# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/2/25

# Life of Pure and Holy Sacrifice



He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow… —[John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+7%3A38)

Jesus did not say, “He who believes in Me will realize all the blessings of the fullness of God,” but, in essence, “He who believes in Me will have everything he receives escape out of him.” Our Lord’s teaching was always anti-self-realization. His purpose is not the development of a person— His purpose is to make a person exactly like Himself, and the Son of God is characterized by self-expenditure. If we believe in Jesus, it is not what we gain but what He pours through us that really counts. God’s purpose is not simply to make us beautiful, plump grapes, but to make us grapes so that He may squeeze the sweetness out of us. Our spiritual life cannot be measured by success as the world measures it, but only by what God pours through us— and we cannot measure that at all.

When Mary of Bethany “broke the flask…of very costly oil…and poured it on [Jesus’] head,” it was an act for which no one else saw any special occasion; in fact, “…there were some who…said, ‘Why was this fragrant oil wasted?’ ” ([Mark 14:3-4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14:3-4)). But Jesus commended Mary for her extravagant act of devotion, and said, “…wherever this gospel is preached…what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her” ([Mark 14:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14:9)). Our Lord is filled with overflowing joy whenever He sees any of us doing what Mary did— not being bound by a particular set of rules, but being totally surrendered to Him. God poured out the life of His Son “that the world through Him might be saved” ([John 3:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:17)). Are we prepared to pour out our lives for Him?

“He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”— and hundreds of other lives will be continually refreshed. Now is the time for us to break “the flask” of our lives, to stop seeking our own satisfaction, and to pour out our lives before Him. Our Lord is asking who of us will do it for Him?

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The Bible does not thrill; the Bible nourishes. Give time to the reading of the Bible and the recreating effect is as real as that of fresh air physically.  Disciples Indeed, 387 R

# CCEL – 9/2/25

**Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.**—[PSA. 27:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.14)

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.—Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.—Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

The trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.—Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

[Isa. 40:28,29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.40.html" \l "Isa.40.28). -[Isa. 41:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.41.html" \l "Isa.41.10). -[Isa. 25:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.4).[Jas. 1:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.3). -[Heb. 10:35,36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.35).

“But Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.” **[Mark 1:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.1.html" \l "Mark.1.30)**

Very interesting is this little peep into the house of the Apostolic Fisherman. We see at once that household joys and cares are no hindrance to the full exercise of ministry, nay, that since they furnish an opportunity for personally witnessing the Lord’s gracious work upon one’s own flesh and blood, they may even instruct the teacher better than any other earthly discipline. Papists and other sectaries may decry marriage, but true Christianity and household life agree well together. Peter’s house was probably a poor fisherman’s hut, but the Lord of Glory entered it, lodged in it, and wrought a miracle in it. Should our little book be read this morning in some very humble cottage, let this fact encourage the inmates to seek the company of King Jesus. God is oftener in little huts than in rich palaces. Jesus is looking round your room now, and is waiting to be gracious to you. Into Simon’s house sickness had entered, fever in a deadly form had prostrated his mother-in-law, and as soon as Jesus came they told him of the sad affliction, and he hastened to the patient’s bed. Have you any sickness in the house this morning? You will find Jesus by far the best physician, go to him at once and tell him all about the matter. Immediately lay the case before him. It concerns one of his people, and therefore will not be trivial to him. Observe, that at once the Saviour restored the sick woman; none can heal as he does. We may not make sure that the Lord will at once remove all disease from those we love, but we may know that believing prayer for the sick is far more likely to be followed by restoration than anything else in the world; and where this avails not, we must meekly bow to his will by whom life and death are determined. The tender heart of Jesus waits to hear our griefs, let us pour them into his patient ear.

# Word Live – 9/2/25

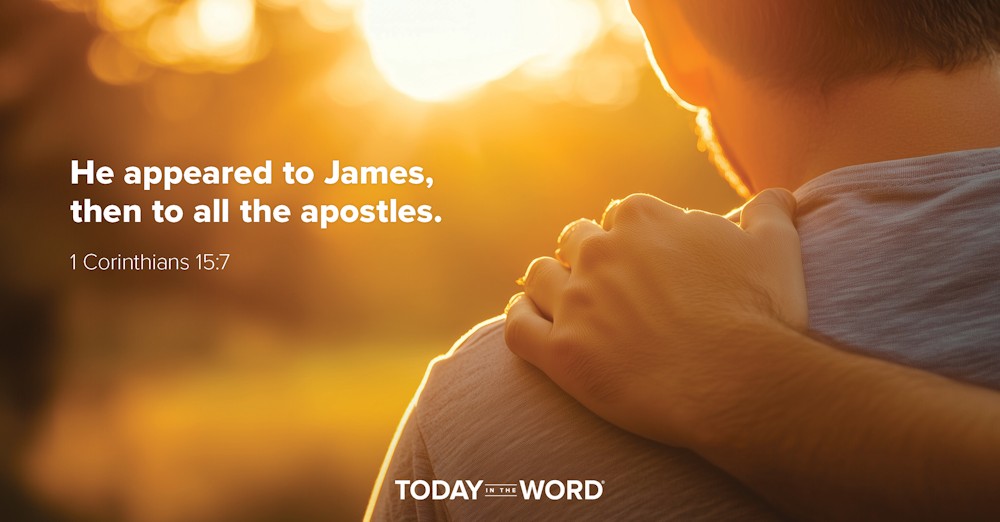
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# Scripture Union – 9/2/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/2/25

# Appearing to James



**Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8**

**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%3A1-8&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%3A1-8&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.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1-8&version=NIV#en-NIV-28722) Or *you at the first*
2. [1 Corinthians 15:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A1-8&version=NIV#en-NIV-28724) That is, Peter

He appeared to James, then to all the apostles.—1 Corinthians 15:7

Adi Dassler began a shoe company in 1924. A few years later, his older brother Rudi joined him. In the 1936 Olympics, Jesse Owens won numerous events wearing the Dassler brothers’ shoes. A feud began that led to a split of the company. Adi renamed his company Adidas by combining his first and last name. Rudi renamed his company Ruda and later Puma. The brothers never reconciled and were buried at opposite ends of the cemetery.

James and Jude did not always believe in Jesus. They assumed He was interested in becoming famous at best (John 7:2-5). At worse, they believed He had lost His mind. Mark tells us, “Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, ‘He is out of his mind’” (Mark 3:20-21).

It is not too far-fetched to think that James and Jude didn’t believe Jesus during His entire earthly life. They may have watched their brother die on the Roman cross not understanding why. They may have felt anger, sadness, or a mixture of both. Perhaps they thought, “Why couldn’t he just be like the rest of us?” But aren’t you glad that was not the end of the story?

First Corinthians tells us that Jesus appeared to James after His resurrection! In the list of people to whom Jesus appeared, only two are listed by name. The first is Cephas (Peter). The second is James (1 Cor. 15:7). In the upper room on the Day of Pentecost we see Jesus’ disciples praying and waiting as Jesus had instructed them. In addition, there were “the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his [Jesus’] brothers” (Acts 1:14). James and Jude believed!

**Go Deeper**

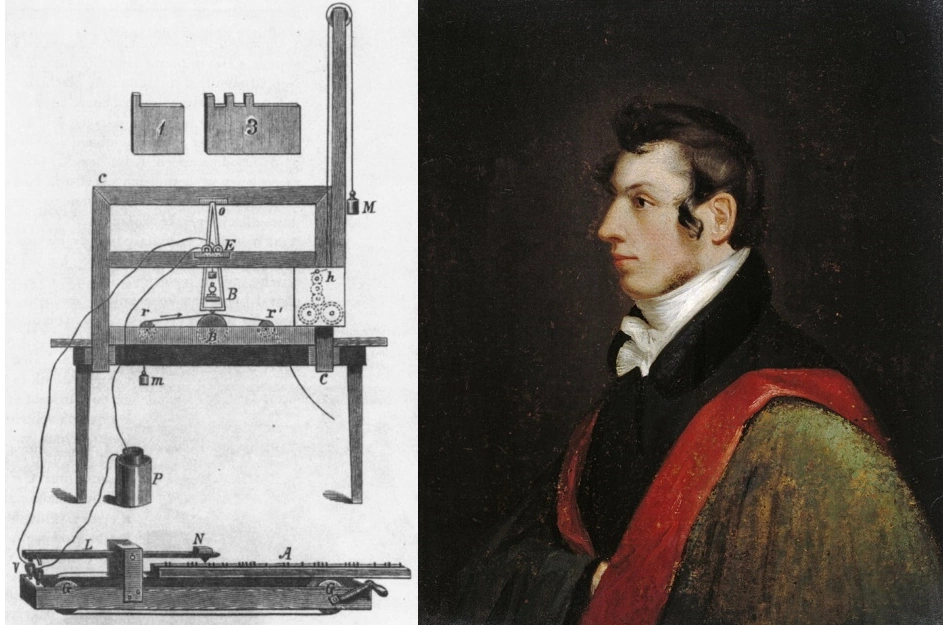
Is there somebody you have been praying for to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? While their hearts may seem resistant, don’t give up!

**Pray with Us**

Lord Jesus, help us not to despair when our own family members reject us. You understand what it’s like — Your half-brothers didn’t believe You at first — and we know You are with us every step of the way.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/2/25

# See What God Has Done

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**Read:** [**Acts 9:1-15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+9:1-6,+8,+10-12,+15)

**Saul’s Conversion**

9 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest 2and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

5“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. 6“Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

7The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

10In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered.

11The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

13“Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. 14And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

15But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around [Saul]. He fell to the ground and heard a voice. Acts 9:3-4

**Today's Devotional**

Morse was the son of a Protestant minister and a struggling painter of landscapes. In the 1820s, he made a meager living as a *limner*—“an itinerant painter” of colonial America. But his was a life God led in another direction. Morse also had an interest in science. He learned about electromagnets, conceiving an idea that would change the world. In 1832, Samuel F. B. Morse conceived the idea of an electric telegraph and later went on to make the first working telegraph.

Probably the most dramatic biblical account of “career change” was that of Saul, who was “breathing out murderous threats” against believers in Christ (Acts 9:1). Jesus appeared to him in a great light (v. 3) saying that Saul was persecuting Him. Essentially, Saul was told to stop because he was under new orders now (v. 6). Saul did a U-turn in his life and assumed a new identity in Christ as the apostle who would eventually spread the gospel wherever he went.

Sometimes what we think is our future really isn’t. God leads us in another direction. Perhaps He needs to call us out of our sin. Or maybe it’s a change of ministry or vocation. When God redirects our lives, we do well to stop what we’re doing and follow our new orders. And as our new path opens before us, we might just echo the joy of the first dot-and-dash message of Morse’s telegraph: “What hath God wrought!”

Kenneth Petersen

**Reflect & Pray**

How has God led your life in a different direction? What word has He given you today to encourage others?

Dear God, please help me be open to Your leading as You guide my path and career in this current season.

For further study, read [It’s Not Fair: Trusting God When Life Doesn’t Make Sense](https://www.odbm.org/en/spiritual-living/spiritual-growth/its-not-fair-trusting-god-when-life-doesnt-make-sense).

**Today's Insights**

The book of Acts contains three accounts of Saul’s conversion: 9:1-19; 22:3-16; and 26:9-18. Saul (later called Paul) made “murderous threats” (9:1) against those who “belonged to the Way” of Christ (v. 2). The second and third times we read of his conversion, Paul is giving testimony of how he turned to Christ. He admitted, “I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death” (22:4). The apostle would’ve continued in the way of opposition to Christ had not Jesus intervened (9:3-5) and led him in a different direction. At times, God will also lead us in a different direction for our good and His honor.

# God Calling – 9/2/25

# I Must Provide

I am your Lord. Enough. Then I can command your obedient service, your loyalty. But I am bound by My Lordship to give you protection.

I am bound to fight for you, to plan for you, to secure you a sufficiency of all within My Power to provide. Think how vast that provision can be. Never doubt.  Such marvels are unfolding. Wonders beyond your dreams. They only need the watering of a grateful spirit and a loving heart to yield abundantly.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.  John 20:28

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/3/25

# Pouring Out the Water of Satisfaction



He would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. —[2 Samuel 23:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Samuel+23%3A16)

What has been like “water from the well of Bethlehem” to you recently— love, friendship, or maybe some spiritual blessing ([2 Samuel 23:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+23:16))? Have you taken whatever it may be, even at the risk of damaging your own soul, simply to satisfy yourself? If you have, then you cannot pour it out “to the Lord.” You can never set apart for God something that you desire for yourself to achieve your own satisfaction. If you try to satisfy yourself with a blessing from God, it will corrupt you. You must sacrifice it, pouring it out to God— something that your common sense says is an absurd waste.

How can I pour out “to the Lord” natural love and spiritual blessings? There is only one way— I must make a determination in my mind to do so. There are certain things other people do that could never be received by someone who does not know God, because it is humanly impossible to repay them. As soon as I realize that something is too wonderful for me, that I am not worthy to receive it, and that it is not meant for a human being at all, I must pour it out “to the Lord.” Then these very things that have come to me will be poured out as “rivers of living water” all around me ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). And until I pour these things out to God, they actually endanger those I love, as well as myself, because they will be turned into lust. Yes, we can be lustful in things that are not sordid and vile. Even love must be transformed by being poured out “to the Lord.”

If you have become bitter and sour, it is because when God gave you a blessing you hoarded it. Yet if you had poured it out to Him, you would have been the sweetest person on earth. If you are always keeping blessings to yourself and never learning to pour out anything “to the Lord,” other people will never have their vision of God expanded through you.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The place for the comforter is not that of one who preaches, but of the comrade who says nothing, but prays to God about the matter. The biggest thing you can do for those who are suffering is not to talk platitudes, not to ask questions, but to get into contact with God, and the “greater works” will be done by prayer (see John 14:12–13). Baffled to Fight Better, 56 R

# CCEL – 9/3/25

**Neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.**—[EXO. 13:7.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.13.html" \l "Exod.13.7)

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.—Abhor that which is evil.—Abstain from all appearance of evil.—Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.—Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.—Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.—In him is no sin.

[Prov. 8:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.13). -[Rom. 12:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.9). -[I Thes. 5:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.22). -[Heb. 12:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.15).[Psa. 66:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.66.html" \l "Ps.66.18).[I Cor. 5:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.5.html" \l "iCor.5.6). -[I Cor. 11:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.11.html" \l "iCor.11.28).[II Tim. 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.19). -[Heb. 7:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.26). -[I John 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.5).

“Thou whom my soul loveth.” **[Song of Solomon 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.7)**

It is well to be able, without any “if” or “but,” to say of the Lord Jesus—“Thou whom my soul loveth.” Many can only say of Jesus that they hope they love him; they trust they love him; but only a poor and shallow experience will be content to stay here. No one ought to give any rest to his spirit till he feels quite sure about a matter of such vital importance. We ought not to be satisfied with a superficial hope that Jesus loves us, and with a bare trust that we love him. The old saints did not generally speak with “buts,” and “ifs,” and “hopes,” and “trusts,” but they spoke positively and plainly. “I know whom I have believed,” saith Paul. “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” saith Job. Get positive knowledge of your love of Jesus, and be not satisfied till you can speak of your interest in him as a reality, which you have made sure by having received the witness of the Holy Spirit, and his seal upon your soul by faith.

True love to Christ is in every case the Holy Spirit’s work, and must be wrought in the heart by him. He is the efficient cause of it; but the logical reason why we love Jesus lies in himself. Why do we love Jesus? Because he first loved us. Why do we love Jesus? Because he “gave himself for us.” We have life through his death; we have peace through his blood. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor. Why do we love Jesus? Because of the excellency of his person. We are filled with a sense of his beauty! an admiration of his charms! a consciousness of his infinite perfection! His greatness, goodness, and loveliness, in one resplendent ray, combine to enchant the soul till it is so ravished that it exclaims, “Yea, he is altogether lovely.” Blessed love this—a love which binds the heart with chains more soft than silk, and yet more firm than adamant!

# Word Live – 9/3/25

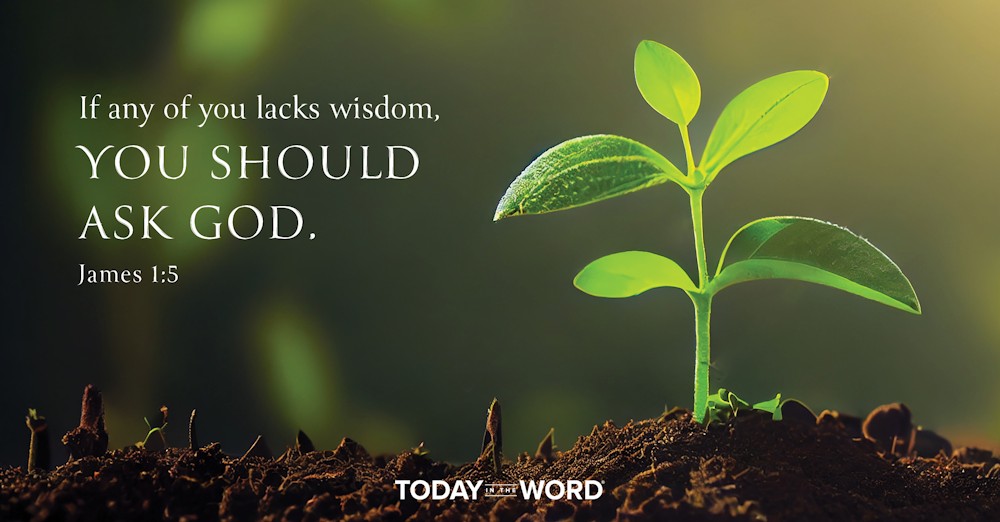
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# Scripture Union – 9/3/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/3/25

# God’s Wisdom \_,



**Read James 1:1-8**

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

**Trials and Temptations**

2Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201%3A1-8&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30269a)] whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

**Footnotes**

1. [James 1:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201%3A1-8&version=NIV#en-NIV-30269) The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in verses 16 and 19; and in 2:1, 5, 14; 3:10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God.—James 1:5

As an amateur runner, | read as much as I can about making running easy. One article advised that “runners who smile used less oxygen, ran more economically and had a lower perceived rate of exertion.” They showed photos of elite marathoners with various degrees of smiles on their faces. In the same way, as we run this race of the Christian life, we should consider replacing our frown with the

“joy of the Lord.”

James (or Jacob, in some translations) follows the traditional address of letters written in his day. Notice that he does not highlight his relationship with Jesus. Rather, he says he is a servant (or slave) of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was writing to the Jewish Christians; however, the content of the letter applies to all Christians.

James begins with the question that was probably on the minds of his readers. “Why are we dealing with these trials?” or “How should we respond?” Jesus told His disciples, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Paul reiterated it in his letter to the Philippians, “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him” (Phil. 1:29). Suffering is a part of the Christian life.

How do we endure then? With joy! James writes, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds” (v. 2). God does not waste our suffering. Our trials test our faith and produce perseverance. Perseverance transforms us into the image of Jesus Christ.

If you need coaching, ask God and He will provide it. James states, “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you” (v. 5). You can’t have a better coach than Jesus.

**Go Deeper**

What are you facing in your life that you need to talk to Jesus about?

**Pray with Us**

How do we “persevere under trials,” Jesus? May we always come to You and Your Word for wisdom and instruction and not rely on our own strength in difficult circumstances.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/3/25

# Ready to Pray



**Read:** [**Romans 15:30-33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+15%3A30-33)

30I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. 31Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord’s people there, 32so that I may come to you with joy, by God’s will, and in your company be refreshed. 33The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Romans 15:30

**Today's Devotional**

A pack of hyenas surrounded a lone lioness. When the cackling beasts attacked, the lioness fought back. Biting, clawing, growling, and roaring in a desperate attempt to ward off her enemies, she finally fell. As the clan engulfed her, another lioness came to the rescue with three helpers only seconds behind her. Though outnumbered, the big cats fought off the hyenas until they scattered. The lionesses stood together, scanning the horizon as if expecting another attack.

Believers in Jesus desperately need help from others too. The most powerful help we can offer is prayer. The apostle Paul wrote in a letter to the church in Rome, “I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me” (Romans 15:30). Paul asked them to pray that he would “be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea” and that the “Lord’s people” would receive him and his gifts “favorably” (v. 31). He acknowledged the rewards of being a part of their community (v. 32). He stood with them in prayer, too, ending his letter with a blessing: “The God of peace be with you all” (v. 33).

As we live for Jesus, we’ll face adversaries in the physical and spiritual realms. God promises to be with us and fight on our behalf, however, as we stand together . . . always ready to pray.

**Reflect & Pray**

How has God used intercessory prayer to strengthen you? How does He keep you ready to pray?

Mighty God, please make me steadfast in prayer as I thrive in community with You and others.

[Discover the life-changing power of prayer](https://odbu.org/topic/sf120-01-lecture/?utm_source=Digital&utm_medium=ODB+Email%2C+app%2C+website&utm_campaign=2025+Sept+3rd+ODB+R%26P+-+Prayer+Basics).

**Today's Insights**

When Paul asked believers in Jesus to “join” him in earnest prayer (Romans 15:30), the Greek word used conveys the idea of straining or striving together. Like athletes struggling to reach the finish line, he wanted the Roman believers to wrestle faithfully with God in prayer for the challenges he’d soon be facing. Paul’s concerns about the likelihood of facing fierce opposition in Judea (v. 31; Acts 20:22-25) were well founded. In Acts 21-27, we read of what the apostle experienced there. He was seized by a mob and arrested (21:27-36), religious leaders conspired to murder him (23:12-15), and he spent two years in prison before finally being sent to Rome (24:27; 26:32–27:1).

This likely wasn’t what Paul was hoping for when he asked for prayers to “be kept safe” (Romans 15:31), but he was able to trust in “God’s will” (v. 32) and powerful presence. As believers in Jesus, we can also trust in the one who’s with us and who will fight for us.

# God Calling – 9/3/25

# Live in the Unseen

**Our Lord, the God of the troubled and the weary, come and save us.**

I am your Savior. Not only from the weight of sin, but from the weight of care, from misery, and depression, from want and woe, from faintness and heartache. Your Savior.

Remember that you are living really in the Unseen - that is the Real Life.

Lift up your heads from earth's troubles, and view the glories of the Kingdom. Higher and higher each day see more of Heaven. Speak to Me. Long for Me. Rest in Me. Abide in Me. No restless bringing Me your burdens, and then feverishly lifting them again and bearing them away.

No! Abide in Me. Not for one moment losing the consciousness of My Strength and Protection.

As a child in its mother's arms, stay sheltered and at rest.

The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.  Proverbs 20:27

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/4/25

# His!



They were Yours, You gave them to Me… —[John 17:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+17%3A6)

A missionary is someone in whom the Holy Spirit has brought about this realization: “You are not your own” ([1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19)). To say, “I am not my own,” is to have reached a high point in my spiritual stature. The true nature of that life in actual everyday confusion is evidenced by the deliberate giving up of myself to another Person through a sovereign decision, and that Person is Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit interprets and explains the nature of Jesus to me to make me one with my Lord, not that I might simply become a trophy for His showcase. Our Lord never sent any of His disciples out on the basis of what He had done for them. It was not until after the resurrection, when the disciples had perceived through the power of the Holy Spirit who Jesus really was, that He said, “Go” (Matthew 28:19; also see [Luke 24:49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24:49) and [Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)).

“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” ([Luke 14:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+14:26)). He was not saying that this person cannot be good and upright, but that he cannot be someone over whom Jesus can write the word Mine. Any one of the relationships our Lord mentions in this verse can compete with our relationship with Him. I may prefer to belong to my mother, or to my wife, or to myself, but if that is the case, then, Jesus said, “[You] cannot be My disciple.” This does not mean that I will not be saved, but it does mean that I cannot be entirely His.

Our Lord makes His disciple His very own possession, becoming responsible for him. “…you shall be witnesses to Me…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)). The desire that comes into a disciple is not one of doing anything for Jesus, but of being a perfect delight to Him. The missionary’s secret is truly being able to say, “I am His, and He is accomplishing His work and His purposes through me.”

Be entirely His!

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We should always choose our books as God chooses our friends, just a bit beyond us, so that we have to do our level best to keep up with them. Shade of His Hand, 1216 L

# CCEL – 9/4/25

**Sit still, my daughter.**—[RUTH 3:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ruth.3.html" \l "Ruth.3.18)

Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted.—Be still, and know that I am God.—Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?—The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Mary . . . sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.—Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.—In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.—Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established.

He that believeth shall not make haste.

[Isa. 7:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.7.html" \l "Isa.7.4). -[Psa. 46:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.46.html" \l "Ps.46.10). -[John 11:40](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.11.html" \l "John.11.40). -[Isa. 2:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.2.html" \l "Isa.2.17).[Luke 10:39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html" \l "Luke.10.39). -[Luke 10:42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html" \l "Luke.10.42). -[Isa. 30:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.30.html" \l "Isa.30.15). -[Psa. 4:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.4).[Psa. 37:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.7).[Psa. 112:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.112.html" \l "Ps.112.7).[Isa. 28:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.28.html" \l "Isa.28.16).

“I will; be thou clean.” **[Mark 1:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.1.html" \l "Mark.1.41)**

Primeval darkness heard the Almighty fiat, “light be,” and straightway light was, and the word of the Lord Jesus is equal in majesty to that ancient word of power. Redemption like Creation has its word of might. Jesus speaks and it is done. Leprosy yielded to no human remedies, but it fled at once at the Lord’s “I will.” The disease exhibited no hopeful signs or tokens of recovery, nature contributed nothing to its own healing, but the unaided word effected the entire work on the spot and forever. The sinner is in a plight more miserable than the leper; let him imitate his example and go to Jesus, “beseeching him and kneeling down to him.” Let him exercise what little faith he has, even though it should go no further than “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;” and there need be no doubt as to the result of the application. Jesus heals all who come, and casts out none. In reading the narrative in which our morning’s text occurs, it is worthy of devout notice that Jesus touched the leper. This unclean person had broken through the regulations of the ceremonial law and pressed into the house, but Jesus so far from chiding him broke through the law himself in order to meet him. He made an interchange with the leper, for while he cleansed him, he contracted by that touch a Levitical defilement. Even so Jesus Christ was made sin for us, although in himself he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. O that poor sinners would go to Jesus, believing in the power of his blessed substitutionary work, and they would soon learn the power of his gracious touch. That hand which multiplied the loaves, which saved sinking Peter, which upholds afflicted saints, which crowns believers, that same hand will touch every seeking sinner, and in a moment make him clean. The love of Jesus is the source of salvation. He loves, he looks, he touches us, we live.

# Word Live – 9/4/25

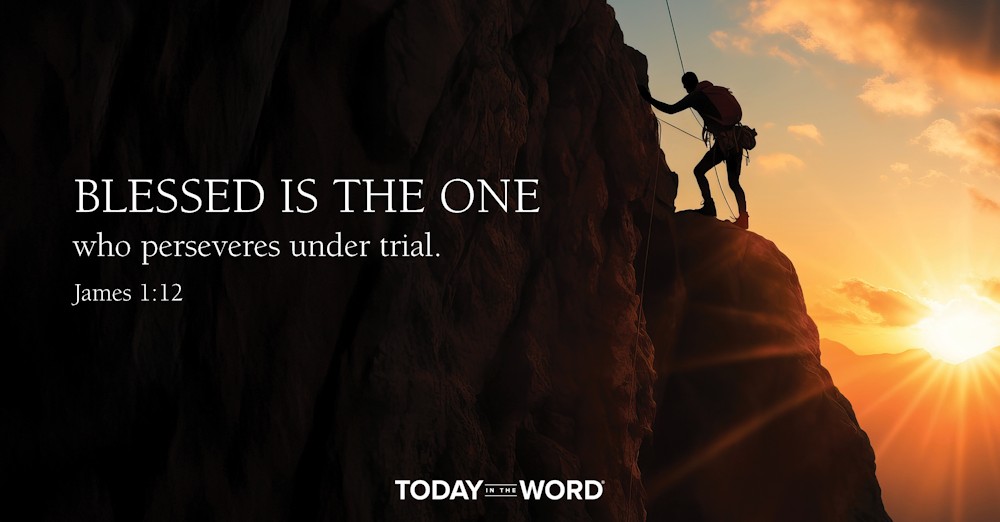
# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 9/4/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/4/25

# True Riches .



**Read James 1:9-12**

9Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. 10But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. 11For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

12Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial.—James 1:12

Is it a blessing to be poor? In Luke 6:20, Jesus said, “Blessed are you who

are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.” Jesus’ brother James addresses wealth in the context of enduring through trials. He gives encouragement to the poor believer and a word of wisdom to the rich.

James paints a graphic picture of what a rich person is like. “They will pass away like a wildflower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away” (vv. 10-11). Whether we are believers or unbelievers, our riches will not last. The wise believer will realize that everything belongs to God, and we are to live as humble stewards of God's resources.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 states, “Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight.” We are to boast not in wealth, not in our accomplishments, but only in our relationship to the Lord.

James closes with a beatitude, similar to those taught by Jesus. He states, “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him” (v.12). Whether poor or rich, trials affect all of us. It is the one who perseveres under trials that will receive the crown of life. The “crown of life” here seems to be a reward for those who faithfully endure to the end.

**Go Deeper**

What are you tempted to boast about? What does James teach us about our attitude toward our wealth (or lack of wealth)?

**Pray with Us**

Lord God, than k You for James, Your faithful follower. Today, more than ever, we need his clear teaching on riches and poverty. Help us to have a balanced, biblical approach to our material possessions.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/4/25

# Our Calling in Christ



**Read:** [**Ezra 7:6-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezra+7:6-11,+27-28)

6this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the Lord, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was on him. 7Some of the Israelites, including priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers and temple servants, also came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

8Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. 9He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him. 10For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

**King Artaxerxes’ Letter to Ezra**

11This is a copy of the letter King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law, a man learned in matters concerning the commands and decrees of the Lord for Israel:

**Read:** [**Ezra 7:27-28**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezra+7:6-11,+27-28)

27Praise be to the Lord, the God of our ancestors, who has put it into the king’s heart to bring honor to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem in this way 28and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king’s powerful officials. Because the hand of the Lord my God was on me, I took courage and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord. Ezra 7:10

**Today's Devotional**

Ginnie Hislop received a standing ovation as she received her master’s degree in 2024. Why? It came *eighty-four years* after she’d completed her coursework! In 1941, she needed only to submit her thesis. But her then boyfriend, George, was suddenly called to serve during World War II. The two quickly married and headed to his army outpost—leaving Ginnie’s nearly realized degree behind. But after a lengthy pause, she was finally able to complete what she’d started.

Ezra was a student of Scripture—one who truly had an “advanced degree” in God’s law—who’d been waiting years to return to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon. “Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees” (Ezra 7:10). Zerubbabel and a group of Israelite exiles had been permitted to return from Babylon to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem decades earlier (2:1-2). And now Ezra, who had “the gracious hand of his God . . . on him” (7:9), was leading more exiles to Jerusalem. God would use him to reform and restore the proper worship of Him according to Scripture: “Ezra opened the book [of the Law]. All the people . . . bowed down and worshiped the Lord” (Nehemiah 8:5-6).

Ezra had to wait decades, but he completed his calling in God’s strength. In His power, let’s persist in finishing the work He has for us.

**Reflect & Pray**

What can you do to press on in your calling from God? How can you persist in His power and wisdom?

Dear God, please help me finish well what You’ve called me to do.

[Learn how to find and follow your calling](https://odbu.org/topic/sf010-01-lecture/?utm_source=Digital&utm_medium=ODB+Email%2C+app%2C+website&utm_campaign=2025+Sept+4th+ODB+R%26P+-+Finding+and+Following).

**Today's Insights**

The book of Ezra records the two returns of Jewish exiles from Babylon. Zerubbabel, a descendant of David (Matthew 1:12), led the first return of fifty thousand in 538 bc (Ezra 1-6). Some eighty years later (458 bc), Ezra led another five thousand in the second return (chs. 7-10). Nehemiah, a contemporary of Ezra, led the third return in 444 bc. Ezra, a priest and a teacher well-versed in the law of Moses, faithfully taught the Scriptures to the people, leading them in two spiritual renewals (Ezra 9-10; Nehemiah 8-10). As God helped Ezra, He can help us persist in finishing the work He has for us.

# God Calling – 9/4/25

# Drop Those Burdens

**Our God is our supply.**

Look to Me for all ... Rely on Me for all.  Drop those burdens, and then, singing and free, you can go on your way rejoicing. Encumbered with them you will fall.

Drop them at My Feet, knowing surely that I will lift them and deal with each one as is truly best.

When he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he ... blessed, and brake the loaves ... and they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.  Mark 6:41-44

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/5/25

# Watching With Jesus



Stay here and watch with Me. — **Read:** [**Matthew 26:38**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+26%3A38)

“Watch with Me.” Jesus was saying, in effect, “Watch with no private point of view at all, but watch solely and entirely with Me.” In the early stages of our Christian life, we do not watch with Jesus, we watch for Him. We do not watch with Him through the revealed truth of the Bible even in the circumstances of our own lives. Our Lord is trying to introduce us to identification with Himself through a particular “Gethsemane” experience of our own. But we refuse to go, saying, “No, Lord, I can’t see the meaning of this, and besides, it’s very painful.” And how can we possibly watch with Someone who is so incomprehensible? How are we going to understand Jesus sufficiently to watch with Him in His Gethsemane, when we don’t even know why He is suffering? We don’t know how to watch with Him— we are only used to the idea of Jesus watching with us.

The disciples loved Jesus Christ to the limit of their natural capacity, but they did not fully understand His purpose. In the Garden of Gethsemane they slept as a result of their own sorrow, and at the end of three years of the closest and most intimate relationship of their lives they “all…forsook Him and fled” ([Matthew 26:56](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26:56)).

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit…” ([Acts 2:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2:4)). “They” refers to the same people, but something wonderful has happened between these two events— our Lord’s death, resurrection, and ascension— and the disciples have now been invaded and “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Our Lord had said, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)). This meant that they learned to watch with Him the rest of their lives.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We never enter into the Kingdom of God by having our head questions answered, but only by commitment. [The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption](http://www.dhp.org/Products/Quotable-Oswald-Chambers--The__BW382.aspx?affid=RBCHAMB)

# CCEL – 9/5/25

**As the body is one, and hath many members, . . . so also is Christ.**—[I COR. 12:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.12.html" \l "iCor.12.12)

He is the head of the body, the church.—The head over things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

A body hast thou prepared me.—Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.—He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.—Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth . . . maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

[Col. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.18). -[Eph. 1:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.22). -[Eph. 5:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.30).[Heb. 10:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.5). -[Psa. 139:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.139.html" \l "Ps.139.16).[John 17:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.6). -[Eph. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.4). -[Rom. 8:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.29).[Eph. 4:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.15).

“Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.” **[Psalm 120:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.120.html" \l "Ps.120.5)**

As a Christian you have to live in the midst of an ungodly world, and it is of little use for you to cry “Woe is me.” Jesus did not pray that you should be taken out of the world, and what he did not pray for, you need not desire. Better far in the Lord’s strength to meet the difficulty, and glorify him in it. The enemy is ever on the watch to detect inconsistency in your conduct; be therefore very holy. Remember that the eyes of all are upon you, and that more is expected from you than from other men. Strive to give no occasion for blame. Let your goodness be the only fault they can discover in you. Like Daniel, compel them to say of you, “We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.” Seek to be useful as well as consistent. Perhaps you think, “If I were in a more favourable position I might serve the Lord’s cause, but I cannot do any good where I am”; but the worse the people are among whom you live, the more need have they of your exertions; if they be crooked, the more necessity that you should set them straight; and if they be perverse, the more need have you to turn their proud hearts to the truth. Where should the physician be but where there are many sick? Where is honour to be won by the soldier but in the hottest fire of the battle? And when weary of the strife and sin that meets you on every hand, consider that all the saints have endured the same trial. They were not carried on beds of down to heaven, and you must not expect to travel more easily than they. They had to hazard their lives unto the death in the high places of the field, and you will not be crowned till you also have endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Therefore, “stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”

# Word Live – 9/5/25

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

# Scripture Union – 9/5/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/5/25

# Good and Perfect Gifts



**Read James 1:13-18**

13When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

16Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. 17Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights. —James 1:17

A trial is a situation that has the potential to discourage our faith. A temptation is something that encourages us to disobey God. Sometimes the two are intertwined but most often one takes the lead. An example of a trial is finding out that in the middle of doing something significant for God, you have cancer and might not be able to complete the work. A temptation is having a sudden unexplainable desire to boast about all you alone have done to make this work become a reality.

At the start of James chapter one, he explained how to deal with trials. Beginning in verse 13, he shifts to address temptation. We might make the mistake of saying, “God caused me to boast by placing this disease in my life!” In other words, “God tempted me! It’s His fault!” James corrects that idea. God cannot be tempted, and He does not tempt His children (v. 13). It is us who are tempted by our own evil desires.

James paints a disgraceful picture of lust (evil desire). Lust baits a trap. When we take the bait, lust drags us away and entices us. Lust bears a child named sin. When sin grows up, it gives birth to death. Death is the ultimate result of our depraved nature.

By contrast, God provides good and perfect gifts. These gifts come from the Father of heavenly lights. The Father gives us “every tree that has fruit with seed in it,” “all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground,” and “every green plant for food” (Gen. 1:29-30). All good gifts. A perfect gift that He has given us is spiritual birth, which came through the word of truth (v. 18). In Christ we are a type of first fruits. We are an offering to God.

**Go Deeper**

What good and perfect gifts can you thank God for today? Why not make a list of things for which you can be thankful?

**Pray with Us**

King Jesus, You are the Giver of good gifts! Your eternal love and amazing grace sustain, guide, and protect us. You gave us Your Word of truth. Keep us thankful, Lord!

# Our Daily Bread – 9/5/25

# The Freedom God Provides

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**Read:** [**Deuteronomy 5:28-29**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+5%3A28-29%2C+32-33)

28The Lord heard you when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, “I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. 29Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

**Read:** [**Deuteronomy 5:32-33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+5%3A28-29%2C+32-33)

32So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. 33Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper. Deuteronomy 5:33

**Today's Devotional**

A team of landscape architects studied the effects of providing a fence around a preschool playground. On playgrounds without fences, children tended to gather close to the school building and their teacher and didn’t stray away. But on fenced-in playgrounds, they enjoyed the entire area. The researchers concluded that boundaries can create a greater sense of freedom. This seems counterintuitive to so many of us who think boundaries restrict enjoyment. Yet fences can provide freedom!

God underlines the freedom His boundaries provide for us. In offering the Ten Commandments to Israel, He promised that a “prosperous” life would result from living within His divine boundaries. “Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess” (Deuteronomy 5:33). Here the concept of prosperity includes a life lived with good results—a life of quality.

Jesus, who fulfilled the law with His death on the cross, proclaimed, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). Indeed, God’s boundaries are for our good. “Fences” can free us to enjoy the life God created us to experience with Him.

**Reflect & Pray**

In what ways do God’s commands free you? How can you better embrace the freedom such boundaries offer?

Dear God, thank You for the wise parameters You put in place for my good.

**Today's Insights**

Deuteronomy records Moses’ words to the fledgling nation of Israel as they’re about to enter the promised land. Here in chapter 5, Moses reminds them of the Ten Commandments (vv. 6-21) given forty years earlier on Mount Sinai. At that time, God had spoken to them “face to face out of the fire on the mountain” (v. 4). The people feared this awesome God and told Moses, “This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any longer” (v. 25). God was pleased with their reverential fear and said, “Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always” (v. 29). He knew their inclination to violate His boundaries, which were given because He loved them. That’s why Moses urged them, “Be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you” (v. 32).

# God Calling – 9/5/25

# Progress

Progress is the Law of Heaven. Higher, ever higher, rise to Life and Beauty, Knowledge and Power. Higher and higher.

Tomorrow be stronger, braver, more loving than you have been today.

The Law of Progress gives a meaning, a purpose to life.

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.  Romans 12:2

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/6/25

# The Far-Reaching Rivers of Life



He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. —[John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+7%3A38)

A river reaches places which its source never knows. And Jesus said that, if we have received His fullness, “rivers of living water” will flow out of us, reaching in blessing even “to the end of the earth” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)) regardless of how small the visible effects of our lives may appear to be. We have nothing to do with the outflow— “This is the work of God, that you believe…” ([John 6:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:29)). God rarely allows a person to see how great a blessing he is to others.

A river is victoriously persistent, overcoming all barriers. For a while it goes steadily on its course, but then comes to an obstacle. And for a while it is blocked, yet it soon makes a pathway around the obstacle. Or a river will drop out of sight for miles, only later to emerge again even broader and greater than ever. Do you see God using the lives of others, but an obstacle has come into your life and you do not seem to be of any use to God? Then keep paying attention to the Source, and God will either take you around the obstacle or remove it. The river of the Spirit of God overcomes all obstacles. Never focus your eyes on the obstacle or the difficulty. The obstacle will be a matter of total indifference to the river that will flow steadily through you if you will simply remember to stay focused on the Source. Never allow anything to come between you and Jesus Christ— not emotion nor experience— nothing must keep you from the one great sovereign Source.

Think of the healing and far-reaching rivers developing and nourishing themselves in our souls! God has been opening up wonderful truths to our minds, and every point He has opened up is another indication of the wider power of the river that He will flow through us. If you believe in Jesus, you will find that God has developed and nourished in you mighty, rushing rivers of blessing for others.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else. “Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord”;…  The Highest Good—The Pilgrim’s Song Book, 537 L

# CCEL – 9/6/25

**Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.**—[LAM. 3:41.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.41)

Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!—Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.—I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.—Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.

[Psa. 113:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.113.html" \l "Ps.113.5). -[Psa. 25:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.25.html" \l "Ps.25.1). -[Psa. 143:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.143.html" \l "Ps.143.6).[Psa. 63:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.63.html" \l "Ps.63.3). -[Psa. 86:4.5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.86.html" \l "Ps.86.4).[John 14:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.13).

“In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” **[Philippians 2:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.15)**

We use lights to make manifest. A Christian man should so shine in his life, that a person could not live with him a week without knowing the gospel. His conversation should be such that all who are about him should clearly perceive whose he is, and whom he serves; and should see the image of Jesus reflected in his daily actions. Lights are intended for guidance. We are to help those around us who are in the dark. We are to hold forth to them the Word of life. We are to point sinners to the Saviour, and the weary to a divine resting-place. Men sometimes read their Bibles, and fail to understand them; we should be ready, like Philip, to instruct the inquirer in the meaning of God’s Word, the way of salvation, and the life of godliness. Lights are also used for warning. On our rocks and shoals a light-house is sure to be erected. Christian men should know that there are many false lights shown everywhere in the world, and therefore the right light is needed. The wreckers of Satan are always abroad, tempting the ungodly to sin under the name of pleasure; they hoist the wrong light, be it ours to put up the true light upon every dangerous rock, to point out every sin, and tell what it leads to, that so we may be clear of the blood of all men, shining as lights in the world. Lights also have a very cheering influence, and so have Christians. A Christian ought to be a comforter, with kind words on his lips, and sympathy in his heart; he should carry sunshine wherever he goes, and diffuse happiness around him.

Gracious Spirit dwell with me;

I myself would gracious be,

And with words that help and heal

Would thy life in mine reveal,

And with actions bold and meek

Would for Christ my Saviour speak.

# Word Live – 9/6/25

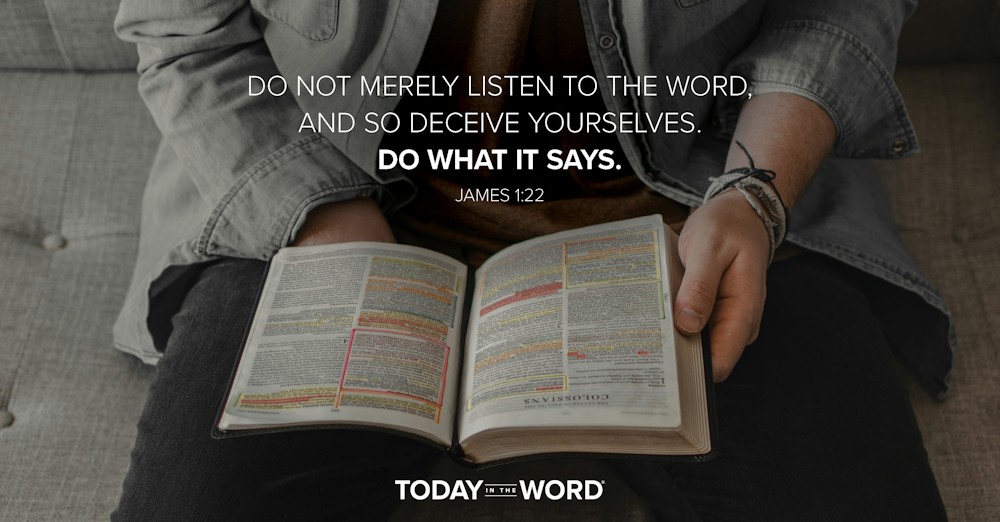
# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 9/6/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/6/25

# Obeying God’s Word



**Read James 1:19-25**

**Listening and Doing**

19My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.—James 1:22

When | was a younger student of the Bible, I was confused about the Israelites and. their disobedience to God. How could the people who were following Moses see the fire of God by night and His cloud by day and still rebel? This confused me until I attended seminary. After a few months of always hearing, reading, talking about, and studying God’s Word, I realized that it was easy to become numb to God's Word. It was easy to fool myself into thinking that because | was constantly around God’s Word that I was obeying.

James warns, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (v. 22). | will from time to time see this in my students. The familiarity with the things of God gives the illusion that we are walking with God. The goal for maturing Christians is not to listen to the Word only, but to apply the truth of God’s Word to our life.

James gives the illustration of the person who looks at himself in the mirror and walks away from the mirror forgetting what he looks like (vv. 23-24). I guess this is okay if what that person saw in the mirror was perfect. James is pointing out that real life doesn’t work that way. The mirror highlights the real condition of our person and the effects of sin. A wise person will look at God's Word and note the differences between what is stated and our spiritual condition, making the necessary adjustments. Only a fool would not.

The Word of God is a spiritual mirror for our soul. We are to look intently into this mirror to. Make the changes necessary to present ourselves pleasing unto the Lord.

**Go Deeper**

Have you allowed yourself to become numb to God's Word? Ask, “Am | really

listening and understanding His Word? Am | looking at my own reflection to see where God is calling me to change?”

**Pray with Us**

Jesus, our pray er today is that when we look into the mirror of Your Word, we remember what we see of ourselves there. May we obey the Bible and change according to what it says, to live lives that are pleasing to You.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/6/25

# A Sense of God’s Justice

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**Read:** [**Psalm 109:6-9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+109:6-9,+26-29)

6Appoint someone evil to oppose my enemy;  
    let an accuser stand at his right hand.  
7When he is tried, let him be found guilty,  
    and may his prayers condemn him.  
8May his days be few;  
    may another take his place of leadership.  
9May his children be fatherless  
    and his wife a widow.

**Read:** [**Psalm 109:26-29**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+109:6-9,+26-29)

26Help me, Lord my God;  
    save me according to your unfailing love.  
27Let them know that it is your hand,  
    that you, Lord, have done it.  
28While they curse, may you bless;  
    may those who attack me be put to shame,  
    but may your servant rejoice.  
29May my accusers be clothed with disgrace  
    and wrapped in shame as in a cloak.

May this be the Lord’s payment to my accusers, to those who speak evil of me. Psalm 109:20

**Today's Devotional**

The news was horrific. A live-in foreign domestic helper had been so ill-treated by the family she worked for that she died. The employers were eventually jailed, but I felt it wasn’t enough. *They should have suffered the same horrors they put that poor girl through*, I thought, *and then put to death*. Then I wondered if my anger had crossed the line. Was I wrong to think such things?

Reading Psalm 109 gave me an insight into our natural sense of justice. David, for one, wrestled with anger toward those who wronged the poor and needy. “May his days be few . . . . May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow,” he charged (vv. 8-9).

But King David didn’t take revenge on these men—even though he had the power to. Instead, he turned to God as the true source of justice and deliverance. “May this be the Lord’s payment to my accusers, to those who speak evil of me,” he said. “Save me according to your unfailing love” (vv. 20, 26).

I believe God made us with an inherent sense of justice, for it reflects His own character. And we can express our feelings honestly. But ultimately we’re to leave judgment and punishment to Him—trusting Him to bring justice in His time and way. The apostle Paul states things clearly: “Do not take revenge . . . but leave room for God’s wrath” (Romans 12:19).

**Reflect & Pray**

What news or events disturb you? How can you pray for those in need and for victims of injustice?

Dear God, You are the all-seeing, righteous God. May Your justice prevail so that all may come to fear and worship You.

**Today's Insights**

Psalm 109 is what’s known as an imprecatory psalm, where the author heaps curses, calamities, and destruction on the wicked, calling on God to judge them (see also Psalms 5, 35, 59, 69, 129, 137, 140). David had suffered unjustly in the hands of his enemies (109:1-5). In his imprecations or curses (vv. 6-20), he wasn’t seeking personal vengeance. Instead, he asked God to act on his behalf. He prayed for God’s justice and righteousness to prevail over evil and for Him to intervene and save him (vv. 26-31). David confidently proclaimed God’s justice in another psalm: “Those who know your name trust in you . . . . The Lord is known for his justice” (9:10, 16 nlt). Our world is characterized by trials, injustice, and wickedness. The Psalms can help us express our praises, laments, petitions, and cries to God for help and trust Him to bring justice in His time.

# God Calling – 9/6/25

# Your Loved Ones

Your loved ones are very safe in My Keeping. Learning and loving and working, theirs is a life of happiness and progress.  They live to serve, and serve they truly do. They serve Me and those they love. Ceaselessly they serve.

But their ministrations, so many, so diverse, you see no more than those in my time on earth in human form could have seen the angels who ministered unto Me in the wilderness.

How often mortals rush to earthly friends who can serve them in so limited a way, when the friends who are freed from the limitations of humanity can serve them so much better, understand them better, protect better, plan better, and even plead better their cause with Me.

You do well to remember your friends in the Unseen. Companying with them the more you live in this Unseen World the gentler will be your passing when it comes. Earth's troubles and difficulties will seem, even now, less overwhelming as you look, not at the things that are seen but at the real, the Eternal Life.

"And this is Life Eternal that we may know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent."

Learning to know Me draws that Kingdom very near, and in Me, and through Knowledge of Me, the dear ones there become very near and dear.

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/7/25

# Fountains of Blessings



The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life. —[John 4:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+4%3A14)

The picture our Lord described here is not that of a simple stream of water, but an overflowing fountain. Continue to “be filled” ([Ephesians 5:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5:18)) and the sweetness of your vital relationship to Jesus will flow as generously out of you as it has been given to you. If you find that His life is not springing up as it should, you are to blame— something is obstructing the flow. Was Jesus saying to stay focused on the Source so that you may be blessed personally? No, you are to focus on the Source so that out of you “will flow rivers of living water”— irrepressible life ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)).

We are to be fountains through which Jesus can flow as “rivers of living water” in blessing to everyone. Yet some of us are like the Dead Sea, always receiving but never giving, because our relationship is not right with the Lord Jesus. As surely as we receive blessings from Him, He will pour out blessings through us. But whenever the blessings are not being poured out in the same measure they are received, there is a defect in our relationship with Him. Is there anything between you and Jesus Christ? Is there anything hindering your faith in Him? If not, then Jesus says that out of you “will flow rivers of living water.” It is not a blessing that you pass on, or an experience that you share with others, but a river that continually flows through you. Stay at the Source, closely guarding your faith in Jesus Christ and your relationship to Him, and there will be a steady flow into the lives of others with no dryness or deadness whatsoever.

Is it excessive to say that rivers will flow out of one individual believer? Do you look at yourself and say, “But I don’t see the rivers”? Through the history of God’s work you will usually find that He has started with the obscure, the unknown, the ignored, but those who have been steadfastly true to Jesus Christ.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The great point of Abraham’s faith in God was that he was prepared to do anything for God.  Not Knowing Whither, 903 R

# CCEL – 9/7/25

**Rejoicing in hope.**—[ROM. 12:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.12)

The hope which is laid up for you in heaven.—If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.—We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.—Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me cannot be my disciple.—No man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.—The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.—Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.—By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

[Col. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.5). -[I Cor. 15:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.19). -[Acts. 14:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.14.html" \l "Acts.14.22). -[Luke 14:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.14.html" \l "Luke.14.27). -[I Thes. 3:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.3.html" \l "iThess.3.3).[Phi. 4:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.4). -[Rom. 15:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.15.html" \l "Rom.15.13). -[I Pet. 1:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.3). -[I Pet. 1:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.8). -[Rom. 5:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.2).

“And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.” **[Mark 2:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.2.html" \l "Mark.2.4)**

Faith is full of inventions. The house was full, a crowd blocked up the door, but faith found a way of getting at the Lord and placing the palsied man before him. If we cannot get sinners where Jesus is by ordinary methods we must use extraordinary ones. It seems, according to [Luke 5:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.5.html" \l "Luke.5.19), that a tiling had to be removed, which would make dust and cause a measure of danger to those below, but where the case is very urgent we must not mind running some risks and shocking some proprieties. Jesus was there to heal, and therefore fall what might, faith ventured all so that her poor paralysed charge might have his sins forgiven. O that we had more daring faith among us! Cannot we, dear reader, seek it this morning for ourselves and for our fellow-workers, and will we not try today to perform some gallant act for the love of souls and the glory of the Lord.

The world is constantly inventing; genius serves all the purposes of human desire: cannot faith invent too, and reach by some new means the outcasts who lie perishing around us? It was the presence of Jesus which excited victorious courage in the four bearers of the palsied man: is not the Lord among us now? Have we seen his face for ourselves this morning? Have we felt his healing power in our own souls? If so, then through door, through window, or through roof, let us, breaking through all impediments, labour to bring poor souls to Jesus. All means are good and decorous when faith and love are truly set on winning souls. If hunger for bread can break through stone walls, surely hunger for souls is not to be hindered in its efforts. O Lord, make us quick to suggest methods of reaching thy poor sin-sick ones, and bold to carry them out at all hazards.

# Word Live – 9/7/25

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

# Scripture Union – 9/7/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/7/25

# Pure Religion



**Read James 1:26-27**

26Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.—James 1:27

The word religion often has a negative connotation. Religion makes us think of uptight, legalistic people or churches that adhere to a strict set of rules, hoping to appease God. But James challenges that view of religion. In James 1:26-27 he addresses “those who consider themselves religious” (v. 26). He is talking to us.

James contrasts what makes a religion true and what makes it “worthless” in God's eyes (v. 26). First, he points to our speech. “Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves” (v. 26). His caution echoes what Jesus taught His disciples years prior, that “the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. For out of the heart come evil thoughts — murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person “ (Matt. 15:18-20). Our speech is a direct indication of our spiritual health.

Then, in verse 27, James gives an example of “religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless.” He says that if you want to serve God sincerely, you will take care of the “least of these” around you. Here James is referring to the most vulnerable of his day, orphans and widows. Serving the helpless might not bring an obvious reward. But as Matthew 25:40 explains, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” Selfless service pleases God our Father.

We might be tempted to think that we are religious if we go to church, study our Bible, attend prayer meetings. But James says true religion is reflected in our speech and our service. So we ask ourselves. Does what we say and do reflect our love for God?

**Go Deeper**

How does your speech reflect your relationship with God? Does it bring Him glory? Or is there a need to change how you speak.

**Pray with Us**

Loving God, teach us to “keep a tight rein on our tongues” and not to “think too highly of ourselves.” Give us humility to serve You sincerely, noticing and taking care of the needy and helpless among us.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/7/25

# Dependence on God

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**Read:** [**Mark 10:13-16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10%3A13-16)

**The Little Children and Jesus**

13People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” 16And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

The kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Mark 10:14

**Today's Devotional**

“Oh, you look so serious!” I said to my ten-week-old granddaughter Leilani. She was studying my face with a knitted brow as I talked to her. “I’d be serious too,” I continued, “looking at this world. But you know what? Mama loves you, Daddy loves you, and Baba and Papa [our nicknames as grandparents] love you too. But best of all, Jesus loves you! And that means everything!”

Then it happened. Like a cloud letting the sun through, the furrow left her brow and her little face lit up with a smile that melted my heart. Like most grandparents, I’d like to believe she understood me, though that may be a stretch. But perhaps she caught some of the joy behind my words. The simple, innocent joy that shone on her face brought to mind Jesus’ words that we must “receive the kingdom of God like a little child” (Mark 10:15).

Jesus said those words as “people were bringing little children” to Him so He might “place his hands on them” and bless them (vv. 13, 16). But “the disciples rebuked them,” thinking Jesus too busy or important. That troubled Him (vv. 14-15).

Children are naturally humble and dependent. To receive God’s kindness to us in Christ, we too must turn from pride and admit our need for Him in everything. As we do, He exchanges this world’s hopelessness with the promise of life with God forever. And that should make us smile.

**Reflect & Pray**

In what ways do you need God? How can you declare your dependence on Him today?

Abba Father, please help me to humbly live in Your kindness today and also share it with others.

Learn more about [having a personal relationship with God](https://ODBM.org/personal-relationship-with-god).

**Today's Insights**

In Mark 10:13-16, Jesus seized the moment to teach a very crucial lesson about how things function in the sphere of heavenly rule and order. “Let the little children come to me,” He said, “and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (v. 14). Christ’s illustration and teaching are consistent with the principle stated in the first beatitude: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). Bible teacher Kent Hughes offers these words: “What Jesus has in mind here is an objective state that every child who has ever lived, regardless of race, culture, or background, has experienced—*helpless dependence*. . . . Children of the kingdom enter it helpless, ones for whom everything must be done.” Those who are impoverished in spirit are those who are needy and know it. When we acknowledge our dependence on God, we come to Him with open hands and heart.

# God Calling – 9/7/25

# Everlasting Arms

**The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.   -   Deuteronomy 33:27**

Arms, sheltering Arms, express the loving tenderness of your Father (My Father) in Heaven.  Man, in his trouble and difficulty, needs nothing so much as a refuge.  A place to hide in. A place where none and nothing can touch him.

Say to yourself, "He is our Refuge." Say it until the truth sinks into your very soul. Say it until you know it - are so sure of it, that nothing can make you afraid.

Feel this not only until fear goes, but until Joy ripples through in its place. Refuge. Everlasting Arms so untiring, so safe - so sure.

I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge. Psalm 71:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/8/25

# Do It Yourself (1)



…casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God… —[2 Corinthians 10:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+10%3A5)

**Determinedly Demolish Some Things.**

Deliverance from sin is not the same as deliverance from human nature. There are things in human nature, such as prejudices, that the saint can only destroy through sheer neglect. But there are other things that have to be destroyed through violence, that is, through God’s divine strength imparted by His Spirit. There are some things over which we are not to fight, but only to “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord…” (see [Exodus 14:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+14:13)). But every theory or thought that raises itself up as a fortified barrier “against the knowledge of God” is to be determinedly demolished by drawing on God’s power, not through human effort or by compromise (see [2 Corinthians 10:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+10:4)).

It is only when God has transformed our nature and we have entered into the experience of sanctification that the fight begins. The warfare is not against sin; we can never fight against sin— Jesus Christ conquered that in His redemption of us. The conflict is waged over turning our natural life into a spiritual life. This is never done easily, nor does God intend that it be so. It is accomplished only through a series of moral choices. God does not make us holy in the sense that He makes our character holy. He makes us holy in the sense that He has made us innocent before Him. And then we have to turn that innocence into holy character through the moral choices we make. These choices are continually opposed and hostile to the things of our natural life which have become so deeply entrenched— the very things that raise themselves up as fortified barriers “against the knowledge of God.” We can either turn back, making ourselves of no value to the kingdom of God, or we can determinedly demolish these things, allowing Jesus to bring another son to glory (see [Hebrews 2:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+2:10)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The great point of Abraham’s faith in God was that he was prepared to do anything for God.  
Not Knowing Whither

# CCEL – 9/8/25

**Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.**—[DAN. 5:27.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Dan.5.html" \l "Dan.5.27)

The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him, actions are weighed.—That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.—The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.—Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.

What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts.—Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing.

[I Sam. 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.2.html" \l "iSam.2.3). -[Luke 16:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.16.html" \l "Luke.16.15). -[I Sam. 16:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.16.html" \l "iSam.16.7). -[Gal. 6:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.6.html" \l "Gal.6.7).[Matt. 16:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.16.html" \l "Matt.16.26). -[Phi. 3:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.7).[Psa. 51:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.6). -[Psa. 17:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.17.html" \l "Ps.17.3).

“From me is thy fruit found.” [Hosea 14:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.14.html" \l "Hos.14.8)

Our fruit is found from our God as to union. The fruit of the branch is directly traceable to the root. Sever the connection, the branch dies, and no fruit is produced. By virtue of our union with Christ we bring forth fruit. Every bunch of grapes has been first in the root, it has passed through the stem, and flowed through the sap vessels, and fashioned itself externally into fruit, but it was first in the stem; so also every good work was first in Christ, and then is brought forth in us. O Christian, prize this precious union to Christ; for it must be the source of all the fruitfulness which thou canst hope to know. If thou wert not joined to Jesus Christ, thou wouldst be a barren bough indeed.

Our fruit comes from God as to spiritual providence. When the dew-drops fall from heaven, when the cloud looks down from on high, and is about to distil its liquid treasure, when the bright sun swells the berries of the cluster, each heavenly boon may whisper to the tree and say, “From me is thy fruit found.” The fruit owes much to the root—that is essential to fruitfulness—but it owes very much also to external influences. How much we owe to God’s grace-providence! in which he provides us constantly with quickening, teaching, consolation, strength, or whatever else we want. To this we owe our all of usefulness or virtue.

Our fruit comes from God as to wise husbandry. The gardener’s sharp-edged knife promotes the fruitfulness of the tree, by thinning the clusters, and by cutting off superfluous shoots. So is it, Christian, with that pruning which the Lord gives to thee. “My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” Since our God is the author of our spiritual graces, let us give to him all the glory of our salvation.

# Word Live – 9/8/25

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

# Scripture Union – 9/8/25

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 9/8/25

# Showing Favoritism



**Read James 2:1-7**

**Favoritism Forbidden**

2 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. 2Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” 4have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

5Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.—James 2:1

For about six years I coached my son’s baseball team. When they were older, we used sabermetrics to choose the best ball players based upon statistics. Before this evaluation method was introduced in 1980, scouts would select players based upon “how they looked.” But that could be problematic. A player might look good in practice but not perform well when the pressure was on.

How do we assess the value of others? James 2:1 instructs us to view people as God does. “Believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.” We are to follow God’s example and look at what is meaningful. We are to look at the heart, not at the clothes a person can afford or the jewelry they are wearing. When we give preference to the rich, we are showing favoritism to people because of superficial reasons. Some think that by showing favors to the wealthy, they will get something in return. This puts trust in them and their riches rather than in God.

In James's day, the rich often exploited the poor to satisfy their own sinful indulgences. Paul reminded the Corinthians, “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God

chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong” (1 Cor. 1:26-27).

If God shows favor to the weak, why would we prioritize the ungodly rich? We are to treat everyone equally. If God has blessed you with wealth, honor Him with your riches. If God has made you rich in faith but poor in material wealth, praise His name!

**Go Deeper**

Despite your material status, can you find reasons to praise God? How can you begin to view everyone equally and not judge people based upon their financial wealth?

**Pray with Us**

Your Word says that “believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism” (James 2:1). We confess we often favor the powerful and the wealthy. Lord, instill in us the desire to see people through Your eyes.

# Our Daily Bread – 9/8/25

# Embracing Christ’s Truth

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**Read:** [**John 14:1-7**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:1-7)

**Jesus Comforts His Disciples**

14 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A1-7&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26670a)]; believe also in me. 2My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4You know the way to the place where I am going.”

**Jesus the Way to the Father**

5Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

6Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you really know me, you will know[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A1-7&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26676b)] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

**Footnotes**

1. [John 14:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A1-7&version=NIV#en-NIV-26670) Or *Believe in God*
2. [John 14:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A1-7&version=NIV#en-NIV-26676) Some manuscripts *If you really knew me, you would know*

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” John 14:6

**Today's Devotional**

When my friend Connor takes pictures on his old film camera, he doesn’t bother to find attractive lighting or airbrush blemishes or crop out anything unsightly. His photos are startlingly raw. They stand out in my social media feed next to heavily edited photos of gorgeous people and places. Though unconventional, his work is beautiful because it communicates truth about how things really are.

We all long for what’s real, but sometimes the truth isn’t attractive to us. Close to the time of His death, Jesus declared, “I am . . . the truth” (John 14:6). His disciples were wondering how they could get to the Father’s house that Jesus spoke so longingly about (vv. 2-3). They failed to see that Jesus standing in front of them was the answer. They struggled to understand that He would bring victory through His own sacrifice.

Isaiah prophesied that the coming Messiah would have no beauty or majesty, “nothing in his appearance that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2). Much of what Jesus said was so challenging and unexpected that it turned religious people against Him (John 11:45-48). Yet He gave an open invitation to know the truth and find real life. “If you really know me,” said Jesus, “you will know my Father as well” (John 14:7). In the midst of an airbrushed and unrealistic world, we can embrace that beautiful, raw truth today!

**Reflect & Pray**

When and why have you sought superficial beauty instead of truth? How can you embrace Jesus’ words more and more?

Dear Jesus, I choose to follow You as the source of all truth.

**Today's Insights**

In John 13-17, we encounter a scene best viewed with reverence and awe. These chapters contain Christ’s final instructions to His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion. Immediately after Judas had departed to betray Christ, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him” (13:31). The reality of His violent death for us was the pivot point of Christ’s entire mission. At first, the disciples couldn’t accept this. The crucifixion brought the rawest truth they would absorb. Yet His death was essential to providing restoration to our heavenly Father. Jesus promised, “My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?” His words “I will come back and take you to be with me” (14:2-3) convey the culmination of that raw truth—eternal joy with our Father.

# God Calling – 9/8/25

# Walk In My Love

When supply seems to have failed you must know it has not done so.  But you must, at the same time, look around to see what you can give away. Give away something.

There is always a stagnation, a blockage, when supply seems short.  Your giving clears that away, and lets the Spirit of My Supply flow clear.

A consciousness of My Presence as Love makes all Life different.  The consciousness of Me means the opening of your whole nature to Me and that brings relief. Relief brings Peace. Peace brings Joy. The "Peace that passeth all understanding" and the "Joy no man taketh from you."

Beyond all words is My Love and Care for you. Be sure of it. Rejoice in it. Walk in My Love. These words mean much. There is a joy, a spring, a gladness in the walk of those who walk in My Love. That walk becomes a glad conquering and triumphant march. So walk.

Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you ...  Deuteronomy 5:33