# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/25/20

# Sacrifice and Friendship



I have called you friends… —[John 15:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+15%3A15)

We will never know the joy of self-sacrifice until we surrender in every detail of our lives. Yet self-surrender is the most difficult thing for us to do. We make it conditional by saying, “I’ll surrender if…!” Or we approach it by saying, “I suppose I have to devote my life to God.” We will never find the joy of self-sacrifice in either of these ways.

But as soon as we do totally surrender, abandoning ourselves to Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives us a taste of His joy. The ultimate goal of self-sacrifice is to lay down our lives for our Friend (see [John 15:13-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:13-14)). When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, our greatest desire is to lay down our lives for Jesus. Yet the thought of self-sacrifice never even crosses our minds, because sacrifice is the Holy Spirit’s ultimate expression of love.

Our Lord is our example of a life of self-sacrifice, and He perfectly exemplified Psalm 40:8, “I delight to do Your will, O my God….” He endured tremendous personal sacrifice, yet with overflowing joy. Have I ever yielded myself in absolute submission to Jesus Christ? If He is not the One to whom I am looking for direction and guidance, then there is no benefit in my sacrifice. But when my sacrifice is made with my eyes focused on Him, slowly but surely His molding influence becomes evident in my life (see [Hebrews 12:1-2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:1-2)).

Beware of letting your natural desires hinder your walk in love before God. One of the cruelest ways to kill natural love is through the rejection that results from having built the love on natural desires. But the one true desire of a saint is the Lord Jesus. Love for God is not something sentimental or emotional— for a saint to love as God loves is the most practical thing imaginable.

“I have called you friends….” Our friendship with Jesus is based on the new life He created in us, which has no resemblance or attraction to our old life but only to the life of God. It is a life that is completely humble, pure, and devoted to God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Am I learning how to use my Bible? The way to become complete for the Master’s service is to be well soaked in the Bible; some of us only exploit certain passages. Our Lord wants to give us continuous instruction out of His word; continuous instruction turns hearers into disciples.  Approved Unto God, 11 L

# CCEL – 8/25/20

**Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.**—[ISA 51:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.51.html" \l "Isa.51.1)

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity.—None eye pitied thee but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, Live.

He brought me up . . . out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.

When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.—God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.

[Psa. 51:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.5). -[Ezek. 16:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.16.html" \l "Ezek.16.5).[Psa. 40:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.40.html" \l "Ps.40.2).[Rom. 5:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.6). -[Eph. 2:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.4).

“His fruit was sweet to my taste.” [Song of Solomon 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.3)

Faith, in the Scripture, is spoken of under the emblem of all the senses. It is sight: “Look unto me and be ye saved.” It is hearing: “Hear, and your soul shall live.” Faith is smelling: “All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia”; “thy name is as ointment poured forth.” Faith is spiritual touch. By this faith the woman came behind and touched the hem of Christ’s garment, and by this we handle the things of the good word of life. Faith is equally the spirit’s taste. “How sweet are thy words to my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my lips.” “Except a man eat my flesh,” saith Christ, “and drink my blood, there is no life in him.”

This “taste” is faith in one of its highest operations. One of the first performances of faith is hearing. We hear the voice of God, not with the outward ear alone, but with the inward ear; we hear it as God’s Word, and we believe it to be so; that is the “hearing” of faith. Then our mind looketh upon the truth as it is presented to us; that is to say, we understand it, we perceive its meaning; that is the “seeing” of faith. Next we discover its preciousness; we begin to admire it, and find how fragrant it is; that is faith in its “smell.” Then we appropriate the mercies which are prepared for us in Christ; that is faith in its “touch.” Hence follow the enjoyments, peace, delight, communion; which are faith in its “taste.” Any one of these acts of faith is saving. To hear Christ’s voice as the sure voice of God in the soul will save us; but that which gives true enjoyment is the aspect of faith wherein Christ, by holy taste, is received into us, and made, by inward and spiritual apprehension of his sweetness and preciousness, to be the food of our souls. It is then we sit “under his shadow with great delight,” and find his fruit sweet to our taste.

# Word Live – 8/25/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/25/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/25/20

# Helping Others

**Read:** [**Matthew 25:31-46**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+25%3a31-46)

### The Sheep and the Goats

31“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

37“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

40“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

41“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

44“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

45“He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

46“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

As a teacher, I have been given the opportunity to work with students of various needs. I have had the blessing of helping students with dyslexia (a reading disorder) move into becoming competent readers of God’s Word. And some of these students are now teachers themselves making a difference in children’s lives. My life has been enriched by helping these students.

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Matthew 25:40

In Matthew 25 Jesus explains the importance of helping others. He says that at the Final Judgment people will be separated into two categories: the sheep and the goats. The sheep not only know Him but have followed His example. They have served others by genuinely helping meet people’s needs through providing food, clothing, shelter, and time. Jesus tells us these helping actions were done without the knowledge of any reward, and these selfless actions are considered the same as serving Christ Himself.

The goats, however, did just the opposite. They never took time to help, even though the opportunity was presented to them time and time again. Mathew 25:43 states, “I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.” Helping others, especially those who are clearly in need, reflects our Savior’s love. Helping should never be about getting a reward and is certainly should not be seen as our “entrance ticket” to heaven. Rather, our desire to help others should flow from our desire to serve and imitate Christ.

Matthew 25:46 warns that there is a different outcome for those who do not know God and those who know Him and are willing to help others: “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

**Apply the Word**

What about you? Is helping your natural habit? Even if you don’t have a natural inclination to help, it can become a part of who you are when you desire to be more like Jesus. How will you respond today when God presents your opportunity to help?

### Pray with Us

Today’s devotional reminds us that helping the poor, the hungry, and the prisoner is the same as doing it to Christ Himself. May we honor the Lord with our deeds of compassion!

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/25/20

# Wonderful Reward

 **Read:** [**Psalm 119:17–24**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.17%E2%80%9324)

#### ג Gimel

17Be good to your servant while I live,  
    that I may obey your word.  
18Open my eyes that I may see  
    wonderful things in your law.  
19I am a stranger on earth;  
    do not hide your commands from me.  
20My soul is consumed with longing  
    for your laws at all times.  
21You rebuke the arrogant, who are accursed,  
    those who stray from your commands.  
22Remove from me their scorn and contempt,  
    for I keep your statutes.  
23Though rulers sit together and slander me,  
    your servant will meditate on your decrees.  
24Your statutes are my delight;  
    they are my counselors.

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. [Psalm 119:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.18)

Donelan, a teacher, had always been a reader, but one day it literally paid off. She was planning a trip and reviewing her lengthy travel insurance policy when on page seven she discovered a wonderful reward. As part of their “It Pays to Read” contest, the company was giving $10,000 to the first person to read that far into the contract. They also donated thousands of dollars to schools in Donelan’s area for children’s literacy. She says, “I’ve always been that nerd who reads contracts. I was the most surprised of anyone!”

The psalmist wanted his eyes opened to “see wonderful things” about God ([Psalm 119:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.18)). He must have had an understanding that God wants to be known, and so he longed for a deeper closeness to Him. His desire was to see more of who God is, what He’d already given, and how to follow Him more closely (vv. 24, 98). He wrote, “Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long” (v. 97).

We too have the privilege of taking time to ponder God, His character, and His provisions—to learn about and grow closer to Him. God longs to instruct us, guide us, and open our hearts to who He is. When we search for Him, He rewards us with greater wonder at who He is and the enjoyment of His presence!

By:  [Anne Cetas](https://odb.org/author/annecetas/)

#### Reflect & Pray

As you open your Bible and read, how is your heart and mind opened to God and His ways? What would you like to know or experience more of?

How I love Your Word, God. It’s sweet to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.

#### Insight

This great acrostic poem celebrating the revelation of God’s law is an easily recognizable passage of Scripture. But due to its length (176 verses), it’s often studied only a portion at a time. Acrostic poems use the repetition of letters and sounds at the beginning of each couplet. This is one of the many literary devices that Hebrew authors used in these hymns. Others include metaphor, simile, and parallelism. Hebrew poets used these elements to enhance and emphasize the message of their poetry.

To learn how to get the most out of your study of the Bible, visit [christianuniversity.org/sf106.](https://christianuniversity.org/sf106.)

# God Calling – 8/25/20

# Exhaustion

We seek Thee as Thou hast told us.

And seeking you shall find. None ever sought My Presence in vain. None ever sought My Help in vain.

A breath of desire and My Spirit is there -- to replenish and renew. Sometimes weariness and exhaustion are not signs of lack of spirit but of the guiding of the Spirit.

Many wonderful things would not have happened but for the physical weariness, the mind-weariness of My servants, which made the resting apart, the giving up of work, a necessity...

Though My Way may seem a narrow way it yet leads to Life, abundant Life. Follow it. It is not so narrow but that I can tread it beside you.

Never too lonely with such companionship. A comrade infinitely tender, infinitely strong, will tread the way with you.

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.  Matthew 7:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/26/20

# Are You Ever Troubled?



Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you… —[John 14:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+14%3A27)

There are times in our lives when our peace is based simply on our own ignorance. But when we are awakened to the realities of life, true inner peace is impossible unless it is received from Jesus. When our Lord speaks peace, He creates peace, because the words that He speaks are always “spirit, and they are life” ([John 6:63](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:63)). Have I ever received what Jesus speaks? “…My peace I give to you…”— a peace that comes from looking into His face and fully understanding and receiving His quiet contentment.

Are you severely troubled right now? Are you afraid and confused by the waves and the turbulence God sovereignly allows to enter your life? Have you left no stone of your faith unturned, yet still not found any well of peace, joy, or comfort? Does your life seem completely barren to you? Then look up and receive the quiet contentment of the Lord Jesus. Reflecting His peace is proof that you are right with God, because you are exhibiting the freedom to turn your mind to Him. If you are not right with God, you can never turn your mind anywhere but on yourself. Allowing anything to hide the face of Jesus Christ from you either causes you to become troubled or gives you a false sense of security.

With regard to the problem that is pressing in on you right now, are you “looking unto Jesus” ([Hebrews 12:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:2)) and receiving peace from Him? If so, He will be a gracious blessing of peace exhibited in and through you. But if you only try to worry your way out of the problem, you destroy His effectiveness in you, and you deserve whatever you get. We become troubled because we have not been taking Him into account. When a person confers with Jesus Christ, the confusion stops, because there is no confusion in Him. Lay everything out before Him, and when you are faced with difficulty, bereavement, and sorrow, listen to Him say, “Let not your heart be troubled…” ([John 14:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:27)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Beware of isolation; beware of the idea that you have to develop a holy life alone. It is impossible to develop a holy life alone; you will develop into an oddity and a peculiarism, into something utterly unlike what God wants you to be. The only way to develop spiritually is to go into the society of God’s own children, and you will soon find how God alters your set. God does not contradict our social instincts; He alters them.  Biblical Psychology, 189 L

# CCEL – 8/26/20

**Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**—[EXO. 28:36.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.28.html" \l "Exod.28.36)

Holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.—God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.—But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.—I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.

This is the law of the house: Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy.—Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.—Seeing . . . that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace. that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

[Heb. 12:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.14). -[John. 4:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.4.html" \l "John.4.24). -[Isa. 64:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.64.html" \l "Isa.64.6). -[Lev. 10:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.10.html" \l "Lev.10.3).[Ezek. 43:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.43.html" \l "Ezek.43.12). -[Psa. 93:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.93.html" \l "Ps.93.5).[John 17:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.19). -[Heb. 4:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html" \l "Heb.4.14),[16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html" \l "Heb.4.16).

“He hath commanded his covenant forever.” [Psalms 111:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.111.html" \l "Ps.111.9)

The Lord’s people delight in the covenant itself. It is an unfailing source of consolation to them so often as the Holy Spirit leads them into its banqueting house and waves its banner of love. They delight to contemplate the antiquity of that covenant, remembering that before the day-star knew its place, or planets ran their round, the interests of the saints were made secure in Christ Jesus. It is peculiarly pleasing to them to remember the sureness of the covenant, while meditating upon “the sure mercies of David.” They delight to celebrate it as “signed, and sealed, and ratified, in all things ordered well.” It often makes their hearts dilate with joy to think of its immutability, as a covenant which neither time nor eternity, life nor death, shall ever be able to violate—a covenant as old as eternity and as everlasting as the Rock of ages. They rejoice also to feast upon the fulness of this covenant, for they see in it all things provided for them. God is their portion, Christ their companion, the Spirit their Comforter, earth their lodge, and heaven their home. They see in it an inheritance reserved and entailed to every soul possessing an interest in its ancient and eternal deed of gift. Their eyes sparkled when they saw it as a treasure-trove in the Bible; but oh! how their souls were gladdened when they saw in the last will and testament of their divine kinsman, that it was bequeathed to them! More especially it is the pleasure of God’s people to contemplate the graciousness of this covenant. They see that the law was made void because it was a covenant of works and depended upon merit, but this they perceive to be enduring because grace is the basis, grace the condition, grace the strain, grace the bulwark, grace the foundation, grace the topstone. The covenant is a treasury of wealth, a granary of food, a fountain of life, a store-house of salvation, a charter of peace, and a haven of joy.

# Word Live – 8/26/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/26/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/26/20

# The Learning Gap

**Read:** [**John 21:15–19**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3a15%e2%80%9319)

### Jesus Reinstates Peter

15When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

16Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

17The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. 18Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” 19Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

A test is designed to assess learning over a given period of time. What has the student learned, and, specifically, is there a “gap” in learning? A gap means that key pieces of knowledge and understanding are missing. Until that gap is filled, progress is not likely. Sometimes, the gap can only be filled through continual reteaching.

“Yes Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” John 21:15

In John 21:15–19, Christ’s repeated questioning reveals Peter’s learning gap and challenges him to put away pride and walk in sacrificing love. Before he denied Jesus three times Peter claimed to love Jesus more than the other disciples loved Jesus (vv. 15, 16). Now, during this resurrection appearance to the disciples, Jesus used the word agapas, asking Peter the question, “Do you love me?” Agapas refers to an all-giving and unselfish love that focuses on someone else’s benefit. It is interesting to note that Peter answered Jesus using the word philio, a friendly and mutual affection between two people.

It is also important to note that Christ never asked Peter to apologize for his denial. He doesn’t throw Peter’s failure in his face. Instead, He asks a third time, “Do you love me?” Peter’s response reveals his continued focus on himself yet his growing understanding of Christ’s omniscient power. Jesus revealed that Peter would, eventually, come to an even greater understanding of what it means to walk in love. He attempted to fill Peter’s “learning gap” through a two-word command. No matter what happens in life, Peter should do one thing: “Follow me” (v. 19). Follow God and lead others to God out of an all-giving and unselfish love that is based on God’s own love for him (and for us). Christ never reprimanded Peter for his need to continue to learn. As our Master Teacher, Christ continued His life-giving lessons.

**Apply the Word**

Think about your spiritual growth in recent months. What is your learning gap—an area you realize you need to grow in? Read God’s Word, and ask Him to help you fill this gap and follow Him more closely.

### Pray with Us

How would you answer Christ’s question in today’s reading: “Do you love me” (John 11:16)? Ask the Lord to show you how to walk closer to Him and love Him more.

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/26/20

# Spiritual Driving

 **Read:** [**Ephesians 5:8–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.8%E2%80%9320)

8For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10and find out what pleases the Lord. 11Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,  
    rise from the dead,  
    and Christ will shine on you.”

15Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. [Ephesians 5:15–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.15%E2%80%9316)

I don’t remember many specifics about my driver’s education class. But for some reason, an acronym we learned, S-I-P-D-E, remains firmly lodged in my memory.

The letters stood for **S**can, **I**dentify, **P**redict, **D**ecide, and **E**xecute, a process we were taught to practice continually. We were to scan the road, identify hazards, predict what the hazards might do, decide how we’d respond, and then, if necessary, execute that plan. It was a strategy for being intentional to avoid accidents.

I wonder how that idea might translate to our spiritual lives. In [Ephesians 5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205), Paul told Ephesian believers, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise, but as wise” (v. 15). Paul knew certain hazards could derail the Ephesians—old ways of living at odds with their new life in Jesus (vv. 8, 10–11). So he instructed the growing church to pay attention.

The words translated “be very careful, then, how you live” literally mean “see how you walk.” In other words, look around. Notice hazards, and avoid personal pitfalls like drunkenness and wild living (v. 18). Instead, the apostle said, we can seek to learn God’s will for our lives (v. 17), while, with fellow believers, we sing to and give Him thanks (vv. 19–20).

No matter what hazards we face—and even when we stumble—we can experience our new life in Christ as we grow in dependence on His boundless power and grace.

By:  [Adam R. Holz](https://odb.org/author/adamholz/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What strategy do you use to recognize what might trip you up spiritually? What role do you think other believers play in identifying and resisting spiritual hazards? How might thanksgiving be an important part of avoiding spiritual pitfalls?

Heavenly Father, as I navigate the spiritual potholes on life’s road, thank You for reminding me to look up to You for help.

#### Insight

Paul calls the believers in Jesus in the church in Ephesus to recognize the times they live in and to act accordingly. They were to “[make] the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil” ([Ephesians 5:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.16)). In early Christianity, evil was viewed as a characteristic of the last days—the time period from Christ’s ascension until His return (see [2 Timothy 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.1); [2 Peter 3:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Pet%203.3)).  
  
The Word Biblical Commentary says, “It is possible that for some of its force, the notion of evil days here retains the implications of its use in the apocalyptic tradition, where these evil days are the last days, are precarious, and will only endure for a limited period. This would produce a sense of urgency about the remaining present and its opportunities.”  
  
Peter is encouraging believers to understand that opportunities to do good are all the more important when we consider that each passing day brings us one day closer to the last day—the day when Jesus returns.

# God Calling – 8/26/20

# Accept Trials

Trials and troubles may seem to overwhelm you. They cannot do more than work My Will, and that Will you have said is your Will.

Do you not see that you cannot be destroyed?  From now a new Life is opening out before you. Yours to enter into the Kingdom I have prepared for you.

The sunlight of My Presence is on your paths. Trust and go forward unafraid. My Grace is sufficient for all your needs.

In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.  Psalm 56:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/27/20

# Living Your Theology



Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you… —[John 12:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+12%3A35)

Beware of not acting upon what you see in your moments on the mountaintop with God. If you do not obey the light, it will turn into darkness. “If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” ([Matthew 6:23](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:23)). The moment you forsake the matter of sanctification or neglect anything else on which God has given you His light, your spiritual life begins to disintegrate within you. Continually bring the truth out into your real life, working it out into every area, or else even the light that you possess will itself prove to be a curse.

The most difficult person to deal with is the one who has the prideful self-satisfaction of a past experience, but is not working that experience out in his everyday life. If you say you are sanctified, show it. The experience must be so genuine that it shows in your life. Beware of any belief that makes you self-indulgent or self-gratifying; that belief came from the pit of hell itself, regardless of how beautiful it may sound.

Your theology must work itself out, exhibiting itself in your most common everyday relationships. Our Lord said, “…unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven” ([Matthew 5:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5:20)). In other words, you must be more moral than the most moral person you know. You may know all about the doctrine of sanctification, but are you working it out in the everyday issues of your life? Every detail of your life, whether physical, moral, or spiritual, is to be judged and measured by the standard of the atonement by the Cross of Christ.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 8/27/20

**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**—[PSA. 119:105.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.105)

By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.—When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light.—Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.—We have also a sure … word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.—Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.—They need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

[Psa. 17:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.17.html" \l "Ps.17.4). -[Prov. 6:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.6.html" \l "Prov.6.22). -[Isa. 30:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.30.html" \l "Isa.30.21).[John 8:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.8.html" \l "John.8.12). –[II Pet. 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.1.html" \l "iiPet.1.19). -[I Cor. 13:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.13.html" \l "iCor.13.12). -[Rev. 22:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.22.html" \l "Rev.22.5).

“How long will it be ere they believe me?” [Numbers 14:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.14.html" \l "Num.14.11)

Strive with all diligence to keep out that monster unbelief. It so dishonours Christ, that he will withdraw his visible presence if we insult him by indulging it. It is true it is a weed, the seeds of which we can never entirely extract from the soil, but we must aim at its root with zeal and perseverance. Among hateful things it is the most to be abhorred. Its injurious nature is so venomous that he that exerciseth it and he upon whom it is exercised are both hurt thereby. In thy case, O believer! it is most wicked, for the mercies of thy Lord in the past, increase thy guilt in doubting him now. When thou dost distrust the Lord Jesus, he may well cry out, “Behold I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.” This is crowning his head with thorns of the sharpest kind. It is very cruel for a well-beloved wife to mistrust a kind and faithful husband. The sin is needless, foolish, and unwarranted. Jesus has never given the slightest ground for suspicion, and it is hard to be doubted by those to whom our conduct is uniformly affectionate and true. Jesus is the Son of the Highest, and has unbounded wealth; it is shameful to doubt Omnipotence and distrust all-sufficiency. The cattle on a thousand hills will suffice for our most hungry feeding, and the granaries of heaven are not likely to be emptied by our eating. If Christ were only a cistern, we might soon exhaust his fulness, but who can drain a fountain? Myriads of spirits have drawn their supplies from him, and not one of them has murmured at the scantiness of his resources. Away, then, with this lying traitor unbelief, for his only errand is to cut the bonds of communion and make us mourn an absent Saviour. Bunyan tells us that unbelief has “as many lives as a cat:” if so, let us kill one life now, and continue the work till the whole nine are gone. Down with thee, thou traitor, my heart abhors thee.

# Word Live – 8/27/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/27/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/27/20

# The Power of Repetition

**Read:** [**Mark 10:32–45**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10%3a32%e2%80%9345)

### Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time

32They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. 33“We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, 34who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”

### The Request of James and John

35Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

36“What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

37They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”

38“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

39“We can,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, 40but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

41When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. 42Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Do you ever need to be told something more than once before you truly get it? Or maybe you repeat something to yourself in order to truly remember it? As a Master Teacher, Jesus knew the power of repetition to help His followers learn. And no matter how frustrating their lack of understanding might have been, He did not lose patience.

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:45

Like His closest followers, we too can be slow to understand. Christ’s patience while repeating the same message to His followers was truly extraordinary. Jesus spoke of His death and resurrection over and over again in the Gospel of Mark, and still, the disciples didn’t seem to understand what was coming. In Mark 10, He had been answering questions from the Pharisees and teaching the people. When they left for Jerusalem, Mark records that “again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him” (v. 32).

Clearly this was not the first time Jesus had tried to prepare them for the difficult days ahead. He could not be clearer than He was in verses 33–34, delivering detailed information on the next days, followed by His resurrection. Still, there seems to be a lack of understanding, and James and John immediately switched subjects to discuss which of them would be most powerful in the kingdom (v. 37). Jesus emphasized that they are not to pursue a power position but to follow His own example which would be marked by humility and suffering.

Four times in Mark 10 the author repeats the setting of Christ’s teaching as being “along the way” or “along a road.” Christ used every situation, setting, and opportunity to repeat His message. Why? He wanted His listeners to hear, to understand, and to believe.

**Apply the Word**

What is Jesus’ attitude toward His listeners? In what ways does He demonstrate patience while sharing Truth? In what ways might God be calling you to show patience to those in your life who will not or cannot understand His truth?

### Pray with Us

Servanthood is an important theme in today’s Scripture. “The Son of Man did not come to be served” (Mark 10:45). Lord Jesus, help us become true servants, worthy of your name!

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/27/20

# Rescue the Weak

 **Read:** [**Psalm 82:3–4**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2082.3%E2%80%934)

3Defend the weak and the fatherless;  
    uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.  
4Rescue the weak and the needy;  
    deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. [Psalm 82:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2082.4)

Which would you choose—a skiing holiday in Switzerland or rescuing children from danger in Prague? Nicholas Winton, just an ordinary man, chose the latter. In 1938, war between Czechoslovakia and Germany seemed on the horizon. After Nicholas visited refugee camps in Prague, where many Jewish citizens lived in horrible conditions, he felt compelled to come up with a plan to help. He raised money to transport hundreds of children safely out of Prague to Great Britain to be cared for by British families before the onset of World War II.

His actions exemplified those called for in [Psalm 82](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2082): “Uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed” (v. 3). Asaph, the writer of this psalm, wanted to stir his people to champion the cause of those in need: “Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (v. 4). Like the children Nicholas worked tirelessly to rescue, the psalmist spoke for those who couldn’t speak for themselves—the poor and the widowed who needed justice and protection.

Everywhere we look today we see people in need due to war, storms, and other hardships. Although we can’t solve every problem, we can prayerfully consider what we can do to help in the situations God brings into our lives.

By:  [Linda Washington](https://odb.org/author/lindawashingtonodb/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What are some immediate needs of others you can help meet? How has God uniquely prepared you to rescue and care for others?

Loving God, open my eyes to the needs of those around me.

#### Insight

The psalms of Asaph (50; 73–83) take an honest look at the seeming absence of justice on the earth. These songs pose our toughest questions, including: Why do the wicked prosper? and Why do good people suffer? Here in [Psalm 82](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2082) the pointed question is asked: “How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked?” (v. 2). We might interpret that as an accusation against God, but the word translated “you” is plural. The psalmist is targeting his question against unjust judges who “will die like mere mortals; [and] will fall like every other ruler” (v. 7). The psalm affirms God’s sovereignty over all things: “God . . . renders judgment among the ‘gods’” (v. 1) and concludes with an appeal to the Lord to “rise up” and “judge the earth” (v. 8). Despite the pain that motivated this cry for justice, the songwriter knows God can be trusted to make things right.

# God Calling – 8/27/20

# Tangled Skeins

In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. -- Isaiah 30:15

Feel that . . . trust Me. Am I not leading you safely, faithfully? Will you believe Me, your Master, that all this is really to bring the answer to your prayers?

Remember that I am the Supreme Being who knows all and can control all.

Directly you put your affairs, their confusion, their difficulties, into My Hands I began to effect a cure of all the disharmony and disorder.

You must know that I shall cause you no more pain in the doing of it than a physician, who plans and knows he can effect a cure, would cause his patient. I will do all as tenderly as possible.

Tell Me that you trust Me in this.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters ... he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  Psalm 23:2, 3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/28/20

# The Purpose of Prayer



…one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray…" —[Luke 11:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+11%3A1)

Prayer is not a normal part of the life of the natural man. We hear it said that a person’s life will suffer if he doesn’t pray, but I question that. What will suffer is the life of the Son of God in him, which is nourished not by food, but by prayer. When a person is born again from above, the life of the Son of God is born in him, and he can either starve or nourish that life. Prayer is the way that the life of God in us is nourished. Our common ideas regarding prayer are not found in the New Testament. We look upon prayer simply as a means of getting things for ourselves, but the biblical purpose of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself.

“Ask, and you will receive…” ([John 16:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:24)). We complain before God, and sometimes we are apologetic or indifferent to Him, but we actually ask Him for very few things. Yet a child exhibits a magnificent boldness to ask! Our Lord said, “…unless you…become as little children…” ([Matthew 18:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18:3)). Ask and God will do. Give Jesus Christ the opportunity and the room to work. The problem is that no one will ever do this until he is at his wits’ end. When a person is at his wits’ end, it no longer seems to be a cowardly thing to pray; in fact, it is the only way he can get in touch with the truth and the reality of God Himself. Be yourself before God and present Him with your problems— the very things that have brought you to your wits’ end. But as long as you think you are self-sufficient, you do not need to ask God for anything.

To say that “prayer changes things” is not as close to the truth as saying, “Prayer changes me and then I change things.” God has established things so that prayer, on the basis of redemption, changes the way a person looks at things. Prayer is not a matter of changing things externally, but one of working miracles in a person’s inner nature.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The truth is we have nothing to fear and nothing to overcome because He is all in all and we are more than conquerors through Him. The recognition of this truth is not flattering to the worker’s sense of heroics, but it is amazingly glorifying to the work of Christ. Approved Unto God, 4 R

# CCEL – 8/28/20

**The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.**—[REV. 12:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.12.html" \l "Rev.12.10)

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.—Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly.—That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.—In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.—Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. And take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.—Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Rev. 12:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.12.html" \l "Rev.12.11). -[Rom. 8:33,34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.33).[Col. 2:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.15). -[Heb. 2:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.14). -[Rom. 8:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.37). -[Eph. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html" \l "Eph.6.11),[17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html" \l "Eph.6.17). -[I Cor. 15:57](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.57).

“Oil for the light.” [Exodus 25:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.25.html" \l "Exod.25.6)

My soul, how much thou needest this, for thy lamp will not long continue to burn without it. Thy snuff will smoke and become an offence if light be gone, and gone it will be if oil be absent. Thou hast no oil well springing up in thy human nature, and therefore thou must go to them that sell and buy for thyself, or like the foolish virgins, thou wilt have to cry, “My lamp is gone out.” Even the consecrated lamps could not give light without oil; though they shone in the tabernacle they needed to be fed, though no rough winds blew upon them they required to be trimmed, and thy need is equally as great. Under the most happy circumstances thou canst not give light for another hour unless fresh oil of grace be given thee.

It was not every oil that might be used in the Lord’s service; neither the petroleum which exudes so plentifully from the earth, nor the produce of fishes, nor that extracted from nuts would be accepted; one oil only was selected, and that the best olive oil. Pretended grace from natural goodness, fancied grace from priestly hands, or imaginary grace from outward ceremonies will never serve the true saint of God; he knows that the Lord would not be pleased with rivers of such oil. He goes to the olive-press of Gethsemane, and draws his supplies from him who was crushed therein. The oil of gospel grace is pure and free from lees and dregs, and hence the light which is fed thereon is clear and bright. Our churches are the Saviour’s golden candelabra, and if they are to be lights in this dark world, they must have much holy oil. Let us pray for ourselves, our ministers, and our churches, that they may never lack oil for the light. Truth, holiness, joy, knowledge, love, these are all beams of the sacred light, but we cannot give them forth unless in private we receive oil from God the Holy Ghost.

# Word Live – 8/28/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/28/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/28/20

# Practice Foresight

**Read:** [**Luke 24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24)

### Jesus Has Risen

24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ” 8Then they remembered his words.

9When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. 10It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. 11But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. 12Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

### On the Road to Emmaus

13Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24#fen-NIV-26005a)] from Jerusalem. 14They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16but they were kept from recognizing him.

17He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. 18One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

19“What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

25He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” 27And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

28As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. 29But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

30When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

33They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together 34and saying, “It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.” 35Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

### Jesus Appears to the Disciples

36While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

37They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. 38He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? 39Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

40When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. 41And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” 42They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43and he took it and ate it in their presence.

44He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

45Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48You are witnesses of these things. 49I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

### The Ascension of Jesus

50When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. 51While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. 52Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. 53And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Luke 24:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24#en-NIV-26005) Or about 11 kilometers

Have you ever looked back at a situation and thought, I sure wish I’d known then what I know now. If we’re honest, we often have the opportunity to make informed decisions, we just don’t always practice foresight. A good teacher shows students how to predict (at least for the most part) what will happen based on what we do know.

Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. Luke 24:44

Jesus lived each day with a clear knowledge and awareness of what was to come—including His death and resurrection. His foresight had a purpose, obedience to the Father, and salvation for those who would repent of sin and turn toward God. In Luke 24 we see the power of God displayed through the resurrected Messiah. Angels told the women the good news: Jesus had risen from the dead! Peter saw the empty tomb, and Jesus spent time with two disciples, even though they did not immediately recognize Him. Finally, Jesus appeared to His gathered disciples, convincing them that He was not a ghost.

But in Luke 24:44 Christ reminds His followers that all of these things had been foretold. For them, as people who knew and had studied the Law, none of this should have come as a surprise. Likewise, when we know and serve God, we must realize He is faithful to His Word. We are not led blindly. The Bible tells us our future, giving specific and practical instructions on how we should live as faithful followers in today’s world.

We have the opportunity to practice foresight each day by reading God’s Word and living obediently. Verse 45 tells us how Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. Nothing is keeping you from having the same blessing.

**Apply the Word**

Today, read His Word, believe His Word, and obediently live His Word! As readers of God’s Word, we are able to live with foresight, certain of what is to come. When you place your head on your pillow tonight, no matter what happens, you can say, “Lord, today I lived for and honored you.”

### Pray with Us

During your time with God ask Him for guidance in your study of His Word and help in going deeper into its truth. Let God’s Word transform your life.

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/28/20

# God Our Rescuer

 **Read:** [**Ezekiel 34:5–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2034.5%E2%80%9312)

5So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. 6My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them.

7“‘Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 8As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, 9therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 10This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

11“‘For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. 12As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.

I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered. [Ezekiel 34:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2034.12)

In the open sea, a rescuer positioned her kayak to assist panicked swimmers competing in a triathlon. “Don’t grab the middle of the boat!” she called to swimmers, knowing such a move would capsize her craft. Instead, she directed weary swimmers to the bow, or front, of the kayak. There they could grab a loop, allowing the safety kayaker to help rescue them.

Whenever life or people threaten to pull us under, as believers in Jesus, we know we have a Rescuer. “For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep . . . . I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered” ([Ezekiel 34:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2034.11%E2%80%9312)).

This was the prophet Ezekiel’s assurance to God’s people when they were in exile. Their leaders had neglected and exploited them, plundering their lives and caring “for themselves rather than for [God’s] flock” (v. 8). As a result, the people “were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them” (v. 6).

But “I will rescue my flock,” declared the Lord (v. 10), and His promise still holds.

What do we need to do? Hold fast to almighty God and His promises. “I myself will search for my sheep and look after them,” He says (v. 11). That’s a saving promise worth holding tightly.

By:  [Patricia Raybon](https://odb.org/author/patriciaraybon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

When you feel panicked, what’s your typical reaction? What problem can you release today as you reach instead for God?

Our rescuing God, when life makes me panic, encourage me to turn from the rolling waves and always reach for You.

#### Insight

According to Bible scholar Kenneth Bailey, [Ezekiel 34:5–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2034.5%E2%80%9312) is one of nine times in Scripture where the imagery of shepherd and sheep is a metaphor for critically important relationships. Sometimes, the shepherd is God Himself or Jesus ([Psalm 23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2023); [Psalm 95](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2095); [Matthew 18:10–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2018.10%E2%80%9314); [Luke 15:3–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.3%E2%80%937); [John 10:7–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.7%E2%80%9318)), sometimes the shepherd represents Israel’s corrupt leadership ([Jeremiah 23:1–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2023.1%E2%80%938); [Ezekiel 34:1–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2034.1%E2%80%938); [Zechariah 10:1–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zech%2010.1%E2%80%9312)), and sometimes it’s church leaders ([1 Peter 5:1–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%205.1%E2%80%934)). As such, sometimes the sheep are Israel’s faithful remnant, sometimes the people of Israel in general ([Mark 6:30–44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%206.30%E2%80%9344)), and other times the sheep are believers in Christ. To the ancient world, the relationship of shepherd and sheep was a familiar one and as a result formed a very accessible picture of the healthy relationships between God and His people and the danger of exploitation by false shepherds.

# God Calling – 8/28/20

# Continuous Service

Service is the Law of Heaven. My angels do always obey. "They serve Him continually" can be said of all who love Me.

With Love there is continuous service in every action, and also even in rest.

Take this not as the end but as the beginning of a New Life consecrated to My Service.

A Life of Power and Joy.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.  John 12:26

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/29/20

# The Unsurpassed Intimacy of Tested Faith



Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" —[John 11:40](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+11%3A40)

Every time you venture out in your life of faith, you will find something in your circumstances that, from a commonsense standpoint, will flatly contradict your faith. But common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense. In fact, they are as different as the natural life and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture out with courage on the words of Jesus Christ, while the realities of your commonsense life continue to shout, “It’s all a lie”? When you are on the mountaintop, it’s easy to say, “Oh yes, I believe God can do it,” but you have to come down from the mountain to the demon-possessed valley and face the realities that scoff at your Mount-of-Transfiguration belief (see [Luke 9:28-42](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:28-42)). Every time my theology becomes clear to my own mind, I encounter something that contradicts it. As soon as I say, “I believe ‘God shall supply all [my] need,’ ” the testing of my faith begins ([Philippians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4:19)). When my strength runs dry and my vision is blinded, will I endure this trial of my faith victoriously or will I turn back in defeat?

Faith must be tested, because it can only become your intimate possession through conflict. What is challenging your faith right now? The test will either prove your faith right, or it will kill it. Jesus said, “Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me” [Matthew 11:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+11:6)). The ultimate thing is confidence in Jesus. “We have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end…” ([Hebrews 3:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+3:14)). Believe steadfastly on Him and everything that challenges you will strengthen your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith up to the point of our physical death, which is the last great test. Faith is absolute trust in God— trust that could never imagine that He would forsake us (see [Hebrews 13:5-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+13:5-6)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Sincerity means that the appearance and the reality are exactly the same.  
[Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](https://dhp.org/0098.html)

# CCEL – 8/29/20

**Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.**—[PROV. 16:20.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.16.html" \l "Prov.16.20)

[Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.—The children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.—It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.—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.

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

[Rom. 4:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.4.html" \l "Rom.4.20). -[II Chr. 13:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.13.html" \l "iiChr.13.18).[Psa. 46:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.46.html" \l "Ps.46.1). -[Psa. 118:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.118.html" \l "Ps.118.8). -[Psa. 37:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.23).[Psa. 34:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.8).

“Have mercy upon me, O God.” [Psalm 51:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.1)

When Dr. Carey was suffering from a dangerous illness, the enquiry was made, “If this sickness should prove fatal, what passage would you select as the text for your funeral sermon?” He replied, “Oh, I feel that such a poor sinful creature is unworthy to have anything said about him; but if a funeral sermon must be preached, let it be from the words, ‘Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.’” In the same spirit of humility he directed in his will that the following inscription and nothing more should be cut on his gravestone:—

William Carey, Born August 17th, 1761: Died - -

“A wretched, poor, and helpless worm

On thy kind arms I fall.”

Only on the footing of free grace can the most experienced and most honoured of the saints approach their God. The best of men are conscious above all others that they are men at the best. Empty boats float high, but heavily laden vessels are low in the water; mere professors can boast, but true children of God cry for mercy upon their unprofitableness. We have need that the Lord should have mercy upon our good works, our prayers, our preachings, our alms-givings, and our holiest things. The blood was not only sprinkled upon the doorposts of Israel’s dwelling houses, but upon the sanctuary, the mercy-seat, and the altar, because as sin intrudes into our holiest things, the blood of Jesus is needed to purify them from defilement. If mercy be needed to be exercised towards our duties, what shall be said of our sins? How sweet the remembrance that inexhaustible mercy is waiting to be gracious to us, to restore our backslidings, and make our broken bones rejoice!

# Word Live – 8/29/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/29/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/29/20

# Facing Disappointment

**Read:** [**Matthew 26:14–56**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356)

### Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

14Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests 15and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. 16From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

### The Last Supper

17On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

18He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” 19So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

20When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. 21And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

22They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?”

23Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. 24The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

25Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?”

Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

26While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

27Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. 28This is my blood of the[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#fen-NIV-24083a)] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

30When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial

31Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

“‘I will strike the shepherd,  
    and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#fen-NIV-24086b)]

32But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

33Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”

34“Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

35But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

### Gethsemane

36Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” 37He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

39Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

40Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. 41“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

42He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

43When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 44So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

45Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. 46Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

### Jesus Arrested

47While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. 48Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” 49Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

50Jesus replied, “Do what you came for, friend.”[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#fen-NIV-24105c)]

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. 51With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

52“Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. 53Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 54But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?”

55In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. 56But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Matthew 26:28](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#en-NIV-24083) Some manuscripts the new
2. [Matthew 26:31](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#en-NIV-24086) Zech. 13:7
3. [Matthew 26:50](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26%3a14%e2%80%9356#en-NIV-24105) Or “Why have you come, friend?”

Many years ago I attended a student’s sweet sixteen party at a luxurious hotel banquet hall. It was a beautiful event. However, on Monday this same young woman walked into my classroom in tears. She explained that when she got home that evening her parents told her they were divorcing. She felt betrayed by this sad ending to her birthday. The good news is that this precious teen did not turn against God. Supported by mentors, she was able to move forward and today is a grown godly woman with three teenage children.

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. Matthew 26:41

Life’s disappointments produce a sense of sadness resulting from our unfulfilled expectations. One moment we are celebrating life, and the next moment we feel knocked across the face by unexpected disappointments. In Matthew 26 Jesus faced a situation that caused great disappointment. Remember, He was fully God, but He was also human and could experience emotional pain. Nevertheless, He accepted what happened as part of God’s plan. Not only did His disciple Judas plot to betray Him (vv. 14–16), but he also led the capture of Jesus, with a “large crowd armed with swords and clubs” (v. 47). Then Judas sealed the betrayal with a pre-arranged signal: a kiss (v. 48). Oh, how hurtful that must have been for Jesus, to be betrayed by one within His closest circle.

What was Jesus’ response? Notice that He called Judas His “friend” (v. 50). He told those defending Him to put away their swords (v. 52). He asked questions and referred the crowd to Scripture (v. 54). Notice what Jesus did not do. He did not wallow in disappointment. We serve a Savior who understands us when we face disappointment because “Jesus understands every weakness of ours” (Heb. 4:15–16).

**Apply the Word**

Serving God will, at times, bring disappointments. Consider how God wants you to respond. Perhaps He wants you to share His Word or mentor someone facing trials. Ask God to mold you to His image, no matter what today brings.

### Pray with Us

Our prayer is that the Lord, the great Teacher, will teach us how to turn away from pride, selfishness, and greed and make us ready to serve one another with humility.

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/29/20

# The Ultimate Wave

 **Read:** [**Colossians 1:1–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.1%E2%80%938)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2To God’s holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29468a)] in Christ:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-29468b" \o "See footnote b)]

### Thanksgiving and Prayer

3We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God’s people— 5the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel 6that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace. 7You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant,[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-29473c" \o "See footnote c)] who is a faithful minister of Christ on our[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29473d)] behalf, 8and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Colossians 1:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-29468) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 4:15.
2. [Colossians 1:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-29468) Some manuscripts Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
3. [Colossians 1:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-29473) Or slave
4. [Colossians 1:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A1%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-29473) Some manuscripts your

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing. [Colossians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.6)

People love doing “the wave.” At sporting events and concerts around the world, it begins when a few people stand and raise their hands. A moment later, those seated beside them do the same. The goal is to have one sequential flowing movement work its way around an entire stadium. Once it reaches the end, those who started it smile and cheer—and keep the movement going.

The first recorded incident of the wave occurred at a professional baseball game between the Oakland Athletics and the New York Yankees in 1981. I love joining in the wave because it’s fun. But it’s also occurred to me that the happiness and togetherness we experience while doing it is reminiscent of the gospel—the good news of salvation in Jesus that unites believers everywhere in praise and hope. This “ultimate wave” started over twenty centuries ago in Jerusalem. Writing to the members of the church in Colossae, Paul described it this way: “The gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it” ([Colossians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.6)). The natural result of this good news is “faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for [us] in heaven” (v. 5).

As believers in Jesus, we’re part of the greatest wave in history. Keep it going! Once it’s done, we’ll see the smile of the One who started it all.

By:  [James Banks](https://odb.org/author/jamesbanks/)

#### Reflect & Pray

From whom did you first hear the good news of Jesus? How can you share it with another person close to you this week?

I praise You for the wonderful gift of my salvation, Father. Please send me to someone who needs to hear of Your kindness today!

#### Insight

Paul uses the first-person-plural pronoun to write “we always thank God . . . when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of [your] love” ([Colossians 1:3–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.3%E2%80%934)). Who is meant by “we”? In addition to expressing the thoughts and sentiments of a young co-worker by the name of Timothy (1:1), he’s also reflecting the hearts of other friends and co-workers (4:10–17). Especially for those who’d never met him face-to-face (2:1), Paul makes a point of speaking on behalf of persons more familiar to them. Of those Paul names, Epaphras stands out as a “dear fellow servant” who not only had been the first to tell the Colossians about the gospel and grace of God (1:7–8), but who “is always wrestling in prayer for [them], that [they] may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured” (4:12).

# God Calling – 8/29/20

# Breathe My Name

Just breathe My Name.

It is like the pressure of a child's hand that calls forth an answering pressure, strengthens the child's confidence and banishes fear.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.  Proverbs 18:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/30/20

# Usefulness or Relationship?



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

Jesus Christ is saying here, “Don’t rejoice in your successful service for Me, but rejoice because of your right relationship with Me.” The trap you may fall into in Christian work is to rejoice in successful service— rejoicing in the fact that God has used you. Yet you will never be able to measure fully what God will do through you if you do not have a right-standing relationship with Jesus Christ. If you keep your relationship right with Him, then regardless of your circumstances or whoever you encounter each day, He will continue to pour “rivers of living water” through you ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). And it is actually by His mercy that He does not let you know it. Once you have the right relationship with God through salvation and sanctification, remember that whatever your circumstances may be, you have been placed in them by God. And God uses the reaction of your life to your circumstances to fulfill His purpose, as long as you continue to “walk in the light as He is in the light” ([1 John 1:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1:7)).

Our tendency today is to put the emphasis on service. Beware of the people who make their request for help on the basis of someone’s usefulness. If you make usefulness the test, then Jesus Christ was the greatest failure who ever lived. For the saint, direction and guidance come from God Himself, not some measure of that saint’s usefulness. It is the work that God does through us that counts, not what we do for Him. All that our Lord gives His attention to in a person’s life is that person’s relationship with God— something of great value to His Father. Jesus is “bringing many sons to glory…” ([Hebrews 2:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+2:10)).

**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

# CCEL – 8/30/20

**The king held out . . . the golden sceptre. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.**—[ESTH. 5:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Esth.5.html" \l "Esth.5.2)

It shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.

We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.

Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.—For through him we . . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father.—We have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.—Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

[Exo. 22:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.22.html" \l "Exod.22.27).[I John 4:16-19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.4.html" \l "iJohn.4.16).[Heb. 10:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.22). -[Eph. 2:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.18). -[Eph. 3:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.12). -[Heb. 4:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html#Heb.4.16).

“Wait on the Lord.” [Psalm 27:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.14)

It may seem an easy thing to wait, but it is one of the postures which a Christian soldier learns not without years of teaching. Marching and quick-marching are much easier to God’s warriors than standing still. There are hours of perplexity when the most willing spirit, anxiously desirous to serve the Lord, knows not what part to take. Then what shall it do? Vex itself by despair? Fly back in cowardice, turn to the right hand in fear, or rush forward in presumption? No, but simply wait. Wait in prayer, however. Call upon God, and spread the case before him; tell him your difficulty, and plead his promise of aid. In dilemmas between one duty and another, it is sweet to be humble as a child, and wait with simplicity of soul upon the Lord. It is sure to be well with us when we feel and know our own folly, and are heartily willing to be guided by the will of God. But wait in faith. Express your unstaggering confidence in him; for unfaithful, untrusting waiting, is but an insult to the Lord. Believe that if he keep you tarrying even till midnight, yet he will come at the right time; the vision shall come and shall not tarry. Wait in quiet patience, not rebelling because you are under the affliction, but blessing your God for it. Never murmur against the second cause, as the children of Israel did against Moses; never wish you could go back to the world again, but accept the case as it is, and put it as it stands, simply and with your whole heart, without any self-will, into the hand of your covenant God, saying, “Now, Lord, not my will, but thine be done. I know not what to do; I am brought to extremities, but I will wait until thou shalt cleave the floods, or drive back my foes. I will wait, if thou keep me many a day, for my heart is fixed upon thee alone, O God, and my spirit waiteth for thee in the full conviction that thou wilt yet be my joy and my salvation, my refuge and my strong tower.”

# Word Live – 8/30/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/30/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/30/20

# Teaching by Example

**Read:** [**John 13:1–17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+13%3a1%e2%80%9317)

### Jesus Washes His Disciples’ Feet

13 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

2The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

7Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”

8“No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”

9“Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”

10Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” 11For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. 13“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. 15I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Corey Nelson is an Arizona high school track coach who his students will tell you “never quits.” While coaching his students on how to sprint, the teacher continues to compete at the Master level. The teacher’s dedication, both to his students and to the sport, has made a deep impression. One parent commented, “He’s going through the same training, the same problems. They can see he’s not all talk.”

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. John 13:14

Jesus made a deep impression on His disciples not only because of what He said but also because of what He did. In today’s passage, He showed them what it meant to be a servant leader by humbling Himself and washing their dusty feet. The disciples had gathered for the Passover Festival and their evening meal. Notice that before Jesus teaches by example, the passage explains why He did it. “Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so . . . ” (v. 3). Jesus understood the suffering that would come in the days ahead. He realized who He was and to what He had been called. Even so, He demonstrated sacrificial love for Peter and the others by pouring a basin of water, taking a towel, and washing their dirty feet (vv. 4–5).

This intimate act of humility proved too much for Peter, who objected, “No, you shall never wash my feet” (v. 8). But Jesus wanted to make a point. He explains more fully in verses 12–17. He was indeed their Teacher and Lord, but He was also showing them by His personal example, what it meant to serve with love and humility. Just as He served them in such a dramatic fashion, they were to serve one another in the same way. I’m sure the disciples never forgot that lesson.

**Apply the Word**

This month has been filled with lessons from the great Teacher. Which ones have pressed most deeply on your own heart? And how can you model your own interactions with others after the example of the greatest Teacher of all?

### Pray with Us

Coming to the end of the month, thank the Lord for patiently teaching His disciples—and us—His truth. Tell Him what you determined to change in your interactions with others as a result of the great Teacher’s example.

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/30/20

# Self-Checking

 **Read:** [**Lamentations 3:37–42**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.37%E2%80%9342)

37Who can speak and have it happen  
    if the Lord has not decreed it?  
38Is it not from the mouth of the Most High  
    that both calamities and good things come?  
39Why should the living complain  
    when punished for their sins?

40Let us examine our ways and test them,  
    and let us return to the Lord.  
41Let us lift up our hearts and our hands  
    to God in heaven, and say:  
42“We have sinned and rebelled  
    and you have not forgiven.

Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord. [Lamentations 3:40](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.40)

Recently I read through a stack of World War II-era letters my dad sent to my mother. He was in North Africa and she was in West Virginia. Dad, a second lieutenant in the US Army, was tasked with censoring soldiers’ letters—keeping sensitive information from enemy eyes. So it was rather humorous to see—on the outside of his letters to his wife—a stamp that said, “Censored by 2nd Lt. John Branon.” Indeed, he had cut out lines from his own letters!

Self-censoring is really a good idea for all of us. Several times in Scripture, the writers mention the importance of taking a good long look at ourselves to find what’s not right—not God-honoring. The psalmist, for example, prayed, “Search me, God, and know my heart . . . . See if there is any offensive way in me” ([Psalm 139:23–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20139.23%E2%80%9324)). Jeremiah put it like this: “Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord” ([Lamentations 3:40](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.40)). And Paul, speaking of our heart condition at the time of communion, said, “Everyone ought to examine themselves” ([1 Corinthians 11:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2011.28)).

The Holy Spirit can help us turn from any attitudes or actions that don’t please God. So before we head out into the world today, let’s stop and seek the Spirit’s help in doing some self-checking so we can “return to the Lord” in fellowship with Him.

By:  [Dave Branon](https://odb.org/author/davebranon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How will you pursue healthy spiritual self-examination today? What are two things that come to mind that you could remove to improve your fellowship with God?

Search me, O God, and know my heart. See if there are any changes I need to make today as I seek to know You more and serve You better.

#### Insight

Lament is an important concept in the Old Testament and one that was deeply ingrained into the Jewish mindset. The privilege of bringing our deepest hurts, fears, or struggles to a God who cares deeply for our well-being is a remarkable thing. In the Old Testament, these attributes put the God of Israel in stark contrast to the gods of the land. The gods of the ancient Near East were harsh and demanding, so the loving compassion of the true God ([Exodus 34:6–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2034.6%E2%80%937)) made Him the perfect person to whom someone could take their heartaches. This certainly rings true with Lamentations. Jeremiah, traditionally believed to be the author, wrote out of a broken heart about the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 bc. This lament consists of five poems, all grieving the desolation of the “city of peace” (the meaning of Jerusalem).

# God Calling – 8/30/20

# Give, Give, Give

Give abundantly. Feel that you are rich. Have no mean thought in your heart.

Of Love, of thought, of all you have, give, give, give.

You are followers of the World's Greatest Giver. Give of time, of personal ease and comfort, of rest, of fame, of healing, of power, of sympathy, of all these and many more.

Learn this lesson, and you will become a great power to help others and to do mighty things.

Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over, shall men give unto your bosom.  Luke 6:38

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/31/20

# “My Joy…Your Joy”



These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. —[John 15:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+15%3A11)

What was the joy that Jesus had? Joy should not be confused with happiness. In fact, it is an insult to Jesus Christ to use the word happiness in connection with Him. The joy of Jesus was His absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice to His Father— the joy of doing that which the Father sent Him to do— “…who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross…” ([Hebrews 12:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:2)). “I delight to do Your will, O my God…” ([Psalm 40:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40:8)). Jesus prayed that our joy might continue fulfilling itself until it becomes the same joy as His. Have I allowed Jesus Christ to introduce His joy to me?

Living a full and overflowing life does not rest in bodily health, in circumstances, nor even in seeing God’s work succeed, but in the perfect understanding of God, and in the same fellowship and oneness with Him that Jesus Himself enjoyed. But the first thing that will hinder this joy is the subtle irritability caused by giving too much thought to our circumstances. Jesus said, “…the cares of this world,…choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful” ([Mark 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+4:19)). And before we even realize what has happened, we are caught up in our cares. All that God has done for us is merely the threshold— He wants us to come to the place where we will be His witnesses and proclaim who Jesus is.

Have the right relationship with God, finding your joy there, and out of you “will flow rivers of living water” ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). Be a fountain through which Jesus can pour His “living water.” Stop being hypocritical and proud, aware only of yourself, and live “your life…hidden with Christ in God” ([Colossians 3:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3:3)). A person who has the right relationship with God lives a life as natural as breathing wherever he goes. The lives that have been the greatest blessing to you are the lives of those people who themselves were unaware of having been a blessing.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

God does not further our spiritual life in spite of our circumstances, but in and by our circumstances.  Not Knowing Whither, 900 L

# CCEL – 8/31/20

**The free gift is of many offences unto justification.**—[ROM. 5:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.16)

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.—I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.—I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—Not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.—And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

[Isa. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.1.html" \l "Isa.1.18). -[Isa. 43:25,26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.25). -[Isa. 44:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.44.html" \l "Isa.44.22).[John 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.16). -[Rom. 5:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.15). -[I Cor. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.11).

“On mine arm shall they trust.” [Isaiah 51:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.51.html" \l "Isa.51.5)

In seasons of severe trial, the Christian has nothing on earth that he can trust to, and is therefore compelled to cast himself on his God alone. When his vessel is on its beam-ends, and no human deliverance can avail, he must simply and entirely trust himself to the providence and care of God. Happy storm that wrecks a man on such a rock as this! O blessed hurricane that drives the soul to God and God alone! There is no getting at our God sometimes because of the multitude of our friends; but when a man is so poor, so friendless, so helpless that he has nowhere else to turn, he flies into his Father’s arms, and is blessedly clasped therein! When he is burdened with troubles so pressing and so peculiar, that he cannot tell them to any but his God, he may be thankful for them; for he will learn more of his Lord then than at any other time. Oh, tempest-tossed believer, it is a happy trouble that drives thee to thy Father! Now that thou hast only thy God to trust to, see that thou puttest thy full confidence in him. Dishonour not thy Lord and Master by unworthy doubts and fears; but be strong in faith, giving glory to God. Show the world that thy God is worth ten thousand worlds to thee. Show rich men how rich thou art in thy poverty when the Lord God is thy helper. Show the strong man how strong thou art in thy weakness when underneath thee are the everlasting arms. Now is the time for feats of faith and valiant exploits. Be strong and very courageous, and the Lord thy God shall certainly, as surely as he built the heavens and the earth, glorify himself in thy weakness, and magnify his might in the midst of thy distress. The grandeur of the arch of heaven would be spoiled if the sky were supported by a single visible column, and your faith would lose its glory if it rested on anything discernible by the carnal eye. May the Holy Spirit give you to rest in Jesus this closing day of the month.

# Word Live – 8/31/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/31/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/31/20

# More Than a Teacher

**Read:** [**Revelation 1**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1)

### Prologue

1 The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. 3Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

### Greetings and Doxology

4John,

To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#fen-NIV-30702a)] before his throne, 5and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

7“Look, he is coming with the clouds,”[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1" \l "fen-NIV-30705b" \o "See footnote b)]  
    and “every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him”;  
    and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#fen-NIV-30705c)]  
So shall it be! Amen.

8“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

### John’s Vision of Christ

9I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, 11which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.”

12I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1" \l "fen-NIV-30711d" \o "See footnote d)] dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. 14The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

17When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

19“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. 20The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#fen-NIV-30718e)] of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Revelation 1:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#en-NIV-30702) That is, the sevenfold Spirit
2. [Revelation 1:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#en-NIV-30705) Daniel 7:13
3. [Revelation 1:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#en-NIV-30705) Zech. 12:10
4. [Revelation 1:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#en-NIV-30711) See Daniel 7:13.
5. [Revelation 1:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1#en-NIV-30718) Or messengers

Picture Day is an annual tradition in most schools. You might remember the excitement of choosing your favorite outfit, brushing your hair one final time before your official class photo. In each class picture, there is a teacher widely smiling, saying, “Here they are my world. My class!”

Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One. Revelation 1:17

Jesus Christ is our Great Teacher. Imagine for a moment a class photo where Jesus was the teacher. Who are His students from this month’s study? On the top row, we see Zacchaeus, head held high, ready to share his wealth. In the middle, we see Nicodemus telling his classmates, “You must be born again.” And there’s Peter at the side of the riser shouting, “I love you, Lord!” Standing in the front row is the Samaritan Woman smiling with thankfulness. The lessons Jesus taught them are part of life’s great lesson plan, designed by God. Why? Because Jesus is much more than a Teacher.

Revelation 1 tells us that Jesus is the beginning and end, the First and Last, the Living One. All things rest on Him. Whether through a parable or an object lesson, or Jesus’ resurrection, it was God’s intent for us to believe in and accept Jesus Christ the Savior. During Jesus’ teaching ministry God revealed His plan for all history, past, present, and future. While being the great Teacher, Jesus was foremost, the incarnate God. There is no greater Teacher for you to learn from and for you to share with others.

If you know Christ as your Savior, then you are in Jesus’ class picture, and God has called you to teach others the good news. “Do not be afraid,” says God. The Alpha and Omega, the Almighty, is with you.

**Apply the Word**

What does it mean to you, personally, that Jesus is your great Teacher? What lessons have you learned that will make you a better teacher of the gospel? Today, picture yourself in Jesus’ class photo. How would others describe you as a student?

### Pray with Us

As we conclude our study, we pray we’ll remember the lessons the Lord has taught us this month. Ask Him for courage and determination to go into the world and make disciples.

## BY Mary Martin, Former Professor of Christian School Education

# Our Daily Bread – 8/31/20

# The Servant Hears

### Today's Devotional Read: [1 Samuel 3:1–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.1%E2%80%9310)

### The Lord Calls Samuel

3 The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

2One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. 3The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. 4Then the Lord called Samuel.

Samuel answered, “Here I am.” 5And he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

But Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down.

6Again the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

“My son,” Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.”

7Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

8A third time the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. 9So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” [1 Samuel 3:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.10)

Had the wireless radio been on, they would have known the Titanic was sinking. Cyril Evans, the radio operator of another ship, had tried to relay a message to Jack Phillips, the radio operator on the Titanic—letting him know they had encountered an ice field. But Phillips was busy relaying passengers’ messages and rudely told Evans to be quiet. So Evans reluctantly turned off his radio and went to bed. Ten minutes later, the Titanic struck an iceberg. Their distress signals went unanswered because no one was listening.

In 1 Samuel we read that the priests of Israel were corrupt and had lost their spiritual sight and hearing as the nation drifted into danger. “The word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions” ([1 Samuel 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.1)). Yet God wouldn’t give up on His people. He began to speak to a young boy named Samuel who was being raised in the priest’s household. Samuel’s name means “the Lord hears”—a memorial to God’s answering his mother’s prayer. But Samuel would need to learn how to hear God.

“Speak, for your servant is listening” (v. 10). It’s the servant who hears. May we also choose to listen to and obey what God has revealed in the Scriptures. Let’s submit our lives to Him and take the posture of humble servants—those who have their “radios” turned on.

By:  [Glenn Packiam](https://odb.org/author/glennpackiam/)

#### Reflect & Pray

Why is it vital for you to obey what God has revealed in Scripture? How can you stay “tuned in” to His voice?

Dear Jesus, thank You for being a speaking God. Thank You for the Scriptures that help me follow You in obedience. Speak, Your servant is listening.

#### Insight

In the early chapters of 1 Samuel, the author is adept at using contrast to highlight the difference between the sons of Eli and Samuel. [First Samuel 2:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%202.12) notes that “Eli’s sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord” and “they slept with the women who served” as worship attendants (v. 22). Samuel, on the other hand, “continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and with people” (v. 26). While Eli’s sons didn’t listen to their father’s rebuke (v. 25), Samuel’s response to the Lord was, “Speak, for your servant is listening” (3:10).

# God Calling – 8/31/20

# Pray and Deny

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. -- Matthew 17: 21.

You must live a life of communion and prayer if you are to save others.

Take My words as a command to you. "By prayer and fasting."

Pray and deny yourself, and you will be used marvelously to save and help others.

And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.  Luke 5:11