# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/22/25

# The Light That Never Fails

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We all, with unveiled face, beholding…the glory of the Lord… —[2 Corinthians 3:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+3%3A18)

A servant of God must stand so very much alone that he never realizes he is alone. In the early stages of the Christian life, disappointments will come— people who used to be lights will flicker out, and those who used to stand with us will turn away. We have to get so used to it that we will not even realize we are standing alone. Paul said, “…no one stood with me, but all forsook me….But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me…” ([2 Timothy 4:16-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Timothy+4:16-17)). We must build our faith not on fading lights but on the Light that never fails. When “important” individuals go away we are sad, until we see that they are meant to go, so that only one thing is left for us to do— to look into the face of God for ourselves.

Allow nothing to keep you from looking with strong determination into the face of God regarding yourself and your doctrine. And every time you preach make sure you look God in the face about the message first, then the glory will remain through all of it. A Christian servant is one who perpetually looks into the face of God and then goes forth to talk to others. The ministry of Christ is characterized by an abiding glory of which the servant is totally unaware— “…Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him” ([Exodus 34:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+34:29)).

We are never called on to display our doubts openly or to express the hidden joys and delights of our life with God. The secret of the servant’s life is that he stays in tune with God all the time.

**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 – 4/22/25

**If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.**—[LEV. 1:3,4.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.1.html" \l "Lev.1.3)

God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.—Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.—We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.—A ransom for many.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.—I will love them freely.—The Son of God . . . loved me and gave himself for me.

He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.—He hath made us accepted in the beloved.

[Gen. 22:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.22.html" \l "Gen.22.8). -[John 1:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html#John.1.29). -[Heb. 10:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.10). -[Matt. 20:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.20.html" \l "Matt.20.28).[John 10:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.18). -[Hos. 14:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.14.html" \l "Hos.14.4). -[Gal. 2:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.2.html" \l "Gal.2.20).[II Cor. 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.21). -[Eph. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.6).

“Him hath God exalted.” **[Acts 5:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.5.html" \l "Acts.5.31)**

Jesus, our Lord, once crucified, dead and buried, now sits upon the throne of glory. The highest place that heaven affords is his by undisputed right. It is sweet to remember that the exaltation of Christ in heaven is a representative exaltation. He is exalted at the Father’s right hand, and though as Jehovah he had eminent glories, in which finite creatures cannot share, yet as the Mediator, the honours which Jesus wears in heaven are the heritage of all the saints. It is delightful to reflect how close is Christ’s union with his people. We are actually one with him; we are members of his body; and his exaltation is our exaltation. He will give us to sit upon his throne, even as he has overcome, and is set down with his Father on his throne; he has a crown, and he gives us crowns too; he has a throne, but he is not content with having a throne to himself, on his right hand there must be his queen, arrayed in “gold of Ophir.” He cannot be glorified without his bride. Look up, believer, to Jesus now; let the eye of your faith behold him with many crowns upon his head; and remember that you will one day be like him, when you shall see him as he is; you shall not be so great as he is, you shall not be so divine, but still you shall, in a measure, share the same honours, and enjoy the same happiness and the same dignity which he possesses. Be content to live unknown for a little while, and to walk your weary way through the fields of poverty, or up the hills of affliction; for by-and-by you shall reign with Christ, for he has “made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign forever and ever.” Oh!, wonderful thought for the children of God! We have Christ for our glorious representative in heaven’s courts now, and soon he will come and receive us to himself, to be with him there, to behold his glory, and to share his joy.

# Word Live – 4/22/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/22/25

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

# Today in the Word – 4/22/25

# Resurrection Courage

A plant growing from a tree stump

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[**Read 1 Corinthians 15:29–34**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+15:29%e2%80%9334)

29Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? 30And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? 31I face death every day—yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised,

“Let us eat and drink,  
    for tomorrow we die.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A29%E2%80%9334&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28751a)]

33Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A29%E2%80%9334&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28752b)] 34Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A29%E2%80%9334&version=NIV#en-NIV-28751) Isaiah 22:13
2. [1 Corinthians 15:33](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A29%E2%80%9334&version=NIV#en-NIV-28752) From the Greek poet Menander

I face death every day.[1 Corinthians 15:31](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.15.31)

Sometimes, the best way to reveal the flaw in another person’s reasoning is to show how inconsistent it is. Often, these inconsistencies surface when we examine the difference between what people say and what they do.

This may help us understand the apostle’s puzzling reference to baptism for the dead in verse 29. In this section, Paul is showing the Corinthians what is implied by what they say they believe. In verse 29, he shifts the focus on what they do. He does not necessarily endorse the kind of baptism mentioned here. Rather, his aim is to demonstrate how this practice assumed the reality of resurrection. Although the phrase “for the dead” is somewhat ambiguous, Paul appears to distance himself from such baptisms by describing them as something that others do. “Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead?” he asks. “If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?” Whatever purpose the Corinthians thought such a rite might serve, it didn’t make any sense if there was no such thing as resurrection.

Paul appealed to his own example as evidence for the hope of resurrection. The certainty of life beyond this life gave Paul the courage to face death. The mention of “wild beasts in Ephesus” is probably figurative (v. 32). The threat to Paul in Ephesus did not come from animals in the arena but from human opponents. Sometime after Paul wrote these words, his ministry caused a riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:23–41). But such threats were not unusual. As Paul put it, “I face death every day” (v. 31). Even today, there are many places in the world where Christians face similar opposition. The assurance of bodily resurrection gives them the courage to face death no matter the cause.

**Go Deeper**

What kind of fears do you struggle with today? How can the promise of resurrection help you to face them?

**Pray with Us**

Father, we confess it’s not always easy to overcome fear. But Paul’s example shows us that the certainty of the resurrection gives courage to face all troubles, even death. Help us to be brave!

# Our Daily Bread – 4/22/25

# LOVING OTHERS WITH GOD'S LOVE

A person and person with children

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**Read: DEUTERONOMY 10:14-19**

**14**To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. **15**Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today. **16**Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. **17**For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. **18**He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. **19**And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.

You are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. DEUTERONOMY 10:19

The people of Le Chambon, France, risked everything to help save the lives of as many as five thousand individuals, many of them Jewish children, during the Nazi occupation. The refugees fleeing their homes were hidden in the community's homes and farms. The townspeople were inspired by pastor Andre Trocme, who called on his congregation to help by referencing the words of Deuteronomy 10:19, "You are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."

This command given to the Israelites comes in a passage that begins with the reminder that the whole earth belongs to God, who is "mighty and awesome" (V. 17). Yet God chose to love the Israelites (V. 15). He also cares for people in vulnerable or unfamiliar situations (V, 18), including foreigners who weren't part of the nation of Israel. As the Israelites settled in their new home, they were to imitate God's love and care for those needing help, especially because they knew the unique struggles of being a foreigner (V. 19).

If we've been at a job a long time or lived in the same home for several years, God may give us the opportunity to show kindness to someone who feels like a "foreigner," perhaps by providing helpful advice to a new coworker or assistance to a recently relocated family. When we do, we demonstrate God's love to those in unfamiliar, and often vulnerable, situations.

**LISA M. SAMRA**

**Reflect and Pray**

When did someone show you kindness recently? How might you care for someone else?

Heavenly Father. please help me to extend Your love and core to others.

**INSIGHT**

In Deuteronomy 10, God commanded Moses to "chisel out two stone

tablets like the first ones" (v. I). These tablets contained God's law and replaced the first tablets that were broken in anger by Moses in response to the people's apostasy (EXODUS 32:19). Israel is called once more to obey God's Law in a renewal of their covenant relationship with Him. In summarizing how God's people were called to live Moses emphasizes that they ought to "fear the LORD [their) God to walk in obedience to Him, to love him, to serve the LORD [their] God with all [their) heart and with all [their) soul" (DEUTERONOMY 10:12). He says that "you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt" (v. 19). Scripture shows that loving God and loving our neighbor are inseparable; it's the heart of what God calls us to. Jesus emphasized this in Matthew 22:37-40.

**MONICA LA ROSE**

# God Calling – 4/22/25

# Complain Not -- Laugh

Trust in Me. Do as I say each moment and all indeed shall be well. Follow out My commands: Divine control, unquestioning obedience -- these are the only conditions of supply being ample for your own needs and those of others.

The tasks I set you may have seemingly no connection with supply. The commands are Mine and the supply is Mine and I make My own conditions, differing in each case -- but in the case of each disciple, adapted to the individual need.

Have no fear, go forward. Joy -- radiant Joy must be yours. Change all disappointment, even if only momentary, into Joy. Change each complaint into laughter.

Rest -- Love -- Joy -- Peace -- Work, and the most powerful of these are Love and Joy.

"Serve the Lord with gladness....be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Psalm 100:2, 4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/23/25

# Do You Worship The Work?



We are God’s fellow workers… —[1 Corinthians 3:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+3%3A9)

Beware of any work for God that causes or allows you to avoid concentrating on Him. A great number of Christian workers worship their work. The only concern of Christian workers should be their concentration on God. This will mean that all the other boundaries of life, whether they are mental, moral, or spiritual limits, are completely free with the freedom God gives His child; that is, a worshiping child, not a wayward one. A worker who lacks this serious controlling emphasis of concentration on God is apt to become overly burdened by his work. He is a slave to his own limits, having no freedom of his body, mind, or spirit. Consequently, he becomes burned out and defeated. There is no freedom and no delight in life at all. His nerves, mind, and heart are so overwhelmed that God’s blessing cannot rest on him.

But the opposite case is equally true– once our concentration is on God, all the limits of our life are free and under the control and mastery of God alone. There is no longer any responsibility on you for the work. The only responsibility you have is to stay in living constant touch with God, and to see that you allow nothing to hinder your cooperation with Him. The freedom that comes after sanctification is the freedom of a child, and the things that used to hold your life down are gone. But be careful to remember that you have been freed for only one thing– to be absolutely devoted to your co-Worker.

We have no right to decide where we should be placed, or to have preconceived ideas as to what God is preparing us to do. God engineers everything; and wherever He places us, our one supreme goal should be to pour out our lives in wholehearted devotion to Him in that particular work. “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might…” ([Ecclesiastes 9:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+9:10)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

It is perilously possible to make our conceptions of God like molten lead poured into a specially designed mould, and when it is cold and hard we fling it at the heads of the religious people who don’t agree with us. Disciples Indeed, 388 R

# CCEL – 4/23/25

**The Lord was my stay.**—[PSA. 18:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.18.html" \l "Ps.18.18)

Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.—The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.—Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.—The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.—So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.—For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

By the grace of God I am what I am.

[Jer. 3:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.3.html" \l "Jer.3.23). -[Psa. 18:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.18.html" \l "Ps.18.2). -[Isa. 12:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.12.html" \l "Isa.12.6).[Psa. 34:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.7),[17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.17). -[Deut. 33:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.33.html" \l "Deut.33.27). -[Heb. 13:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.6). -[Psa. 18:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.18.html" \l "Ps.18.31),[32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.18.html" \l "Ps.18.32).[I Cor. 15:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.10).

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” **[Romans 8:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.37)**

We go to Christ for forgiveness, and then too often look to the law for power to fight our sins. Paul thus rebukes us, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Take your sins to Christ’s cross, for the old man can only be crucified there: we are crucified with him. The only weapon to fight sin with is the spear which pierced the side of Jesus. To give an illustration—you want to overcome an angry temper; how do you go to work? It is very possible you have never tried the right way of going to Jesus with it. How did I get salvation? I came to Jesus just as I was, and I trusted him to save me. I must kill my angry temper in the same way. It is the only way in which I can ever kill it. I must go to the cross with it, and say to Jesus, “Lord, I trust thee to deliver me from it.” This is the only way to give it a death-blow. Are you covetous? Do you feel the world entangle you? You may struggle against this evil so long as you please, but if it be your besetting sin, you will never be delivered from it in any way but by the blood of Jesus. Take it to Christ. Tell him, “Lord, I have trusted thee, and thy name is Jesus, for thou dost save thy people from their sins: Lord, this is one of my sins; save me from it!” Ordinances are nothing without Christ as a means of mortification. Your prayers, and your repentances, and your tears—the whole of them put together—are worth nothing apart from him. “None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good;” or helpless saints either. You must be conquerors through him who hath loved you, if conquerors at all. Our laurels must grow among his olives in Gethsemane.

# Word Live – 4/23/25

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# Scripture Union – 4/23/25

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# Today in the Word – 4/23/25

# Resurrection Bodies

A person with her hands on her chest

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[**Read 1 Corinthians 15:35–49**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+15:35%e2%80%9349)

**The Resurrection Body**

35But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” 36How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. 38But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. 39Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. 40There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. 41The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

42So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A35%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28764a)]; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. 46The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. 47The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. 48As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. 49And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A35%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28768b)] bear the image of the heavenly man.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:45](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A35%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#en-NIV-28764) Gen. 2:7
2. [1 Corinthians 15:49](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A35%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#en-NIV-28768) Some early manuscripts *so let us*

The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable.[1 Corinthians 15:42](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.15.42)

When I was a professor, I sometimes assured my students that there were no stupid questions. I did find, however, that there are other kinds. Some questions are annoying. Others are disingenuous. Many are ill-informed. In verse 35, Paul raises two questions posed by some of the Corinthians that he calls foolish: “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” To modern readers, these questions seem reasonable. Why would Paul call them foolish?

Paul deemed such questions to be foolish because they cast doubt on God’s power and ability. The evidence for what God can do is found in what God has already done. In verses 38–44, the apostle focuses on several analogies that point to creation for evidence that bodily resurrection is possible. How are the dead raised? They are raised by God’s power. Just as the first bodies were God’s creation, the resurrected body will be a new creation. What kind of body will it be? The resurrection body will be incorruptible. The form of the plant is unlike the seed from which it springs (v. 37). God designed animals, birds, and fish, each with a body “as he has determined” (vv. 38–39; compare with Gen. 1:21). He also made the heavenly bodies different from one another. A star differs from a planet, and a comet from a star. Even those celestial bodies that are similar do not all shine with the same splendor (vv. 40–41).

Those who are in Christ will have what Paul describes as “a spiritual body” (v. 44). He does not mean that it is immaterial. Instead, it will be a body created after the fashion of “the last Adam, a life-giving spirit” (v. 45). We do not need to have all our questions answered. It is enough to know that the believer’s destiny is to be like Christ (1 John 3:2).

**Go Deeper**

What do you know about Christ’s resurrected body? What implications can we draw about the believer’s resurrected body?

**Pray with Us**

Loving God, help us accept the fact that not all our questions will be answered this side of eternity. Give us humility to trust You no matter what and to know that when we see You face to face, we’ll have all the answers.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/23/25

# TO INFINITY AND BEYOND!

A toy character with text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: MATTHEW 18:21-35**

**The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant**

**21**Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

**22**Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23750a)]

**23**“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24**As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23752b)] was brought to him. **25**Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

**26**“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ **27**The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

**28**“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23756c)] He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

**29**“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

**30**“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31**When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

**32**“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33**Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ **34**In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

**35**“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

**Footnotes**

1. [Matthew 18:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-23750) Or *seventy times seven*
2. [Matthew 18:24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-23752) Greek *ten thousand talents*; a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer’s wages.
3. [Matthew 18:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-23756) Greek *a hundred denarii*; a denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer (see 20:2).

Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you? MATTHEW 18:33

In the animated movie Toy Story, a child's toys come to life whenever he leaves the room or falls asleep. One character, a space ranger named Buzz Lightyear, shouts his signature catchphrase while flying about the bedroom: "To infinity and beyond!"

It's a phrase that has confused many. Isn't infinity as far as you can go? How can there be anything "beyond" infinity? Drawing on wisdom from ancient Greek philosophers, mathematician Ian Stewart suggests that what is beyond infinity are yet bigger infinities. On and on and on.

Jesus seems to employ such exponential effort in the realm of forgiveness. When Peter asked Jesus about forgiving another person, "How many times must I forgive him ... seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, you must forgive him more than seven times. You must forgive him even if he wrongs you seventy times seven" (MATTHEW 18:21-22 NCV). Jesus goes on to tell a parable comparing a merciful king and an unmerciful servant, making the point that when someone truly regrets their error, there is no limit to the number of times we're to forgive. We're to forgive others the way God forgives us (v. 33). Over and over, on and on.

That may seem impossible to us. That's why we constantly need to ask God for His help.

Only in His strength can we do this. Forgiven people forgive people. To infinity and beyond!

**ELISA MORGAN**

**Reflect and Pray**

Who longs for your forgiveness? What does it mean to forgive another in a way that honors t hem and God?

Dear Father, please help me to be as generous and wise with forgiveness as You are.

Visit ODBU.org/ SF107 to learn more about how to find the strength to forgive others and how this can bring you peace.

**INSIGHT**

Throughout Matthew 18, Jesus used extreme examples to make His point-become like a child to be deemed "greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (V.4); cut off your hand or foot to keep from sinning (V.8). In this parable of the man who owed "ten thousand bags of gold" (v. 24), Bible commentator John D. Barry notes the monumental size of the debt: roughly 150,000 years of wages. Christ's point is that our sin is a debt we can't possibly repay. Since we've been forgiven such a great sum, our own willingness to forgive others is to be likewise limitless.

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

# God Calling – 4/23/25

# Too Much Talk

Guidance you are bound to have as you live more and more with Me. It follows without doubt.

But these times are not times when you ask to be shown and led, they are times of feeling and realizing My Presence. Does the branch continually ask the Vine to supply it with sap, to show it in what direction to grow? No, that comes naturally from the very union with the Vine, and I said, "I am the true vine, ye are the branches."

From the branches hang the choice grapes, giving joy and nourishment to all, but no branch could think that the fruit, the grapes, were of its shaping and making.

No! the grapes are the fruit of the Vine, the Parent-Plant.  The work of the branch is to provide a channel for the life-flow.

So, My children, union with Me is the one great overwhelming necessity. All else follows so naturally, and union with Me may be the result of just consciousness of My Presence. Be not too ready to speak to others.  Never make yourselves do this.

Pray always that the need may be apparent, if you are to do this, and the guidance very plain. My Spirit has been driven out by the words of men.  Words, words, words.  Many have called Me Lord, Lord, who have not done the things that I said.

Discourage too much talk. Deeds live, and re-echo down the ages -- words perish. As Paul: Though I speak with tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, . . . And have not charity, I am nothing....

Remember that rarely to the human heart do I speak in words. Man will see Me in My works done through you, meet Me in the atmosphere of Love and self-effacement.  Do not feel that you have to speak

When man ceased to commune with his God simply and naturally, he took refuge in words—words.  Babel resulted.  Then God wanted to do away with man from the earth.  Rely less on words.  Always remember that speech is of the senses.  So make it your servant, never your Master.

"And that ye study to be quiet." 1 Thessalonians 4:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/24/25

# The Warning Against Desiring Spiritual Success

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Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you… —[Luke 10:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+10%3A20)

Worldliness is not the trap that most endangers us as Christian workers; nor is it sin. The trap we fall into is extravagantly desiring spiritual success; that is, success measured by, and patterned after, the form set by this religious age in which we now live. Never seek after anything other than the approval of God, and always be willing to go “outside the camp, bearing His reproach” ([Hebrews 13:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+13:13)). In [Luke 10:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+10:20), Jesus told the disciples not to rejoice in successful service, and yet this seems to be the one thing in which most of us do rejoice. We have a commercialized view— we count how many souls have been saved and sanctified, we thank God, and then we think everything is all right. Yet our work only begins where God’s grace has laid the foundation. Our work is not to save souls, but to disciple them. Salvation and sanctification are the work of God’s sovereign grace, and our work as His disciples is to disciple others’ lives until they are totally yielded to God. One life totally devoted to God is of more value to Him than one hundred lives which have been simply awakened by His Spirit. As workers for God, we must reproduce our own kind spiritually, and those lives will be God’s testimony to us as His workers. God brings us up to a standard of life through His grace, and we are responsible for reproducing that same standard in others.

Unless the worker lives a life that “is hidden with Christ in God” ([Colossians 3:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3:3)), he is apt to become an irritating dictator to others, instead of an active, living disciple. Many of us are dictators, dictating our desires to individuals and to groups. But Jesus never dictates to us in that way. Whenever our Lord talked about discipleship, He always prefaced His words with an “if,” never with the forceful or dogmatic statement— “You must.” Discipleship carries with it an option.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Jesus Christ can afford to be misunderstood; we cannot. Our weakness lies in always wanting to vindicate ourselves. The Place of Help

# CCEL – 4/24/25

**The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.**—[GEN. 21:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.21.html" \l "Gen.21.1)

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us.—David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.—God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.—I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.—There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass.

He is faithful that promised.—Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?—Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away—The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

[Psa. 62:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.62.html" \l "Ps.62.8). -[I Sam. 30:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.30.html" \l "iSam.30.6). -[Gen. 50:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.50.html" \l "Gen.50.24). -[Acts. 7:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.7.html" \l "Acts.7.34),[36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.7.html" \l "Acts.7.36). -[Josh. 21:45](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Josh.21.html" \l "Josh.21.45).[Heb. 10:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.23). -[Num. 23:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.23.html" \l "Num.23.19). -[Matt. 24:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.24.html" \l "Matt.24.35). -[Isa. 40:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.40.html" \l "Isa.40.8).

“And because of all this we make a sure covenant.” **[Nehemiah 9:38](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Neh.9.html" \l "Neh.9.38)**

There are many occasions in our experience when we may very rightly, and with benefit, renew our covenant with God. After recovery from sickness when, like Hezekiah, we have had a new term of years added to our life, we may fitly do it. After any deliverance from trouble, when our joys bud forth anew, let us again visit the foot of the cross, and renew our consecration. Especially, let us do this after any sin which has grieved the Holy Spirit, or brought dishonour upon the cause of God; let us then look to that blood which can make us whiter than snow, and again offer ourselves unto the Lord. We should not only let our troubles confirm our dedication to God, but our prosperity should do the same. If we ever meet with occasions which deserve to be called “crowning mercies” then, surely, if he hath crowned us, we ought also to crown our God; let us bring forth anew all the jewels of the divine regalia which have been stored in the jewel-closet of our heart, and let our God sit upon the throne of our love, arrayed in royal apparel. If we would learn to profit by our prosperity, we should not need so much adversity. If we would gather from a kiss all the good it might confer upon us, we should not so often smart under the rod. Have we lately received some blessing which we little expected? Has the Lord put our feet in a large room? Can we sing of mercies multiplied? Then this is the day to put our hand upon the horns of the altar, and say, “Bind me here, my God; bind me here with cords, even forever.” Inasmuch as we need the fulfilment of new promises from God, let us offer renewed prayers that our old vows may not be dishonoured. Let us this morning make with him a sure covenant, because of the pains of Jesus which for the last month we have been considering with gratitude.

# Word Live – 4/24/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/24/25

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

# Today in the Word – 4/24/25

# Changed by Resurrection

A close up of a flower

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

[**Read 1 Corinthians 15:50–58**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=1+Corinthians+15:50%e2%80%9358)

50I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— 52in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 54When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A50%E2%80%9358&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28773a)]

55“Where, O death, is your victory?  
    Where, O death, is your sting?”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A50%E2%80%9358&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28774b)]

56The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

**Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:54](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A50%E2%80%9358&version=NIV#en-NIV-28773) Isaiah 25:8
2. [1 Corinthians 15:55](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A50%E2%80%9358&version=NIV#en-NIV-28774) Hosea 13:14

We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.[1 Corinthians 15:51](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=1Cor.15.51)

I would imagine that more than one church has a sign inscribed with 1 Corinthians 15:51 outside the door of the nursery: “We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.” Paul, of course, talks about a different kind of change in this verse. He describes this truth as a “mystery,” not implying that it is unfathomable but saying that it is new information.

This is the culmination of his answer to earlier questions about how the dead are raised and what kind of body they possess. It is not an ordinary body of flesh and blood like the ones we now have. In verse 50, he explains that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” Whatever the apostle means by this, he cannot be saying that we do not have bodies. One of the earliest affirmations of faith recorded in Scripture is a testimony to the hope of resurrection. “And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God,” Job asserts. “I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:26–27).

The change Paul describes is outlined further in the second phrase of the verse when he observes that the perishable cannot inherit the imperishable. The believer’s resurrection body will be suited for eternal life. God will replace our perishable bodies with ones like Christ’s glorious body. Unlike ordinary flesh, which slowly decays, this transformation will be instantaneous. Verse 52 reveals that it will happen “in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye.” It will be a result of God’s command and timing, signified by the sound of the trumpet. In the Old Testament, a trumpet blast signaled a sacred assembly (Lev. 23:24).

**Go Deeper**

Why would eternal life demand a different kind of body? What does verse 58 say is the effect on how we use our bodies today?

**Pray with Us**

Jesus, Savior, thank You for the new life You prepared for Your people in eternity. Thank You that You are that Door to new life—to love forgiveness, grace, freedom.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/24/25

# CONFESSING TO CHRIST

A person in a body of water

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: PROVERBS 28:9-13**

**9**If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction,  
    even their prayers are detestable.

**10**Whoever leads the upright along an evil path  
    will fall into their own trap,  
    but the blameless will receive a good inheritance.

**11**The rich are wise in their own eyes;  
    one who is poor and discerning sees how deluded they are.

**12**When the righteous triumph, there is great elation;  
    but when the wicked rise to power, people go into hiding.

**13**Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper,  
    but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. PROVERBS 28:13

Hidden and ignored sources of toxins can have severe consequences. According to a report in The Wall Street Journal, telecom companies have left behind more than two thousand lead-covered cables across the United States. The toxic lead runs underwater, "in the soil, and on poles overhead." As the lead deteriorates, it ends up in places where people " live, work, and play." Many telecom companies, some of which have known for years about the dangers of toxic exposure, are taking the potential risk of lead leaching into the environment very seriously.

The toxin of unconfessed and unaddressed sin can also pose serious consequences in our lives. When a person sins, there's a natural tendency to try to cover up or conceal it from God and others. But it's foolish to indulge in things that go against Him and His " instruction" (PROVERBS 28:9)-attempting to ignore, hide, or excuse them. As the writer reveals, "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy" (v. 13).

When we confess our sins to God, Scripture reveals that He will purify us from them in His abundant grace: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive … and purify us· (1 JOHN 1:9). So let's ask God to help us honestly confess our sins before the toxins leach into our hearts and into the lives of others.

**MARVIN WILLIAMS**

**Reflect and Pray**

When are you tempted to conceal your sin? What are the consequences of doing so?

Dear Gad, please help me to confess my sins honestly and forsake them completely.

**INSIGHT**

The book of Proverbs is followed by Ecclesiastes, yet the two seem to conflict with each other. Proverbs provides advice for living and assumes a good outcome if we live by its counsel. In contrast, Ecclesiastes says, ''The righteous .. . get what the wicked deserve and the wicked ... get what the righteous deserve" (8:14). But Proverbs and Ecclesiastes aren't in conflict. These two books are wisdom literature and communicate general truth. For example, when Peter advises husbands to treat their wives with "respect ... so that nothing wilt hinder your prayers" (1 PETER 3:7), he affirms the principle in Proverbs 28:9: “If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction, even their prayers are detestable.” Similarly, the principle of Proverbs 28:13 that “whoever conceals their sins does not prosper" is seen in Acts, where concealing sin cost Ananias and Sapphira their lives (5:1-11). And the writer of Ecclesiastes noted, "I know that it will go better with those who fear God, who are reverent before him" (8:12).

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

# God Calling – 4/24/25

# I Go Before

You can never perish, My children, because within you is the Life of Life. The Life that down the ages has kept My servants, in peril, in adversity, in sorrow.

Once you are born of the Spirit, that is your Life's breath. You must never doubt, never worry, but step by step, the way to freedom must be trodden. See that you walk it with Me.

This means no worry, no anxiety, but it does not mean no effort. When My Disciples told Me that they had toiled all night and taken nothing, I did not fill the boat with fishes without effort on their part. No! My Command stood. "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught."

Their lives were endangered, the ship nearly sank, the help of their fellows had to be summoned, and there were broken nets to mend. Any one of these troubles might have made them feel My help was not for them. And yet as they sat on the shore and mended those nets, they would see My Love and Care.

Man rises by effort

The man who reaches the mountain height by the help of train or car has learned no climber's lesson. But remember this does not mean no Guide -- this does not mean that My Spirit is not supplying wisdom and strength. How often, when sometimes you little know it, do I go before you to prepare the way, to soften the heart here, to overrule there.

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." John 10:28

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/25/25

# “Ready in Season”



Be ready in season and out of season. —[2 Timothy 4:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Timothy+4%3A2)

Many of us suffer from the unbalanced tendency to “be ready” only “out of season.” The season does not refer to time; it refers to us. This verse says, “Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season.” In other words, we should “be ready” whether we feel like it or not. If we do only what we feel inclined to do, some of us would never do anything. There are some people who are totally unemployable in the spiritual realm. They are spiritually feeble and weak, and they refuse to do anything unless they are supernaturally inspired. The proof that our relationship is right with God is that we do our best whether we feel inspired or not.

One of the worst traps a Christian worker can fall into is to become obsessed with his own exceptional moments of inspiration. When the Spirit of God gives you a time of inspiration and insight, you tend to say, “Now that I’ve experienced this moment, I will always be like this for God.” No, you will not, and God will make sure of that. Those times are entirely the gift of God. You cannot give them to yourself when you choose. If you say you will only be at your best for God, as during those exceptional times, you actually become an intolerable burden on Him. You will never do anything unless God keeps you consciously aware of His inspiration to you at all times. If you make a god out of your best moments, you will find that God will fade out of your life, never to return until you are obedient in the work He has placed closest to you, and until you have learned not to be obsessed with those exceptional moments He has given you.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

No one could have had a more sensitive love in human relationship than Jesus; and yet He says there are times when love to father and mother must be hatred in comparison to our love for Him.   So Send I You, 1301 L

# CCEL – 4/25/25

Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins—[MATT. 1:21.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.1.html" \l "Matt.1.21)

Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins.—That we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.—He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.

He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.—Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.—He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, . . . to give repentance.—

Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.—Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

[I John 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.5). -[I Pet. 2:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.24). -[Heb. 7:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.25).[Isa. 53:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.5). -[Luke 24:46,47](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.46). -[Heb. 9:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html" \l "Heb.9.26).[Acts 5:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.5.html#Acts.5.31). -[Acts 13:38,39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.13.html" \l "Acts.13.38). -[I John 2:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.12).

“Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.” **[Song of Solomon 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.10)**

Lo, I hear the voice of my Beloved! He speaks to me! Fair weather is smiling upon the face of the earth, and he would not have me spiritually asleep while nature is all around me awaking from her winter’s rest. He bids me “Rise up,” and well he may; for I have long enough been lying among the pots of worldliness. He is risen, I am risen in him, why then should I cleave unto the dust? From lower loves, desires, pursuits, and aspirations, I would rise towards him. He calls me by the sweet title of “My love,” and counts me fair; this is a good argument for my rising. If he has thus exalted me, and thinks me thus comely, how can I linger in the tents of Kedar and find congenial associates among the sons of men? He bids me “Come away.” Further and further from everything selfish, grovelling, worldly, sinful, he calls me; yea, from the outwardly religious world which knows him not, and has no sympathy with the mystery of the higher life, he calls me. “Come away” has no harsh sound in it to my ear, for what is there to hold me in this wilderness of vanity and sin? O my Lord, would that I could come away, but I am taken among the thorns, and cannot escape from them as I would. I would, if it were possible, have neither eyes, nor ears, nor heart for sin. Thou callest me to thyself by saying “Come away,” and this is a melodious call indeed. To come to thee is to come home from exile, to come to land out of the raging storm, to come to rest after long labour, to come to the goal of my desires and the summit of my wishes. But Lord, how can a stone rise, how can a lump of clay come away from the horrible pit? O raise me, draw me. Thy grace can do it. Send forth thy Holy Spirit to kindle sacred flames of love in my heart, and I will continue to rise until I leave life and time behind me, and indeed come away.

# Word Live – 4/25/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/25/25

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

# Today in the Word – 4/25/25

# Facing Forward

A sunset over a dock

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[**Read 2 Corinthians 4:7–18**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=2+Corinthians+4:7%e2%80%9318)

7But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

13It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%204%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28873a)] Since we have that same spirit of[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%204%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28873b)] faith, we also believe and therefore speak, 14because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. 15All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

16Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

**Footnotes**

1. [2 Corinthians 4:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%204%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-28873) Psalm 116:10 (see Septuagint)
2. [2 Corinthians 4:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%204%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-28873) Or *Spirit-given*

We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.[2 Corinthians 4:18](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=2Cor.4.18)

Although it is not a universal practice, many Christians bury the dead facing east. This is based in part on the promise of Matthew 24:27: “For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.” Even in death, these believers would be looking for Christ’s return.

In 2 Corinthians 4:7–18, Paul speaks of a posture of faith for the living. Those who live for Christ look forward to the life to come. But we do not have to wait until then to experience it. Paul’s bodily life displayed the glory of Christ like a treasure that had been concealed in a clay jar. Its purpose was to show “that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (v. 7). As a result, Paul’s experience was a study in contrasts. The apostle’s life was marked by vulnerability and weakness by which “the life of Jesus” was revealed (vv. 9–11).

Citing the Greek translation of the Old Testament (known as the Septuagint), Paul describes his own response to these afflictions as one of faith (v. 14). His faith was grounded in the knowledge “that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself” (v. 14). His sufferings put God’s grace on display and caused others to glorify God and give thanks (v. 15). For his part, Paul was determined to go through life facing forward by maintaining a kind of double vision. Although fully aware of his present (and often difficult) circumstances, faith enabled the apostle to see the spiritual reality behind his experience. Faith enabled him to understand how “our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all” (v. 17).

**Go Deeper**

How would you describe the “unseen” reality that shaped Paul’s earthly life? How does keeping our focus on this reality change our lives today?

**Pray with Us**

Almighty God, give us faith to see the spiritual reality behind the everyday events of our lives, as well as behind crises, mistakes, misfortunes, and grief. Help us remember that You are faithful and Your Word is true.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/25/25

# STEPS OF FAITH

A waterfall over a bridge

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**Read: JAMES 1:1-11**

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

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

**Trials and Temptations**

**2**Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JAMES%201%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30269a)] whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3**because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **4**Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. **5**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. **6**But 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. **7**That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. **8**Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

**9**Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. **10**But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. **11**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 even while they go about their business.

1. [James 1:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JAMES%201%3A1-11&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.

You know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. JAMES 1:3

Four of us hiked through the beautiful Watkins Glen Gorge in New York. At times we stood together in awe as we gazed in wonder at waterfalls and two-hundred-foot cliffs. Other times, we had to stop to catch our breath and rest our hurting legs as we climbed wet rocks and endless steps. When we neared the top, a hiker heading back down said, "You've got only 10 steps to go of your 832." Maybe it was best we hadn't known how difficult the journey would be because we might have stayed back and missed the beauty of it all.

The journey of life has difficult steps too. Jesus and Paul warned believers about trouble and persecution (JOHN 16:33; 2 TIMOTHY 3:12), and this requires some perspective. James said, "Consider it pure joy ... whenever you face trials of many kinds" (JAMES 1:2). Why pure joy instead of pure agony? God knows and we "know that the testing of [our] faith produces perseverance" (v. 3). But to what end? So that we may be "mature and complete, not lacking anything" (V. 4).

If we'll stop and look, despite the pain, we may see the beautiful strength of character God is producing in us and those around us. And we'll learn to appreciate the truth that one day we'll "receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him" (v. 12). Let's keep climbing together.

**ANNE CETAS**

**Reflect and Pray**

What troubles are you facing? You might not see it yet, but which character traits could God want to grow in you?

Thank You, God, that You understand everything going on in my life and have good plans for me.

**INSIGHT**

Poverty and the mistreatment of the poor by the wealthy and powerful might be part of what James has in mind by "trials" and "testing of your faith" (JAMES 1:2-3). In verses 9·12, he encourages "believers in humble circumstances ... to take pride in their high position," suggesting God is with the poor, while emphasizing "the rich will fade away" (v. 11). James warned against showing favoritism to wealthy persons: "Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith ... ?" (2:5). "Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? (v. 6). As we grow in Christ, He'll help us avoid favoritism.

**MONICA LA ROSE**

# God Calling – 4/25/25

# Bless Your Enemies

Say often, "God bless . . . ," of any whom you find in disharmony with you, or whom you desire to help. Say it, willing that showers of blessings and joy and success may fall upon them.

Leave to Me that necessary correcting or training; you must only desire joy and blessing for them. At present your prayers are that they should be taught and corrected.

Oh! If My children would leave My work to Me and occupy themselves with the task I give them. Love, love, love. Love will break down all your difficulties. Love will build up all your successes.

God the destroyer of evil, God the creator of good -- is Love. To Love one another is to use God in your life. To use God in your life is to bring into manifestation all harmony, beauty, joy, and happiness.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matthew 5:44

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/26/25

# The Supreme Climb



Take now your son…and offer him…as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. —[Genesis 22:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Genesis+22%3A2)

A person’s character determines how he interprets God’s will (see [Psalm 18:25-26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+18:25-26)). Abraham interpreted God’s command to mean that he had to kill his son, and he could only leave this traditional belief behind through the pain of a tremendous ordeal. God could purify his faith in no other way. If we obey what God says according to our sincere belief, God will break us from those traditional beliefs that misrepresent Him. There are many such beliefs which must be removed– for example, that God removes a child because his mother loves him too much. That is the devil’s lie and a travesty on the true nature of God! If the devil can hinder us from taking the supreme climb and getting rid of our wrong traditional beliefs about God, he will do so. But if we will stay true to God, God will take us through an ordeal that will serve to bring us into a better knowledge of Himself.

The great lesson to be learned from Abraham’s faith in God is that he was prepared to do anything for God. He was there to obey God, no matter what contrary belief of his might be violated by his obedience. Abraham was not devoted to his own convictions or else he would have slain Isaac and said that the voice of the angel was actually the voice of the devil. That is the attitude of a fanatic. If you will remain true to God, God will lead you directly through every barrier and right into the inner chamber of the knowledge of Himself. But you must always be willing to come to the point of giving up your own convictions and traditional beliefs. Don’t ask God to test you. Never declare as Peter did that you are willing to do anything, even “to go …both to prison and to death” ([Luke 22:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+22:33)). Abraham did not make any such statement— he simply remained true to God, and God purified his faith.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We must keep ourselves in touch, not with theories, but with people, and never get out of touch with human beings, if we are going to use the word of God skilfully amongst them.  Workmen of God, 1341 L

# CCEL – 4/26/25

His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.—[SONG 2:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.6)

Underneath are the everlasting arms.—When [Peter] saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?—The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.—Casting all your care upon Him, for he careth for you.—He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all.

[Deut. 33:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.33.html#Deut.33.27). -[Matt. 14:30,31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.14.html" \l "Matt.14.30). -[Psa. 37:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.23).[Deut. 33:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.33.html" \l "Deut.33.12). -[I Pet. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.7). -[Zech. 2:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.2.html" \l "Zech.2.8).[John 10:28,29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.28).

“This do in remembrance of me.” **[1 Corinthians 11:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.11.html" \l "iCor.11.24)**

It seems then, that Christians may forget Christ! There could be no need for this loving exhortation, if there were not a fearful supposition that our memories might prove treacherous. Nor is this a bare supposition: it is, alas! too well confirmed in our experience, not as a possibility, but as a lamentable fact. It appears almost impossible that those who have been redeemed by the blood of the dying Lamb, and loved with an everlasting love by the eternal Son of God, should forget that gracious Saviour; but, if startling to the ear, it is, alas! too apparent to the eye to allow us to deny the crime. Forget him who never forgot us! Forget him who poured his blood forth for our sins! Forget him who loved us even to the death! Can it be possible? Yes, it is not only possible, but conscience confesses that it is too sadly a fault with all of us, that we suffer him to be as a wayfaring man tarrying but for a night. He whom we should make the abiding tenant of our memories is but a visitor therein. The cross where one would think that memory would linger, and unmindfulness would be an unknown intruder, is desecrated by the feet of forgetfulness. Does not your conscience say that this is true? Do you not find yourselves forgetful of Jesus? Some creature steals away your heart, and you are unmindful of him upon whom your affection ought to be set. Some earthly business engrosses your attention when you should fix your eye steadily upon the cross. It is the incessant turmoil of the world, the constant attraction of earthly things which takes away the soul from Christ. While memory too well preserves a poisonous weed, it suffereth the rose of Sharon to wither. Let us charge ourselves to bind a heavenly forget-me-not about our hearts for Jesus our Beloved, and, whatever else we let slip, let us hold fast to him.

# Word Live – 4/26/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/26/25

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# Today in the Word – 4/26/25

# Compelled by Love

A close up of a leaf

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[**Read 2 Corinthians 5:1–15**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=2+Corinthians+5:1%e2%80%9315)

**Awaiting the New Body**

5 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, 3because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

6Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7For we live by faith, not by sight. 8We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

**The Ministry of Reconciliation**

11Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

For Christ’s love compels us.[2 Corinthians 5:14](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=2Cor.5.14)

Even though it is something we must all face, many people are uncomfortable when talking about death. Anticipating death is not easy, even for those who believe in the hope of the resurrection. The certainty of death makes most people anxious. But as believers, we know that this is not an end, but that through Christ it is a beginning. The apostle Paul acknowledges these conflicting feelings when he states that “while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life” (v. 4).

Embodied life is part of God’s design for humanity. To exchange this “earthly tent” for a “heavenly dwelling,” which is “a building from God” and “an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands,” is the final move in our redemptive experience (vv. 1–2). It does not happen immediately upon death but is something that Paul associates with the events that attend Christ’s second coming and the final judgment (v. 10).

The remedy for the anxiety we feel about the prospect of temporary separation from bodily life comes from the confidence of our faith (vv. 6–8). Its foundation rests in the knowledge that for the Christian to be absent from the body is to be “at home with the Lord.” This hope energizes our service in the present. We are not complacent toward God but “make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it” (v. 9). The certainty of judgment to come produces a combination of love for God and others, mixed with healthy reverence, that is the prime motivation for sharing the gospel (vv. 11–15).

**Go Deeper**

Does the thought of death make you anxious? What truths from today’s text can help you face its inevitability?

**Pray with Us**

Thank You, Jesus, that You gave life to the dead, revealed to us what true love is, and through the confidence of our faith, You took away our fear of death. We rejoice in Your resurrection, and eagerly await Your Second Coming.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/26/25

# ACTION-NOT DISTRACTION

A person standing next to a person

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: JOSHUA 1:1-9**

**Joshua Installed as Leader**

**1**After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide: **2**“Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. **3**I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. **4**Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. **5**No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. **6**Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

**7**“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. **8**Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. **9**Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you. JOSHUA 1:7

A school bus driver passed out at the wheel, and his large vehicle loaded with sixty students was careening out of control. Seventh grader Dillon Reeves burst from his seat, rushed to the front of the bus, and slowly stepped on the brake in the nick of time. While most students were busy texting or playing games on their phones, Dillon-who didn't have a phone-had his head up and reacted. He knew to depress the brake slowly as he'd seen the driver do many times. Remaining alert and not distracted helped him save the lives of all aboard, including the driver who later revived.

Joshua had to step up courageously after his leader, Moses, was no longer "in the driver's seat"-leading the people of Israel. God said to him, "Moses my servant is dead. Now ... get ready" (JOSHUA 1:21. What's more, He instructed, "Be strong and very courageous, Be careful to ... not turn from [the Book of the Law) to the right or to the left" (V. 7). God was telling Joshua not to get distracted and to keep his focus, and to keep his eyes on the instructions He'd given – meditating on them "day and night" (V. 8).

We can be distracted by screens and other things that cause us to take our eyes off God and the wisdom found in Scripture (2TIMOTHY 3:16-17). Instead, as we remain alert "by keeping our eyes on Jesus" (HEBREWS 12-2 NLT), we can spring into action when God calls.

**TOM FELTEN**

**Reflect and Pray**

Why is it vital to keep your eyes on Christ? How can you be ready for His call today?

Dear Jesus, please help me to avoid distractions as I follow You.

**INSIGHT**

Joshua first appeared as the military commander who "overcame the Amalekite army with the sword" (EXODUS 17:13), and he was one of the twelve spies Moses sent to survey the promised land (NUMBERS 13:1-16). His name was changed from Hoshea, meaning "salvation," to Joshua, meaning "Yah [Yahweh) saves" (VV. 8, 16). In Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8, the Greek equivalent for Joshua is Jesous or Jesus (MATTHEW 1:21). Joshua succeeded Moses as national leader when he was already an octogenarian (JOSHUA 14:10). He died at age 110, some 25 years after he entered the promised land. His epitaph reads, "The servant of the LORD" (24:29)-a servant who dearly kept his eyes on God.

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

# God Calling – 4/26/25

# I Make The Opportunities

Never doubt. Have no fear. Watch the faintest tremor of fear, and stop all work, everything, and rest before Me until you are joyful and strong again

Deal in the same way with all tired feelings. I was weary too, when on earth, and I separated Myself from My Disciples, and sat and rested on the well. Rested -- and then it was that the Samaritan woman was helped.

Times of withdrawal for rest always precede fresh miracle-working.  Learn of Me.  To accept the limitations of human flesh is to be subject, except as far as sin is concerned, to the same conditions as man.

I had to teach renewal of Spirit -- force rest of body to My Disciples. Then, as your Example, I lay with My Head on a pillow, asleep in the boat. It was not, as they thought, indifference. They cried, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" and I had to teach them that ceaseless activity was no part of My Father's plan.

When Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me," he did not mean that he was to do all things and then rely on Me to find strength. He meant that for all I told him to do he could rely on My supplying the strength.

My Work in the world has been hindered by work, work, work. Many a tireless nervous body has driven a spirit. The spirit should be the master always, and just simply and naturally use the body as need should arise. Rest in Me.

Do not seek to work for Me. Never make opportunities. Live with Me and for Me. I do the work and I make the opportunities.

# "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/27/25

# What Do You Want?



Do you seek great things for yourself? —[Jeremiah 45:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Jeremiah+45%3A5)

Are you seeking great things for yourself, instead of seeking to be a great person? God wants you to be in a much closer relationship with Himself than simply receiving His gifts— He wants you to get to know Him. Even some large thing we want is only incidental; it comes and it goes. But God never gives us anything incidental. There is nothing easier than getting into the right relationship with God, unless it is not God you seek, but only what He can give you.

If you have only come as far as asking God for things, you have never come to the point of understanding the least bit of what surrender really means. You have become a Christian based on your own terms. You protest, saying, “I asked God for the Holy Spirit, but He didn’t give me the rest and the peace I expected.” And instantly God puts His finger on the reason– you are not seeking the Lord at all; you are seeking something for yourself. Jesus said, “Ask, and it will be given to you…” ([Matthew 7:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7:7)). Ask God for what you want and do not be concerned about asking for the wrong thing, because as you draw ever closer to Him, you will cease asking for things altogether. “Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him” ([Matthew 6:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:8)). Then why should you ask? So that you may get to know Him.

Are you seeking great things for yourself? Have you said, “Oh, Lord, completely fill me with your Holy Spirit”? If God does not, it is because you are not totally surrendered to Him; there is something you still refuse to do. Are you prepared to ask yourself what it is you want from God and why you want it? God always ignores your present level of completeness in favor of your ultimate future completeness. He is not concerned about making you blessed and happy right now, but He’s continually working out His ultimate perfection for you— “…that they may be one just as We are one…” ([John 17:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:22)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Beware of pronouncing any verdict on the life of faith if you are not living it. Not Knowing Whither, 900 R

# CCEL – 4/27/25

Brethren, the time is short.—[I COR. 7:29.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.7.html" \l "iCor.7.29)

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.—The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.—As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Death is swallowed up in victory.—Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.—To live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Cast not away . . . 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. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.—The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.—The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

[Job. 14:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.14.html" \l "Job.14.1). -[I John 2:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.17). -[I Cor. 15:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.22),[54](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.54). -[Rom. 14:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.14.html" \l "Rom.14.8). -[Phi. 1:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.1.html" \l "Phil.1.21).[Heb. 10:35-37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.35). -[Rom. 13:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.13.html" \l "Rom.13.12). -[I Pet. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.7).

“God, even our own God.” **[Psalm 67:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.67.html" \l "Ps.67.6)**

It is strange how little use we make of the spiritual blessings which God gives us, but it is stranger still how little use we make of God himself. Though he is “our own God,” we apply ourselves but little to him, and ask but little of him. How seldom do we ask counsel at the hands of the Lord! How often do we go about our business, without seeking his guidance! In our troubles how constantly do we strive to bear our burdens ourselves, instead of casting them upon the Lord, that he may sustain us! This is not because we may not, for the Lord seems to say, “I am thine, soul, come and make use of me as thou wilt; thou mayst freely come to my store, and the oftener the more welcome.” It is our own fault if we make not free with the riches of our God. Then, since thou hast such a friend, and he invites thee, draw from him daily. Never want whilst thou hast a God to go to; never fear or faint whilst thou hast God to help thee; go to thy treasure and take whatever thou needest—there is all that thou canst want. Learn the divine skill of making God all things to thee. He can supply thee with all, or, better still, he can be to thee instead of all. Let me urge thee, then, to make use of thy God. Make use of him in prayer. Go to him often, because he is thy God. O, wilt thou fail to use so great a privilege? Fly to him, tell him all thy wants. Use him constantly by faith at all times. If some dark providence has beclouded thee, use thy God as a “sun;” if some strong enemy has beset thee, find in Jehovah a “shield,” for he is a sun and shield to his people. If thou hast lost thy way in the mazes of life, use him as a “guide,” for he will direct thee. Whatever thou art, and wherever thou art, remember God is just what thou wantest, and just where thou wantest, and that he can do all thou wantest.

# Word Live – 4/27/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/27/25

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

# Today in the Word – 4/27/25

# Raised to Serve

A purple flower in snow

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

[**Read Ephesians 2:1–10**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Ephesians+2:1%e2%80%9310)

**Made Alive in Christ**

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%202%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29233a)] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9not by works, so that no one can boast. 10For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**Footnotes**

1. [Ephesians 2:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%202%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-29233) In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.

God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions. [Ephesians 2:4–5](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Eph.2.4)

The comic books of my youth often included ads for bodybuilder Charles Atlas, who promised to turn a 98-pound weakling into a well-muscled specimen of a man. This was just one of a much larger genre of ads aimed at both men and women using before-and-after images to sell their “miraculous” products.

In Ephesians 2:1–10, the apostle gives us a verbal description of salvation that transforms us from the inside out. He begins by reminding the Ephesians that they were dead in transgressions and sins, in which they “used to live” (v. 2). In other words, death, as Paul describes it, is more than cessation of bodily life. It is a spiritual condition that exists even before the body ceases to function. Death is a state of being marked by bondage to “the ways of this world” and obedience to “the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.”

There is no moral program that can change this, no matter how rigorous. Salvation by grace and through faith is the only remedy to our sinful condition. What is more, Paul makes it clear that this salvation is something that God does by raising us with Christ and seating us with Him “in the heavenly realms” (v. 6). Although we are waiting for God to complete this through our bodily resurrection, salvation has already been inaugurated through the resurrection of Christ. Not only has God “made us alive with Christ,” He has “raised us up with Christ and seated us with him” to display His grace to us for ages to come. It is this resurrection power that motivates and enables us to do “the good works” God has prepared for us. All of this is an extension of God at work in us (v. 10).

**Go Deeper**

How has Christ changed your life? Where do you see God at work in you and through you? If you don’t know Christ yet, call 1-800-NEED HIM today.

**Pray with Us**

Christ Jesus, open my eyes to see more fully Your work in my life, to hear Your voice, and to follow You faithfully. Let me see more clearly Your guidance for my faith journey. Thank You that You are with me every step of the way.

# Our Daily Bread – 4/27/25

# GOD'S LOVE NEVER RUNS OUT

A person and person sitting on a couch

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**Read: LAMENTATIONS 3:19-26**

**19**I remember my affliction and my wandering,  
    the bitterness and the gall.  
**20**I well remember them,  
    and my soul is downcast within me.  
**21**Yet this I call to mind  
    and therefore I have hope:

**22**Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,  
    for his compassions never fail.  
**23**They are new every morning;  
    great is your faithfulness.  
**24**I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion;  
    therefore I will wait for him.”

**25**The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,  
    to the one who seeks him;  
**26**it is good to wait quietly  
    for the salvation of the Lord.

His mercies never cease. LAMENTATIONS 3:22 NLT

When Josie's ill and aging father moved in with her, she felt overwhelmed by the daily needs of caring for him. The medications she needed to buy were expensive. The caregiving tasks and the wisdom needed to guide her decision·making for his worsening health condition, aside from her other "full-time" job, were wearing her down. She said, "How could I keep gathering and giving out strength, practical resources, wisdom, and love?"

Josie found hope in Lamentations, a book about the grief Jeremiah and God's people felt. Jerusalem had been 'destroyed by the Babylonians, and the Jews now faced the uncertain days of exile ahead. The suffering was overwhelming, but God promised that "because of [His] great love we are not consumed" (LAMENTATIONS 3:22). His covenant love would remain with them, even if they were no longer in the promised land: “for his mercies never cease" (v. 22 NLT).

God's love for His children has no limits. "God is my portion, my personal source of everything," Josie realized, echoing verse 24. "I can gather and give out what's needed each day because I draw my strength from Him, whose love never runs out."

As we live in obedience to God, we can have hope, no matter what lies ahead. In His perfect wisdom, He knows what we need and will provide for us as He sees best.

**KAREN HUANG**

**Reflect and Pray**

How does God's perfect love give you comfort and confidence? How can you trust His wisdom in providing what you need?

Dear God, my hope is in You. I’ll wait for You.

**INSIGHT**

As its English title suggests, the book of Lamentations is a book of lament. Though the author is anonymous, Jewish tradition upholds Jeremiah's authorship. The Septuagint (the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible translated into Greek), adds these words at the beginning: "And It came to pass, after Israel was taken captive, and Jerusalem made desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem" (The Bible Knowledge Commentary). Jeremiah is lamenting over the fall of Jerusalem to the siege of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian armies. In the Hebrew Bible, book titles were often based on the first word or phrase of the book. The original name of Lamentations in Hebrew is 'Ekah, which means "how"- taken from the book's opening word. It laments at how the people of God have fallen so far from His protection and care. Nevertheless, central to the book is its well-known affirmation of hope in God's mercy and faithfulness found in Lamentations 3:22-23. These two things reflect His "great love" for His people (V. 22).

**BILL CROWDER**

# God Calling – 4/27/25

# Seeing Christ

I am beside you. Can you not feel My Presence?

Contact with Me is not gained by the senses. Spirit-consciousness replaces sight.

When man sees Me with his human sight it does not mean of necessity that his spiritual perception is greater. Nay, rather that for that soul I have to span the physical and the spiritual with a spiritual vision clear to human eyes.

Remember this to cheer My disciples who have never seen Me, and yet have had a clear spiritual consciousness of Me.

"And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Exodus 33:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/28/25

# What You Will Get



I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go. —[Jeremiah 45:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Jeremiah+45%3A5)

This is the firm and immovable secret of the Lord to those who trust Him– “I will give your life to you….” What more does a man want than his life? It is the essential thing. “…your life…as a prize…” means that wherever you may go, even if it is into hell, you will come out with your life and nothing can harm it. So many of us are caught up in exhibiting things for others to see, not showing off property and possessions, but our blessings. All these things that we so proudly show have to go. But there is something greater that can never go– the life that “is hidden with Christ in God” ([Colossians 3:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3:3)).

Are you prepared to let God take you into total oneness with Himself, paying no more attention to what you call the great things of life? Are you prepared to surrender totally and let go? The true test of abandonment or surrender is in refusing to say, “Well, what about this?” Beware of your own ideas and speculations. The moment you allow yourself to think, “What about this?” you show that you have not surrendered and that you do not really trust God. But once you do surrender, you will no longer think about what God is going to do. Abandonment means to refuse yourself the luxury of asking any questions. If you totally abandon yourself to God, He immediately says to you, “I will give your life to you as a prize….” The reason people are tired of life is that God has not given them anything— they have not been given their life “as a prize.” The way to get out of that condition is to abandon yourself to God. And once you do get to the point of total surrender to Him, you will be the most surprised and delighted person on earth. God will have you absolutely, without any limitations, and He will have given you your life. If you are not there, it is either because of disobedience in your life or your refusal to be simple enough.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

“I have chosen you” (John 15:16). Keep that note of greatness in your creed. It is not that you have got God, but that He has got you.  My Utmost for His Highest, October 25, 837 R

# CCEL – 4/28/25

Behold the Lamb of God.—[JOHN 1:29.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.29)

It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.—He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: . . . manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God . . . that your faith and hope might be in God.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

[Heb. 10:4-7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.4). -[Isa. 53:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.7).[I Pet. 1:18-21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.18).[Rev. 5:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.5.html" \l "Rev.5.12).

“Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.” **[Psalm 119:49](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.49)**

Whatever your especial need may be, you may readily find some promise in the Bible suited to it. Are you faint and feeble because your way is rough and you are weary? Here is the promise—“He giveth power to the faint.” When you read such a promise, take it back to the great Promiser, and ask him to fulfil his own word. Are you seeking after Christ, and thirsting for closer communion with him? This promise shines like a star upon you—“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Take that promise to the throne continually; do not plead anything else, but go to God over and over again with this—“Lord, thou hast said it, do as thou hast said.” Are you distressed because of sin, and burdened with the heavy load of your iniquities? Listen to these words—“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will no more remember thy sins.” You have no merit of your own to plead why he should pardon you, but plead his written engagements and he will perform them. Are you afraid lest you should not be able to hold on to the end, lest, after having thought yourself a child of God, you should prove a castaway? If that is your state, take this word of grace to the throne and plead it: “The mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed, but the covenant of my love shall not depart from thee.” If you have lost the sweet sense of the Saviour’s presence, and are seeking him with a sorrowful heart, remember the promises: “Return unto me, and I will return unto you;” “For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.” Banquet your faith upon God’s own word, and whatever your fears or wants, repair to the Bank of Faith with your Father’s note of hand, saying, “Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.”

# Word Live – 4/28/25

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

# Scripture Union – 4/28/25

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

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* Raised for Freedom

A butterfly on a flower

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Daily DevotionalApril 28, 2025

# Daily Devotional | Raised for Freedom

# Raised for Freedom

A butterfly on a flower

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[**Read Colossians 2:13–23**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Colossians+2:13%e2%80%9323)

13When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202%3A13%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29508a)] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202%3A13%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29510b)]

**Freedom From Human Rules**

16Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 18Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. 19They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

20Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21“Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? 22These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

**Footnotes**

1. [Colossians 2:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202%3A13%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#en-NIV-29508) Some manuscripts *us*
2. [Colossians 2:15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%202%3A13%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#en-NIV-29510) Or *them in him*

God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins. [Colossians 2:13](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Col.2.13)

When a reporter from the *New York Journal* contacted Mark Twain to find out whether rumors that he was seriously ill or perhaps even dead were true, Mark Twain told him that the rumors had confused him with his cousin who had been ill in London and had recovered. “The report of my illness grew out of his illness,” Twain explained. “The report of my death was an exaggeration.”

The opposite is often the case with legalistic spiritual systems. They assume there is spiritual life in those who are actually dead in sins. This was the spiritual condition of the Colossians when the gospel came to them. “When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ,” Paul reminds them in verses 13–14. “He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.”

Because Christ took upon Himself the penalty for our sins, we are not bound by any custom, observance, or regulation that claims to make us right with God. Even the regulations in the Law of Moses were only “a shadow of the things that were to come,” while the reality “is found in Christ” (v. 17). The appeal of many of these legalistic systems is that they offer the appearance of holiness with the rigor of their demands. But in reality, they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence (v. 23).

When Paul tells us not to let anyone judge us in such matters, he means that we should not let them impose their practices and standards on us. For the Colossians, these were regulations about food, festivals, and observances. Righteousness is not earned by obeying rules.

**Go Deeper**

What is your approach to holiness? Is it external or internal? Does your righteousness begin with Christ or are you depending on a to-do list provided by someone else?

**Pray with Us**

God of the ages, our prayer today is Paul’s instruction to the Galatians: “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1).

# Our Daily Bread – 4/28/25

# IMITATE ME

A person and child sitting on a dock looking at a lake

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**Read: 2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-13**

**Warning Against Idleness**

**6**In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20THESSALONIANS%203%3A6-13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29685a)] you received from us. **7**For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, **8**nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. **9**We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. **10**For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”

**11**We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. **12**Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. **13**And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

**Footnotes**

1. [2 Thessalonians 3:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20THESSALONIANS%203%3A6-13&version=NIV#en-NIV-29685) Or *tradition*

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1

As his daddy cast his fishing line out into the lake, two-year-old Thomas mimicked his father's actions with his own toy fishing pole. Later, as he stood on the shallow edge of the lake, Thomas also tried imitating his father's example of throwing fish back into the water by dipping his pole in the water and "catching" weeds. After each "catch," Thomas held the weeds up for his daddy to admire before releasing them back into the lake.

We tend to learn - both what's good and wholesome and what's definitely not - through observing and imitating others. Perhaps that's why in the New Testament, followers of Jesus are often encouraged to look to faithful servants of the gospel as role models (SEE 2 THESSALONIANS 3:9; HEBREWS 13:7; 3 JOHN 1:11).

In 2 Thessalonians 3, Paul told his readers not to imitate idle, disruptive, and meddling lifestyles (vv 6, 11) and told them to imitate instead the examples of integrity found in him and the other leaders (vv. 7-10). And he encouraged them to "never tire of doing what is good" (V. 13).

But Paul knew that ultimately his example was only worth imitating insofar as it pointed to reliance on Christ (1 CORINTHIANS 11:1). Only by rooting our lives in Christ's faith and power can we grow in grace and wisdom.

**ALYSON KIEDA**

**Reflect and Pray**

Who has been a godly role model in your life? Who might you influence in turn?

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for the dear people You’ve placed in my life who've pointed me to You and are helping me learn what it means to live in Your power and love.

**INSIGHT**

In 2 Thessalonians 2, some believers in Jesus had quit their jobs and were living off the generosity of the church because they'd been misled by false teachers that Jesus had already returned (V. 2). These freeloaders had become "busybodies" and threatened the unity of the community (3:11). Paul told the church to withdraw fellowship (V. 6) and withhold food from these idlers who disobeyed the church's teaching and rejected the apostle's example of working for a living (vv 7-10). The church must continue to do "what is good" and help those who are unable to work (v. 13). But Paul says, "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat" (v. 10). The apostle commanded these idlers to get back to fruitful employment and productivity: "Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat" (V. 12). By doing so, they imitated Paul, who sought to imitate Jesus.

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

# God Calling – 4/28/25

# The Roundabout Way

Through briers, through waste places, through glades, up mountain heights, down into valleys, I lead. But ever with the Leadership goes the Helping Hand.

Glorious to follow where your Master goes. But remember that the varied path does not always mean that you need the varied training.

We are seeking lost sheep -- we are bringing the Kingdom into places where it has not been known before. So realize that you are joining Me on My quest -- My undying quest, tracking down the souls.

I am not choosing ways that will fret and tire -- just to fret and tire; we are out to save. You may not always see the soul we seek. I know.

"Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." Luke 15:6