;  
 but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/21/25

# Don’t Hurt the Lord

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Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? —[John 14:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+14%3A9)

Our Lord must be repeatedly astounded at us— astounded at how “un-simple” we are. It is our own opinions that make us dense and slow to understand, but when we are simple we are never dense; we have discernment all the time. Philip expected the future revelation of a tremendous mystery, but not in Jesus, the Person he thought he already knew. The mystery of God is not in what is going to be— it is now, though we look for it to be revealed in the future in some overwhelming, momentous event. We have no reluctance to obey Jesus, but it is highly probable that we are hurting Him by what we ask— “Lord, show us the Father…” ([John 14:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:8)). His response immediately comes back to us as He says, “Can’t you see Him? He is always right here or He is nowhere to be found.” We look for God to exhibit Himself to His children, but God only exhibits Himself in His children. And while others see the evidence, the child of God does not. We want to be fully aware of what God is doing in us, but we cannot have complete awareness and expect to remain reasonable or balanced in our expectations of Him. If all we are asking God to give us is experiences, and the awareness of those experiences is blocking our way, we hurt the Lord. The very questions we ask hurt Jesus, because they are not the questions of a child.

“Let not your heart be troubled…” ([14:1, 27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:1;27)). Am I then hurting Jesus by allowing my heart to be troubled? If I believe in Jesus and His attributes, am I living up to my belief? Am I allowing anything to disturb my heart, or am I allowing any questions to come in which are unsound or unbalanced? I have to get to the point of the absolute and unquestionable relationship that takes everything exactly as it comes from Him. God never guides us at some time in the future, but always here and now. Realize that the Lord is here now, and the freedom you receive is immediate.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

“When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” We all have faith in good principles, in good management, in good common sense, but who amongst us has faith in Jesus Christ? Physical courage is grand, moral courage is grander, but the man who trusts Jesus Christ in the face of the terrific problems of life is worth a whole crowd of heroes.  The Highest Good, 544 R

# CCEL – 4/21/25

**Stand fast in the Lord.**—[PHI. 4:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.1)

My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

The Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever.—The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back into perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.—If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed.—He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.—Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.—Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.—He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.

[Job 23:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.23.html" \l "Job.23.11).[Psa. 37:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.28). -[Psa. 121:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.121.html" \l "Ps.121.7).[Heb. 10:38,39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.38). -[I John 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.19).[John 8:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.8.html" \l "John.8.31). -[Matt. 24:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.24.html" \l "Matt.24.13). -[I Cor. 16:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.16.html" \l "iCor.16.13). -[Rev. 3:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.3.html" \l "Rev.3.11). -[Rev. 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.3.html" \l "Rev.3.5).

“I know that my Redeemer liveth.” **[Job 19:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.19.html" \l "Job.19.25)**

The marrow of Job’s comfort lies in that little word “My”—“My Redeemer,” and in the fact that the Redeemer lives. Oh! to get hold of a living Christ. We must get a property in him before we can enjoy him. What is gold in the mine to me? Men are beggars in Peru, and beg their bread in California. It is gold in my purse which will satisfy my necessities, by purchasing the bread I need. So a Redeemer who does not redeem me, an avenger who will never stand up for my blood, of what avail were such? Rest not content until by faith you can say “Yes, I cast myself upon my living Lord; and he is mine.” It may be you hold him with a feeble hand; you half think it presumption to say, “He lives as my Redeemer;” yet, remember if you have but faith as a grain of mustard seed, that little faithentitles you to say it. But there is also another word here, expressive of Job’s strong confidence, “I know.” To say, “I hope so, I trust so” is comfortable; and there are thousands in the fold of Jesus who hardly ever get much further. But to reach the essence of consolation you must say, “I know.” Ifs, buts, and perhapses, are sure murderers of peace and comfort. Doubts are dreary things in times of sorrow. Like wasps they sting the soul! If I have any suspicion that Christ is not mine, then there is vinegar mingled with the gall of death; but if I know that Jesus lives for me, then darkness is not dark: even the night is light about me. Surely if Job, in those ages before the coming and advent of Christ, could say, “I know,” we should not speak less positively. God forbid that our positiveness should be presumption. Let us see that our evidences are right, lest we build upon an ungrounded hope; and then let us not be satisfied with the mere foundation, for it is from the upper rooms that we get the widest prospect. A living Redeemer, truly mine, is joy unspeakable.

# Word Live – 4/21/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 4/21/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 4/21/25

# The Necessity of Resurrection

A person standing in a cave with a light coming out of the end

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[**Read 1 Corinthians 15:12–28**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+15:12%e2%80%9328)

**The Resurrection of the Dead**

12But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27For he “has put everything under his feet.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A12%E2%80%9328&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28746a)] Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A12%E2%80%9328&version=NIV#en-NIV-28746) Psalm 8:6

For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either.[1 Corinthians 15:16](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.15.16)

Today, people refer to “canceling” as a way of expressing their disapproval of something or someone in a public forum. People cancel others to try to stop the spread of objectionable ideas. And those who have been canceled see it as the suppression of their right to speak freely.

Followers of Christ have always faced pressure from those who disapprove of aspects of the gospel message. In Corinth, this disapproval was aimed at the gospel’s emphasis on bodily resurrection, which seemed incompatible with a dualistic philosophy that saw the material world as being incompatible with the spiritual. Such scorn caused some Corinthians to suppress the unpopular aspects of the gospel they had received from Paul. One result was their assertion that there was no bodily resurrection (v. 12).

Paul’s method of dealing with this error was to start with their premise and explain what it would mean if that were actually true. He does this with a series of “if…then” assertions which show that once the foundation of the bodily resurrection of Christ is removed, the hope of the gospel collapses entirely (vv. 13–19). Without the resurrection, faith in Christ is “useless” (v. 14). Apostolic authority for the gospel is eliminated (v. 15). If Christ did not rise “you are still in your sins,” and those “who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost” (vv. 18–19). Paul summarizes with this blunt conclusion in verse 19: “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” The good news is that Jesus “has indeed been raised from the dead” (v. 20). We are now waiting for the full effect of the victory Christ has already achieved to become a reality (vv. 22–28).

**Go Deeper**

What unpopular aspects of the gospel message do you feel pressured to suppress? How does their removal distort the message?

**Pray with Us**

Dear God, give us wisdom to boldly speak Your truth, without excluding parts we may deem unpopular. May Paul’s warning to the Corinthians in today’s reading serve as a somber reminder for us as well.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/21/25

# DEEP CLEAN

A backpack with a variety of items

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**Read: MATTHEW 23:23-26**

23“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. 24You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

25“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

(Jesus said), "First clean the inside of the cup." MATTHEW 23:2

On a frigid November day, our church hoped to fill two hundred backpacks for the homeless. Preparing to help fill them, I sorted through the items donated, praying to find new gloves, hats, socks, blankets. Bowls of chili and sandwiches would also be shared with those who were to receive the gifts. Then I noticed an item that surprised me: washcloths. I'd been focusing on helping people stay warm and fed. Someone had remembered to help our recipients feel clean.

The Bible speaks about another kind of "clean"-cleanliness of heart and spirit. Jesus painted this out as He decried the hypocrisy of the teachers of the law and the Pharisees. They kept the smallest requirements of the law but "neglected the more important matters of the law-justice, mercy and faithfulness" (MATIHEW 23:23). Christ told them, "You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. First clean the inside of

the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean" (vv. 25-26).

Acting as if we are spiritually spotless is just a show if we don't seek the cleansing found in Christ. "What can wash away my sin?" asks an old gospel song. "Nothing but the blood of Jesus." A new washcloth can be a gift to wash us on the outside. Jesus cleans us on the inside, washing away even the worst of our sins.

**PATRICIA RAYBON**

**Reflect and Pray**

Where do you need spiritual deep-cleaning? How can you pray for Christ to cleanse you today?

Please clean me spiritually on the inside, dear Jesus. Learn more here:

ODB.org/personal-relationship-with-god .

**INSIGHT**

Matthew 23:13-29 records seven "woes" as Jesus confronts the teachers of the law and the Pharisees for their ritualistic piety and hypocrisy. *Woe* means "how dreadful or terrible." It's a severe condemnation (SEE ISAIAH 3:11; MATTHEW 11:21-22) in stark contrast to the description "blessed" in the Beatitudes (MATTHEW 5:3-12). The teachers of the law, or scribes, were the scholars of the day, professionally trained in Old Testament law. The majority of these scribes were themselves Pharisees (MARK 2:16). The Pharisees-the "separated ones"-were self-appointed guardians and enforcers of the Mosaic law. They considered the "tradition of the elders"-interpretations and regulations handed down by tradition-to be more authoritative than the Scriptures (7:3-5. 8-9). In six of the seven denunciations, Jesus called them "hypocrites" (MATTHEW 23:13, 15, 23, *25, 27,* 29), "for they do not practice what they preach" (V 3), and "everything they do is done for people to see" (v. 5). Instead, Christ is concerned with what's inside-our hearts. He alone can clean us from the inside out (v. 26).

By: [**K. T. Sim**](https://odb.org/author/ktsim/)

# God Calling – 4/21/25

# You Will Conquer

I am with you.  My Presence is a sign of My forgiveness.  I uphold you

You will conquer. Do not fear changes. You can never fear changes when I, your Lord, change not. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. I am beside you. Steadfastness, unchangingness, come to you, too, as you dwell with Me. Rest in Me.

As breathing rightly, from being a matter of careful practice, becomes a habit, unconsciously, yet rightly performed, so if you regularly practice this getting back into My Presence, when the slightest feeling of unrest disturbs your perfect calm and harmony, so this, too, will become a habit, and you will grow to live in that perfect consciousness of My Presence, and perfect calm and harmony will be yours.

Life is a training school. Remember, only the pupil giving great promise of future good work would be so singled out by the Master for strenuous and unwearied discipline, teaching and training,

You are asking both of you to be not as hundreds of My followers, nay as many, many thousands, but to be even as those who reflect Me in all they say and do and are. So, My dear children, take this training, not as harsh, but as the tender loving answer to your petition.

Life can never be the same again for either of you. Once you have drunk of the wine of My giving, the Life Eternal, all earth's attempts to quench your thirst will fail.

"I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Exodus 3:14