# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/9/21

# Are You Exhausted Spiritually?



The everlasting God…neither faints nor is weary. —[Isaiah 40:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+40%3A28)

Exhaustion means that our vital energies are completely worn out and spent. Spiritual exhaustion is never the result of sin, but of service. Whether or not you experience exhaustion will depend on where you get your supplies. Jesus said to Peter, “Feed My sheep,” but He gave him nothing with which to feed them ([John 21:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21:17)). The process of being made broken bread and poured-out wine means that you have to be the nourishment for other people’s souls until they learn to feed on God. They must drain you completely— to the very last drop. But be careful to replenish your supply, or you will quickly be utterly exhausted. Until others learn to draw on the life of the Lord Jesus directly, they will have to draw on His life through you. You must literally be their source of supply, until they learn to take their nourishment from God. We owe it to God to be our best for His lambs and sheep, as well as for Him.

Have you delivered yourself over to exhaustion because of the way you have been serving God? If so, then renew and rekindle your desires and affections. Examine your reasons for service. Is your source based on your own understanding or is it grounded on the redemption of Jesus Christ? Continually look back to the foundation of your love and affection and remember where your Source of power lies. You have no right to complain, “O Lord, I am so exhausted.” He saved and sanctified you to exhaust you. Be exhausted for God, but remember that He is your supply. “All my springs are in you” ([Psalm 87:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+87:7)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We are all based on a conception of importance, either our own importance, or the importance of someone else; Jesus tells us to go and teach based on the revelation of His importance. “All power is given unto Me.… Go ye therefore ….”  So Send I You, 1325 R

# CCEL – 2/9/21

**Now he is comforted.**—[LUKE 16:25.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.16.html" \l "Luke.16.25)

Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.—He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth.—These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.—God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

[Isa. 60:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.60.html" \l "Isa.60.20). -[Isa. 25:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.8). -[Rev. 7:14-17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.7.html" \l "Rev.7.14). -[Rev. 21:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.4).

“And David enquired of the Lord.” [2 Samuel 5:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiSam.5.html" \l "iiSam.5.23)

When David made this enquiry he had just fought the Philistines, and gained a signal victory. The Philistines came up in great hosts, but, by the help of God, David had easily put them to flight. Note, however, that when they came a second time, David did not go up to fight them without enquiring of the Lord. Once he had been victorious, and he might have said, as many have in other cases, “I shall be victorious again; I may rest quite sure that if I have conquered once I shall triumph yet again. Wherefore should I tarry to seek at the Lord’s hands?” Not so, David. He had gained one battle by the strength of the Lord; he would not venture upon another until he had ensured the same. He enquired, “Shall I go up against them?” He waited until God’s sign was given. Learn from David to take no step without God. Christian, if thou wouldst know the path of duty, take God for thy compass; if thou wouldst steer thy ship through the dark billows, put the tiller into the hand of the Almighty. Many a rock might be escaped, if we would let our Father take the helm; many a shoal or quicksand we might well avoid, if we would leave to his sovereign will to choose and to command. The Puritan said, “As sure as ever a Christian carves for himself, he'll cut his own fingers;” this is a great truth. Said another old divine, “He that goes before the cloud of God’s providence goes on a fool’s errand;” and so he does. We must mark God’s providence leading us; and if providence tarries, tarry till providence comes. He who goes before providence, will be very glad to run back again. “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go,” is God’s promise to his people. Let us, then, take all our perplexities to him, and say, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Leave not thy chamber this morning without enquiring of the Lord.

# Word Live – 2/9/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/9/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/9/21

# The Chain of Grace

# Read: [Romans 5:1–11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311)

### **Peace and Hope**

5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-28049a)] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-28050b)] boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3Not only so, but we[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-28051c)] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

6You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! 10For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 5:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-28049) Many manuscripts let us
2. [Romans 5:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-28050) Or let us
3. [Romans 5:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-28051) Or let us

In The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Lucy Pevensie opens the door of a wardrobe and discovers that it is a gateway to the dreamlike land of Narnia. As she pushes past heavy fur winter coats, she steps out of the wardrobe and into a winter wonderland. In Romans 5, the apostle Paul shows us how faith can be a doorway. Faith does not lead to a fantasy land but to our real standing before God that Paul calls grace.

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

Faith produces a chain of experiences that show how God’s grace transforms those who have trusted in Christ. First, faith makes peace with God possible (v. 1).  By His sacrifice, Jesus removed the enmity that was created by our inability to obey God’s law  (Eph. 2:15). Second, our new standing is one of grace because in it God bestows His favor on us as a gift. Grace enables us to “boast in the hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2). Although we have fallen short of God’s glory, God’s grace assures us that we will be fully restored. Christ’s righteousness gives us the confidence to face God in His glory and guarantees that we will one day reflect that glory.

Through grace, God transforms suffering into a laboratory where we learn perseverance. He uses this perseverance to transform our character. Our transformed character, in turn, gives us reason to hope because it offers concrete evidence of Christ at work in us. God further validates this hope by pouring out His love through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We not only know God but we also experience His love! This is the chain of grace.

**Apply the Word**

Grace changes everything. God’s grace in the present gives us a reason to hope for the future. If the shed blood of Christ has already given you a righteous standing before God, you can be confident that you will escape God’s wrath.

### **Pray with Us**

Father, not only are we undeserving of your peace and grace, but we can never repay you for your mercy. We can only rejoice and offer our lives in your service, asking for the privilege to participate in your work on earth.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/9/21

# Looking Up

 **Read:** [**Colossians 3:1–4**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.1%E2%80%934)

### **Living as Those Made Alive in Christ**

3 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ, who is your[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3%3A1%E2%80%934&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-29522a" \o "See footnote a)] life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Colossians 3:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3%3A1%E2%80%934&version=NIV#en-NIV-29522) Some manuscripts our

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. [Colossians 3:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.2)

The cockeyed squid lives in the ocean’s “twilight zone” where sunlight barely filters through the deep waters. The squid’s nickname is a reference to its two extremely different eyes: the left eye develops over time to become considerably larger than the right—almost twice as big. Scientists studying the mollusk have deduced that the squid uses its right eye, the smaller one, to look down into the darker depths. The larger, left eye, gazes upward, toward the sunlight.

The squid is an unlikely depiction of what it means to live in our present world and also in the future certainty we await as people who “have been raised with Christ” ([Colossians 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.1)). In Paul’s letter to the Colossians, he insists we ought to “set [our] minds on things above” because our lives are “hidden with Christ in God” (vv. 2–3).

As earth-dwellers awaiting our lives in heaven, we keep an eye trained on what’s happening around us in our present reality. But just as the squid’s left eye develops over time into one that’s larger and more sensitive to what’s happening overhead, we too can grow in our awareness of the ways God works in the spiritual realm. We may not have yet fully grasped what it means to be alive in Jesus, but as we look “up,” our eyes will begin to see it more and more.

By:  [Kirsten Holmberg](https://odb.org/author/kirstenholmberg/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How can you develop your “upward” vision? How can you set your mind on heavenly things?

Loving God, help me to set my mind and heart on those things that are of You!

#### **Insight**

Paul had meaningful ties with the Colossian assembly, although it was a church he hadn’t planted. One significant connection was the apostle’s longstanding friendship with Philemon—a leader in the Colossian church that met in his home (see [Philemon 1:1–2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Philem%201.1%E2%80%932)). Throughout the brief letter of Philemon, Paul leverages his friendship with Philemon on behalf of his relationship with Onesimus, a Colossian believer and runaway slave from Philemon’s household ([Colossians 4:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%204.9); [Philemon 1:8–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Philem%201.8%E2%80%9316)). Perhaps these relationships allowed Paul to write to the Colossians with surprising familiarity, as we see in [Colossians 2:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%202.2): “My goal is that [you] may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that [you] may . . . know the mystery of God, namely, Christ.”

# God Calling – 2/9/21

# The Voice Divine

The Divine Voice is not always expressed in words.

It is made known as a heart-consciousness.

"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/10/21

# Is Your Ability to See God Blinded?



Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things… —[Isaiah 40:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+40%3A26)

The people of God in Isaiah’s time had blinded their minds’ ability to see God by looking on the face of idols. But Isaiah made them look up at the heavens; that is, he made them begin to use their power to think and to visualize correctly. If we are children of God, we have a tremendous treasure in nature and will realize that it is holy and sacred. We will see God reaching out to us in every wind that blows, every sunrise and sunset, every cloud in the sky, every flower that blooms, and every leaf that fades, if we will only begin to use our blinded thinking to visualize it.

The real test of spiritual focus is being able to bring your mind and thoughts under control. Is your mind focused on the face of an idol? Is the idol yourself? Is it your work? Is it your idea of what a servant should be, or maybe your experience of salvation and sanctification? If so, then your ability to see God is blinded. You will be powerless when faced with difficulties and will be forced to endure in darkness. If your power to see has been blinded, don’t look back on your own experiences, but look to God. It is God you need. Go beyond yourself and away from the faces of your idols and away from everything else that has been blinding your thinking. Wake up and accept the ridicule that Isaiah gave to his people, and deliberately turn your thoughts and your eyes to God.

One of the reasons for our sense of futility in prayer is that we have lost our power to visualize. We can no longer even imagine putting ourselves deliberately before God. It is actually more important to be broken bread and poured-out wine in the area of intercession than in our personal contact with others. The power of visualization is what God gives a saint so that he can go beyond himself and be firmly placed into relationships he never before experienced.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 2/10/21

**He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed.**—[PSA. 78:20.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.78.html" \l "Ps.78.20)

All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ.—One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.—My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.—Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

[I Cor. 10:1-4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.10.html" \l "iCor.10.1). -[John 19:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.19.html" \l "John.19.34). -[Isa. 53:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.5).[John 5:40](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.5.html" \l "John.5.40). -[Jer. 2:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.2.html" \l "Jer.2.13).[John 7:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.7.html" \l "John.7.37). -[Rev. 22:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.22.html" \l "Rev.22.17).

“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.” [Isaiah 44:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.44.html" \l "Isa.44.22)

Attentively observe the instructive similitude: our sins are like a cloud. As clouds are of many shapes and shades, so are our transgressions. As clouds obscure the light of the sun, and darken the landscape beneath, so do our sins hide from us the light of Jehovah’s face, and cause us to sit in the shadow of death. They are earth-born things, and rise from the miry places of our nature; and when so collected that their measure is full, they threaten us with storm and tempest. Alas! that, unlike clouds, our sins yield us no genial showers, but rather threaten to deluge us with a fiery flood of destruction. O ye black clouds of sin, how can it be fair weather with our souls while ye remain?

Let our joyful eye dwell upon the notable act of divine mercy—“blotting out.” God himself appears upon the scene, and in divine benignity, instead of manifesting his anger, reveals his grace: he at once and forever effectually removes the mischief, not by blowing away the cloud, but by blotting it out from existence once for all. Against the justified man no sin remains, the great transaction of the cross has eternally removed his transgressions from him. On Calvary’s summit the great deed, by which the sin of all the chosen was forever put away, was completely and effectually performed.

Practically let us obey the gracious command, “return unto me.” Why should pardoned sinners live at a distance from their God? If we have been forgiven all our sins, let no legal fear withhold us from the boldest access to our Lord. Let backslidings be bemoaned, but let us not persevere in them. To the greatest possible nearness of communion with the Lord, let us, in the power of the Holy Spirit, strive mightily to return. O Lord, this night restore us!

# Word Live – 2/10/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/10/21

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# Today in the Word – 2/10/21

# The Power of One

**Read:** [**Romans 5:12–21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3a12%e2%80%9321)

### **Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ**

12Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

13To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law. 14Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! 16Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. 17For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

18Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

20The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, 21so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the days before digital pictures, photographic negatives were common. A negative is an image where the light areas are reversed to appear dark, and the dark areas now become light. It creates a mirror of the photograph but is also its opposite.

Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. Romans 5:19

Today’s reading describes the relationship between Jesus and Adam. It may be helpful to think about it as a photographic negative. When Paul calls Adam a “pattern of the one to come” (v. 14), he implies that we can better understand Jesus by looking to Adam. Because Adam was humanity’s representative, when he sinned, all sinned (v. 12). Sin and death passed on to the human race through Adam. Through the sin of one, all became sinners. Likewise, through the obedience of one (Jesus), we can all be declared righteous.

But Jesus’ obedience and death did much more than merely match Adam’s original sin. Jesus’ sacrifice surpassed what was needed. In this case, the gift was not like the trespass: “For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!” (v. 15). If God intended to offer righteousness as a gift through Jesus Christ, why did He give the law? Paul tells us in verse 20: “The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase.” God used the law to shine a light on human sin and to clearly show us our need for grace. Paul depicts the law as an assistant to grace, revealing our guilt and need for a righteousness that is apart from the law (Rom. 3:21).

**Apply the Word**

If you’re taking notes on our study of Romans, add the terms “law” and “grace” to your definition list. The law reveals our guilt and our need for righteousness (Rom. 3:21). Grace is seen in God’s gift of righteousness, freely offered to you through Jesus Christ.

### **Pray with Us**

Thank you, God, for the righteousness you have given us in Your Son! We ask that you continue to conform us to your will, so that in our words and deeds we may grow more and more like you.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/10/21

# Waiting in Hope

 **Read:** [**Luke 2:25–35**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%202.25%E2%80%9335)

25Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

29“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
    you may now dismiss[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A25%E2%80%9335&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25003a)] your servant in peace.  
30For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
31    which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:  
32a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
    and the glory of your people Israel.”

33The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Luke 2:29](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A25%E2%80%9335&version=NIV#en-NIV-25003) Or promised, / now dismiss

Simeon . . . was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. [Luke 2:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%202.25)

In the movie Hachi: A Dog’s Tale, a college professor befriended a stray Akita puppy named Hachi. The dog expressed his loyalty by waiting at the train station each day for the professor to return from work. One day, the professor suffered a fatal stroke. Hachi waited hours at the train station, and for the next ten years he returned each day—awaiting His loving master.

Luke tells the story of a man named Simeon who patiently waited for the coming of his Master ([Luke 2:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%202.25)). The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he would not see death until he saw the Messiah (v. 26). As a result, Simeon kept waiting for the One who would provide “salvation” for God’s people (v. 30). When Mary and Joseph entered the temple with Jesus, the Holy Spirit whispered to Simeon that He was the One! The wait was finally over! Simeon held Christ in his arms—the hope, salvation, and comfort for all people (vv. 28–32).

If we find ourselves in a season of waiting, may we hear the words of the prophet Isaiah with fresh ears: “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” ([Isaiah 40:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2040.31)). As we await Jesus’ return, He provides the hope and strength we need for each new day.

By:  [Marvin Williams](https://odb.org/author/marvinwilliams/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you become weary as you waited for God? What encouraged you to endure during that challenging season?

Jesus, I will wait for You. Through pain, tears, and uncertainty, help me to not become weary but to rest in Your provision.

For hope in the storms of life, read [DiscoverySeries.org/Q0746.](https://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0746.)

#### **Insight**

Simeon had one clear characteristic: he was in tune with the Spirit. [Luke 2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%202) says “the Holy Spirit was on him” (v. 25). The Spirit had revealed that he wouldn’t die before he’d seen Jesus (v. 26) and moved him to go to the temple courts (v. 27). The surrounding verses also reveal the power of the Spirit in his life. The description of Simeon as being “righteous and devout” (v. 25) is connected to the Spirit being on him; and his recognition of Jesus, his song of praise, and his words to Mary and Joseph (vv. 29–35) came though the Spirit.

# God Calling – 2/10/21

# The Life-Line

I am your Savior, your Savior from sins' thralls, your Savior from all the cares and troubles of life, your Savior from disease.

I speak in all to you both. Look to Me for salvation. Trust in Me for help. Did not My servant of old say, "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me?" But not all the waters of affliction could drown him. For of him was it true, "He came from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters."

The life-line, the line of rescue, is the line from the soul to God, faith, and power. It is a strong line, and no soul can be overwhelmed who is linked to Me by it. Trust, trust, trust. Never be afraid.

Think of My trees stripped of their beauty, pruned, cut, disfigured, bare, but through the dark seemingly dead branches flows silently, secretly, the spirit-life-sap, till, lo! with the sun of Spring comes new life, leaves, bud, blossom, fruit, but oh! fruit a thousand times better for the pruning.

Remember that you are in the hands of the Master-Gardener. He makes no mistakes about His pruning. Rejoice. Joy is the Spirit's reaching out to say its thanks to Me. It is the new life-sap of the tree, reaching out to Me to find such beautiful expression later. So never cease to joy. Rejoice.

"From the end of the earth will I cry onto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Psalm 61:2

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/11/21

# Is Your Mind Stayed on God?



You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. —[Isaiah 26:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+26%3A3)

Is your mind stayed on God or is it starved? Starvation of the mind, caused by neglect, is one of the chief sources of exhaustion and weakness in a servant’s life. If you have never used your mind to place yourself before God, begin to do it now. There is no reason to wait for God to come to you. You must turn your thoughts and your eyes away from the face of idols and look to Him and be saved (see [Isaiah 45:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+45:22)).

Your mind is the greatest gift God has given you and it ought to be devoted entirely to Him. You should seek to be “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ…” ([2 Corinthians 10:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+10:5)). This will be one of the greatest assets of your faith when a time of trial comes, because then your faith and the Spirit of God will work together. When you have thoughts and ideas that are worthy of credit to God, learn to compare and associate them with all that happens in nature— the rising and the setting of the sun, the shining of the moon and the stars, and the changing of the seasons. You will begin to see that your thoughts are from God as well, and your mind will no longer be at the mercy of your impulsive thinking, but will always be used in service to God.

“We have sinned with our fathers…[and]…did not remember…” ([Psalm 106:6-7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+106:6-7)). Then prod your memory and wake up immediately. Don’t say to yourself, “But God is not talking to me right now.” He ought to be. Remember whose you are and whom you serve. Encourage yourself to remember, and your affection for God will increase tenfold. Your mind will no longer be starved, but will be quick and enthusiastic, and your hope will be inexpressibly bright.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Awe is the condition of a man’s spirit realizing Who God is and what He has done for him personally. Our Lord emphasizes the attitude of a child; no attitude can express such solemn awe and familiarity as that of a child.  Not Knowing Whither, 882 L

# CCEL – 2/11/21

**They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord harkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.**—[MAL. 3:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.16)

It came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.—Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst ot them.—My fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.—Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.—Behold, it is written before me.

[Luke 24:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.15). -[Matt. 18:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.18.html" \l "Matt.18.20). -[Phi. 4:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.3).[Col. 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.16). -[Heb. 3:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.3.html" \l "Heb.3.13).[Matt. 12:36,37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.12.html" \l "Matt.12.36). -[Isa. 65:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.65.html" \l "Isa.65.6).

“And they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” [Acts 4:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.4.html" \l "Acts.4.13)

A Christian should be a striking likeness of Jesus Christ. You have read lives of Christ, beautifully and eloquently written, but the best life of Christ is his living biography, written out in the words and actions of his people. If we were what we profess to be, and what we should be, we should be pictures of Christ; yea, such striking likenesses of him, that the world would not have to hold us up by the hour together, and say, “Well, it seems somewhat of a likeness;” but they would, when they once beheld us, exclaim, “He has been with Jesus; he has been taught of him; he is like him; he has caught the very idea of the holy Man of Nazareth, and he works it out in his life and every-day actions.” A Christian should be like Christ in his boldness. Never blush to own your religion; your profession will never disgrace you: take care you never disgrace that. Be like Jesus, very valiant for your God. Imitate him in your loving spirit; think kindly, speak kindly, and do kindly, that men may say of you, “He has been with Jesus.” Imitate Jesus in his holiness. Was he zealous for his Master? So be you; ever go about doing good. Let not time be wasted: it is too precious. Was he self-denying, never looking to his own interest? Be the same. Was he devout? Be you fervent in your prayers. Had he deference to his Father’s will? So submit yourselves to him. Was he patient? So learn to endure. And best of all, as the highest portraiture of Jesus, try to forgive your enemies, as he did; and let those sublime words of your Master, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,” always ring in your ears. Forgive, as you hope to be forgiven. Heap coals of fire on the head of your foe by your kindness to him. Good for evil, recollect, is godlike. Be godlike, then; and in all ways and by all means, so live that all may say of you, “He has been with Jesus.”

# Word Live – 2/11/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/11/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/11/21

# Escaping Sin's Control

**Read:** [**Romans 6:1–23**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3a1%e2%80%9323)

### **Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ**

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3a1%e2%80%9323#fen-NIV-28075a)] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

8Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

11In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. 14For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

### **Slaves to Righteousness**

15What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! 16Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

19I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 20When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3a1%e2%80%9323#fen-NIV-28092b)] Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 6:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3a1%e2%80%9323#en-NIV-28075) Or be rendered powerless
2. [Romans 6:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3a1%e2%80%9323#en-NIV-28092) Or through

Juneteenth commemorates the day that Union General Gordon Granger announced to former slaves in Galveston, Texas, that the Civil War had ended, and they were free. The announcement came two and a half years after Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This was life-changing good news; those who had once been slaves were   
now free!

Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:11

In today’s text, Paul delivers good news: the believer’s emancipation from slavery to sin. Paul begins with a practical question: Does our sin magnify God’s grace? The thought that a Christian would ignore sin was unthinkable to the apostle. Continuing to let sin reign means we do not fully understand our freedom in Christ (vv. 3–4). The believer’s union with Christ is key to overcoming sin. Christ’s death and resurrection fundamentally change the believer’s relationship to sin. Although we are still capable of sinning, we are no longer enslaved by it (v. 6). Sin no longer holds power over us. Overcoming sin begins with an act of faith by which we “count” ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. Our sinful nature may try to reassert its former dominance, but we do not have to let it rule us (vv. 11–12). In a sense, every act of sin is a denial of our true identity in Christ. Sin is a kind of amnesia.

Paul strengthens his theological argument with a practical question based on personal experience: “When you were slaves to sin,  you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!” (vv. 20–21). Sin entered human experience in the Garden of Eden with a false promise. It continues to entice us with boasts that it cannot fulfill.

**Apply the Word**

Do you want a practical strategy for dealing with temptation? When you are tempted, slow down and think about your prior experience with sin. When has it ever been your friend? Why should this time be any different?

### **Pray with Us**

We are free from sin’s domination, yet so often we still choose sin over righteousness. Lord, please help us to turn to you when we are tempted. Cultivate in us a craving for holiness.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/11/21

# The Ticking Watch

### Today's Devotional **Read:** [**Psalm 37:1–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2037.1%E2%80%937) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+37%3A1%E2%80%937&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14452a)**]**

#### **Of David.**

1Do not fret because of those who are evil  
    or be envious of those who do wrong;  
2for like the grass they will soon wither,  
    like green plants they will soon die away.

3Trust in the Lord and do good;  
    dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.  
4Take delight in the Lord,  
    and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5Commit your way to the Lord;  
    trust in him and he will do this:  
6He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,  
    your vindication like the noonday sun.

7Be still before the Lord  
    and wait patiently for him;  
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,  
    when they carry out their wicked schemes.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 37:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+37%3A1%E2%80%937&version=NIV#en-NIV-14452) This psalm is an acrostic poem, the stanzas of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. [Psalm 37:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2037.7)

A group of workers were cutting ice out of a frozen lake and storing it in an icehouse when one of them realized he’d lost his watch in the windowless building. He and his friends searched for it in vain.

After they gave up, a young boy who’d seen them exit went into the building. Soon, he emerged with the watch. Asked how he’d found it, he replied: “I just sat down and kept quiet, and soon I could hear it ticking.”

The Bible talks much about the value of being still. And no wonder, for God sometimes speaks in a whisper ([1 Kings 19:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2019.12)). In the busyness of life, it can be hard to hear Him. But if we stop rushing about and spend some quiet time with Him and the Scriptures, we may hear His gentle voice in our thoughts.

[Psalm 37:1–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2037.1%E2%80%937) assures us that we can trust God to rescue us from the “wicked schemes” of evil people, give us refuge, and help us stay faithful. But how can we do this when turmoil is all around us?

Verse 7 suggests: “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.” We could start by learning to keep silent for a few minutes after prayer. Or by quietly reading the Bible and letting the words soak into our hearts. And then, perhaps, we’ll hear His wisdom speaking to us, quiet and steady as a ticking watch.

By:  [Leslie Koh](https://odb.org/author/lesliekoh/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How can you be still before God each day? What will help you stay silent and listen?

Loving God, grant me the patience and discipline to stay still for a while each day, that I might hear Your gentle whisper in my life.

#### **Insight**

After [Psalm 37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2037)’s opening exhortation not to be upset by the short-lived vitality and success of those who ignore God (vv. 1–2), a series of commands follow that call for faithful dependence on Him (vv. 3–8). The remainder of the psalm describes the conduct of two kinds of people (the righteous and the wicked), who follow two different paths and end up at two different places (vv. 9–11, 20). In various ways, the wicked harass and prey upon the righteous (vv. 12–15, 32). But the righteous aren’t alone. God—in whom they trust and delight and upon whom they wait—protects them, making them safe and secure (vv. 16–17, 23–26, 32–33). The conclusion speaks powerfully to those who place their faith in God. “The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. The Lord helps them and delivers them . . . because they take refuge in him” (vv. 39–40).

# God Calling – 2/11/21

# The Difficult Path

Your path is difficult, difficult for you both. There is no work in life so hard as waiting, and yet I say wait. Wait until I show you My Will. Proof it is of My Love and of My certainty of your true discipleship, that I give you both hard tasks.

Again, I say wait. All motion is more easy than calm waiting. So many of My followers have marred their work and hindered the progress of My Kingdom by activity.

Wait. I will not overtry your spiritual strength. You are both like two persons, helpless on a raft in mid-ocean. But, lo! there cometh towards you One walking on the waters, like unto the Son of Man. When He comes and you receive Him, it will be with you, as it was with My Disciples when I was on earth, that straightway you will be at the place where you would be.

All your toil in rowing and all your activity could not have accomplished the journey so soon. Oh, wait and trust. Wait, and be not afraid.

"Wait on the Lord, and keep his way." Psalm 37:34

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/12/21

# Are You Listening to God?



They said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." —[Exodus 20:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Exodus+20%3A19)

We don’t consciously and deliberately disobey God— we simply don’t listen to Him. God has given His commands to us, but we pay no attention to them— not because of willful disobedience, but because we do not truly love and respect Him. “If you love Me, keep My commandments” ([John 14:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:15)). Once we realize we have constantly been showing disrespect to God, we will be filled with shame and humiliation for ignoring Him.

“You speak with us,…but let not God speak with us….” We show how little love we have for God by preferring to listen to His servants rather than to Him. We like to listen to personal testimonies, but we don’t want God Himself to speak to us. Why are we so terrified for God to speak to us? It is because we know that when God speaks we must either do what He asks or tell Him we will not obey. But if it is simply one of God’s servants speaking to us, we feel obedience is optional, not imperative. We respond by saying, “Well, that’s only your own idea, even though I don’t deny that what you said is probably God’s truth.”

Am I constantly humiliating God by ignoring Him, while He lovingly continues to treat me as His child? Once I finally do hear Him, the humiliation I have heaped on Him returns to me. My response then becomes, “Lord, why was I so insensitive and obstinate?” This is always the result once we hear God. But our real delight in finally hearing Him is tempered with the shame we feel for having taken so long to do so.

**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 – 2/12/21

**They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.**—[MAL. 3:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.17)

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

I will come again, and receive you unto myself.—He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day.—We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.—Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

[John 17:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.6),[9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.9),[24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.24).[John 14:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.3). -[II Thes. 1:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiThess.1.html" \l "iiThess.1.10). -[I Thes. 4:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.4.html" \l "iThess.4.17). -[Isa. 62:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.62.html" \l "Isa.62.3).

“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.” [2 Corinthians 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.1.html" \l "iiCor.1.5)

There is a blessed proportion. The Ruler of Providence bears a pair of scales—in this side he puts his people’s trials, and in that he puts their consolations. When the scale of trial is nearly empty, you will always find the scale of consolation in nearly the same condition; and when the scale of trials is full, you will find the scale of consolation just as heavy. When the black clouds gather most, the light is the more brightly revealed to us. When the night lowers and the tempest is coming on, the Heavenly Captain is always closest to his crew. It is a blessed thing, that when we are most cast down, then it is that we are most lifted up by the consolations of the Spirit. One reason is, because trials make more room for consolation. Great hearts can only be made by great troubles. The spade of trouble digs the reservoir of comfort deeper, and makes more room for consolation. God comes into our heart—he finds it full—he begins to break our comforts and to make it empty; then there is more room for grace. The humbler a man lies, the more comfort he will always have, because he will be more fitted to receive it. Another reason why we are often most happy in our troubles, is this—then we have the closest dealings with God. When the barn is full, man can live without God: when the purse is bursting with gold, we try to do without so much prayer. But once take our gourds away, and we want our God; once cleanse the idols out of the house, then we are compelled to honour Jehovah. “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.” There is no cry so good as that which comes from the bottom of the mountains; no prayer half so hearty as that which comes up from the depths of the soul, through deep trials and afflictions. Hence they bring us to God, and we are happier; for nearness to God is happiness. Come, troubled believer, fret not over your heavy troubles, for they are the heralds of weighty mercies.

# Word Live – 2/12/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/12/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/12/21

# Death and the Law

**Read:** [**Romans 7:1–14**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a1%e2%80%9314)

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

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

4So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. 5For when we were in the realm of the flesh,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a1%e2%80%9314" \l "fen-NIV-28097a" \o "See footnote a)] the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. 6But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

### **The Law and Sin**

7What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a1%e2%80%9314#fen-NIV-28099b)] 8But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. 9Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. 10I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. 11For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. 12So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

13Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

14We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 7:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a1%e2%80%9314#en-NIV-28097) In contexts like this, the Greek word for flesh (sarx) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.
2. [Romans 7:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a1%e2%80%9314#en-NIV-28099) Exodus 20:17; Deut. 5:21

According to voting records, John Cenkner cast ballots in the California elections of 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, and 2010. The only problem was that he died in 2003. For obvious reasons, the dead can’t vote! In Romans 7, Paul uses the concept of death to help us understand our complicated relationship with God’s law.

So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. Romans 7:12

Just as the believer’s union with Christ in His death changes our relationship to our sinful nature, it also alters our relationship to God’s law. Using the analogy of a married woman whose husband dies, Paul points out that those who are united with Christ in His death have “died to the law” (v. 4). This was necessary because of the way our sinful nature interacts with the law. Instead of preventing sin, God’s law actually aroused it (v. 5).

Does this mean that the law itself is responsible for sin? Paul’s answer in verse 7 is very emphatic:   
“Certainly not!” Paul uses the example of coveting. For a rebellious child, when the law tells him not to covet, it stirs up all of his covetous instincts (vv. 7, 8).

God’s law is holy, and its commandments are “holy, righteous and good” (v. 12). The problem with the law resides within us. Sin makes it impossible for us to measure up to God’s standard. And this very good thing can actually stir up wrong desires in us. Paul personifies sin, saying that it used what was good to bring about his death (v. 10). In this way, the commandment shows that sin is “utterly sinful” (v. 13). Sin shows its destructive power by taking the law that was designed for life and using it as an instrument of death.

**Apply the Word**

We slip into sin because we do not take our capacity to sin seriously enough. We overestimate our ability, thinking we can obey God’s law in our own strength. Not only do we fall short, but our sinful nature craves the very desires God’s law prohibits.

### **Pray with Us**

Father, help us not to shy away from acknowledging our fallen natures. Recognizing our sin drives us to hold fast to you. You have defeated death and sin, and we draw on your strength to choose righteousness.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/12/21

# A Joyful Celebration

 **Read:** [**Revelation 19:1–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2019.1%E2%80%939)

### **Threefold Hallelujah Over Babylon’s Fall**

19 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:

“Hallelujah!  
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,  
2    for true and just are his judgments.  
He has condemned the great prostitute  
    who corrupted the earth by her adulteries.  
He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

3And again they shouted:

“Hallelujah!  
The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.”

4The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried:

“Amen, Hallelujah!”

5Then a voice came from the throne, saying:

“Praise our God,  
    all you his servants,  
you who fear him,  
    both great and small!”

6Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

“Hallelujah!  
    For our Lord God Almighty reigns.  
7Let us rejoice and be glad  
    and give him glory!  
For the wedding of the Lamb has come,  
    and his bride has made herself ready.  
8Fine linen, bright and clean,  
    was given her to wear.”

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)

9Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

The wedding of the Lamb has come. [Revelation 19:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2019.7)

My friend Sharon passed away one year prior to the death of my friend Dave’s teenage daughter Melissa. They both had been tragically killed in car accidents. One night both Sharon and Melissa were in my dream. They giggled and talked as they hung streamers in a large banquet hall and ignored me when I stepped into the room. A long table with white tablecloths had been set with golden plates and goblets. I asked if I could help decorate, but they didn’t seem to hear me and kept working.

But then Sharon said, “This party is Melissa’s wedding reception.”

“Who’s the groom?” I asked.

Neither responded but smiled and looked at each other knowingly. Finally, it dawned on me—it’s Jesus!

“Jesus is the groom,” I whispered as I woke up.

My dream brings to mind the joyful celebration believers in Jesus will share together when He returns. It’s portrayed in Revelation as a lavish feast called “the wedding supper of the Lamb” (19:9). John the Baptist, who prepared people for the first coming of Christ, had called Him “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” ([John 1:29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.29)). He also referred to Jesus as “the bridegroom” and to himself as the “friend” (like the best man) who waited for Him (3:29).

On that banquet day and for all eternity we will enjoy unbroken fellowship with Jesus, our groom, and with Sharon and Melissa and all of God’s people.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What does Jesus’ invitation to come to Him for forgiveness and eternal life mean to you? Who could you tell your story to?

I look forward to that day of celebration and seeing You, Jesus. Come quickly.

Read more about Christ’s ultimate triumph in this study of Revelation: [ChristianUniversity.org/NT228.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/NT228.)

#### **Insight**

Who is the “great prostitute” who’s condemned in [Revelation 19:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2019.2)? It’s clear from [Revelation 17:1–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2017.1%E2%80%936), [15–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Revelation%2017.15%E2%80%9316) that the prostitute is Babylon. However, this naturally raises the question: what is Babylon? Babylon is the world system that has “corrupted the earth” and killed God’s true servants (19:2). It’s a way of life—both cultural and political—at war with scriptural principles, with God-fearing people, and with God Himself. Not to be missed in the chapter is the contrast between the “great prostitute” and the true bride of Christ—the church. It’s this “bride” that’s the target of so much persecution. [Revelation 19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2019) celebrates the final judgment of the world system that opposes God.

# God Calling – 2/12/21

# Meet Me Everywhere

Life is really consciousness of Me.

Have no fear. A very beautiful future lies before you. Let it be a new life, a new existence, in which in every single happening, event, plan, you are conscious of Me.

"And this is Life Eternal, that we might know Thee, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

Get this ever-consciousness and you have Eternal Life -- the Life of the Ages. Be in all things led by the Spirit of God and trust Me in all. And the consciousness of Me must bring Joy. Give Me not only trust but gladness.

"For as many as our led by the Spirit of God,   
they are the Sons of God." Romans 8:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/13/21

# The Devotion of Hearing



Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears." —[1 Samuel 3:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Samuel+3%3A10)

Just because I have listened carefully and intently to one thing from God does not mean that I will listen to everything He says. I show God my lack of love and respect for Him by the insensitivity of my heart and mind toward what He says. If I love my friend, I will instinctively understand what he wants. And Jesus said, “You are My friends…” ([John 15:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:14)). Have I disobeyed some command of my Lord’s this week? If I had realized that it was a command of Jesus, I would not have deliberately disobeyed it. But most of us show incredible disrespect to God because we don’t even hear Him. He might as well never have spoken to us.

The goal of my spiritual life is such close identification with Jesus Christ that I will always hear God and know that God always hears me (see [John 11:41](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+11:41)). If I am united with Jesus Christ, I hear God all the time through the devotion of hearing. A flower, a tree, or a servant of God may convey God’s message to me. What hinders me from hearing is my attention to other things. It is not that I don’t want to hear God, but I am not devoted in the right areas of my life. I am devoted to things and even to service and my own convictions. God may say whatever He wants, but I just don’t hear Him. The attitude of a child of God should always be, “Speak, for Your servant hears.” If I have not developed and nurtured this devotion of hearing, I can only hear God’s voice at certain times. At other times I become deaf to Him because my attention is to other things— things which I think I must do. This is not living the life of a child of God. Have you heard God’s voice today?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To live a life alone with God does not mean that we live it apart from everyone else. The connection between godly men and women and those associated with them is continually revealed in the Bible, e.g., 1 Timothy 4:10.  Not Knowing Whither, 867 L

# CCEL – 2/13/21

**Upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.**—[EZEK. 1:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.1.html" \l "Ezek.1.26)

The man Christ Jesus.—Made in the likeness of men . . . found in fashion as a man.—Forasmuch . . . as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death.

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.—Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.—What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?—He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.—In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God.

[I Tim. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.2.html" \l "iTim.2.5). -[Phi. 2:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.7). -[Heb. 2:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.14).[Rev. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.1.html" \l "Rev.1.18). -[Rom. 6:9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.9). -[John 6:62](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.6.html" \l "John.6.62). -[Eph. 1:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.20). -[Col. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.9).[II Cor. 13:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.13.html" \l "iiCor.13.4).

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” [1 John 3:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.1)

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.” Consider who we were, and what we feel ourselves to be even now when corruption is powerful in us, and you will wonder at our adoption. Yet we are called “the sons of God.” What a high relationship is that of a son, and what privileges it brings! What care and tenderness the son expects from his father, and what love the father feels towards the son! But all that, and more than that, we now have through Christ. As for the temporary drawback of suffering with the elder brother, this we accept as an honour: “Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” We are content to be unknown with him in his humiliation, for we are to be exalted with him. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” That is easy to read, but it is not so easy to feel. How is it with your heart this morning? Are you in the lowest depths of sorrow? Does corruption rise within your spirit, and grace seem like a poor spark trampled under foot? Does your faith almost fail you? Fear not, it is neither your graces nor feelings on which you are to live: you must live simply by faith on Christ. With all these things against us, now—in the very depths of our sorrow, wherever we may be—now, as much in the valley as on the mountain, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” “Ah, but,” you say, “see how I am arrayed! my graces are not bright; my righteousness does not shine with apparent glory.” But read the next: “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.” The Holy Spirit shall purify our minds, and divine power shall refine our bodies; then shall we see him as he is.

# Word Live – 2/13/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/13/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/13/21

# The Other Law

**Read:** [**Romans 7:15–35**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3a15%e2%80%9335)

15I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3A15%E2%80%9335+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28110a)] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

21So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; 23but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3A15%E2%80%9335+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28117b)] a slave to the law of sin.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 7:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3A15%E2%80%9335+&version=NIV#en-NIV-28110) Or my flesh
2. [Romans 7:25](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7%3A15%E2%80%9335+&version=NIV#en-NIV-28117) Or in the flesh

Many who struggle with addictions have found help by joining a twelve-step program. Developed by Alcoholics Anonymous, the twelve steps begin by having participants admit that they are powerless over their addiction and that their lives have become unmanageable. The key to healing lies in recognizing that we are not in control.

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. Romans 7:21

If we want to overcome sin, we must come to a similar realization. We must admit that despite our desire to do good, “good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature” (v. 18). Even when we agree with God’s law and want to obey, we discover that there is “another law at work” (v. 23). This is “the law of sin at work within me” (v. 23). The impulses of our sinful nature create an insurmountable problem for those who hope to be made righteous based on their own efforts. It is not enough to affirm God’s moral standard and intend to obey His commands. Despite our agreement with God and even our sincere desire to do what is right, we will find that the law of sin will always work against us.

Does this passage create a feeling of desperation within you? While this is Paul’s intent, he does not leave us without hope. If all we can do is rely upon our own effort, we might as well end with Paul’s cry in verse 24: “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” Instead, Paul ends with a prayer of thanks in verse 25 pointing to the solution: “Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

**Apply the Word**

If it weren’t for the grace of God, the best we could hope for is to be servants of God in mind but slaves to sin in practice. Like an addict, we receive God’s help when we admit that we are helpless. Hand your life over to Jesus Christ today!

### **Pray with Us**

We are helpless against sin, Almighty God. We take shelter in your power, trusting that you are always sanctifying us, even when we can’t perceive your hand at work.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/13/21

# Something New

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 43:14–21**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.14%E2%80%9321)

### **God’s Mercy and Israel’s Unfaithfulness**

14This is what the Lord says—  
    your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:  
“For your sake I will send to Babylon  
    and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+43%3A14%E2%80%9321&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18520a)]  
    in the ships in which they took pride.  
15I am the Lord, your Holy One,  
    Israel’s Creator, your King.”

16This is what the Lord says—  
    he who made a way through the sea,  
    a path through the mighty waters,  
17who drew out the chariots and horses,  
    the army and reinforcements together,  
and they lay there, never to rise again,  
    extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:  
18“Forget the former things;  
    do not dwell on the past.  
19See, I am doing a new thing!  
    Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
    and streams in the wasteland.  
20The wild animals honor me,  
    the jackals and the owls,  
because I provide water in the wilderness  
    and streams in the wasteland,  
to give drink to my people, my chosen,  
21    the people I formed for myself  
    that they may proclaim my praise.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Isaiah 43:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+43%3A14%E2%80%9321&version=NIV#en-NIV-18520) Or Chaldeans

See, I am doing a new thing! . . . I am making . . . streams in the wasteland. [Isaiah 43:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.19)

Farming is difficult in areas that lack fresh water. To help solve this problem, the Seawater Greenhouse company has created something new: “cooling houses” in Somaliland, Africa, and other countries with similar climates. Cooling houses use solar pumps to drizzle saltwater over walls made of corrugated cardboard. As the water moves down each panel, it leaves its salt behind. Much of the remaining fresh water evaporates inside the structure, which becomes a humid place where fruit and vegetable crops can flourish.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God promised to do a “new thing” as He provided “streams in the wasteland” for ancient Israel ([Isaiah 43:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.19)). This new thing contrasted with the old thing He had done to rescue His people from the Egyptian army. Remember the Red Sea account? God wanted His people to recall the past but not let it overshadow His current involvement in their lives (v. 18). He said, “See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness” (v. 19).

While looking to the past can bolster our faith in God’s provision, living in the past can blind us to all the fresh work of God’s Spirit today. We can ask God to show us how He’s currently moving—helping, remaking, and sustaining His people. May this awareness prompt us to partner with Him to meet the needs of others, both near and far.

By:  [Jennifer Benson Schuldt](https://odb.org/author/jenniferbschuldt/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What new thing is God doing in your life? How is He using you to touch others’ lives and help make the world a better place?

Dear God, I praise You as the living One who constantly does new things. Help me to trust You to meet my changing needs.

#### **Insight**

The first half of the book of Isaiah (chs. 1–39) predominantly focuses on God’s judgment of Israel, which was fulfilled by Assyria and then Babylon. In the second half (chs. 40–66), the book explores more fully God’s promised hope and restoration.

[Isaiah 43:14–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.14%E2%80%9321) compares the coming restoration of God’s people in exile to their past deliverance from Egypt. However, although these verses show the parallels between this coming deliverance and the exodus (such as “making a way in the wilderness” v. 19), it also instructs the Israelites to “forget the former things” (v. 18). The “new thing” (v. 19) that God would do for them would be even more extraordinary than the first exodus.

To learn more about the book of Isaiah, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/OT510.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/OT510.)

# God Calling – 2/13/21

# Near The Goal

In a race it is not the start that hurts, not even the pace of the long stretch. It is when the goal is in sight that heart and nerves and courage and muscles are strained almost beyond human endurance, almost to the breaking point.

So with you now the goal is in sight, you need your final cry to Me. Can you not see by the nerve and heart rack of the past few days that your race is nearly run? Courage, courage. Heed My voice of encouragement. Remember that I am by your side, spurring you on to victory.

In the annals of heaven, the saddest records are those that tell of the many who ran well, with brave stout hearts, until in sight of the goal, of victory, and then their courage failed. The whole host of heaven longed to cry out how near the end was, to implore the last spurt, but they fell out, never to know until the last day of revealing, how near they were to victory.

Would that they had listened to Me in the silence as you two meet with Me. They would have known. There must be the listening ear, as well as the still small voice.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/14/21

# The Discipline of Hearing



Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. —[Matthew 10:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+10%3A27)

Sometimes God puts us through the experience and discipline of darkness to teach us to hear and obey Him. Song birds are taught to sing in the dark, and God puts us into “the shadow of His hand” until we learn to hear Him ([Isaiah 49:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+49:2)). “Whatever I tell you in the dark…” — pay attention when God puts you into darkness, and keep your mouth closed while you are there. Are you in the dark right now in your circumstances, or in your life with God? If so, then remain quiet. If you open your mouth in the dark, you will speak while in the wrong mood— darkness is the time to listen. Don’t talk to other people about it; don’t read books to find out the reason for the darkness; just listen and obey. If you talk to other people, you cannot hear what God is saying. When you are in the dark, listen, and God will give you a very precious message for someone else once you are back in the light.

After every time of darkness, we should experience a mixture of delight and humiliation. If there is only delight, I question whether we have really heard God at all. We should experience delight for having heard God speak, but mostly humiliation for having taken so long to hear Him! Then we will exclaim, “How slow I have been to listen and understand what God has been telling me!” And yet God has been saying it for days and even weeks. But once you hear Him, He gives you the gift of humiliation, which brings a softness of heart— a gift that will always cause you to listen to God now.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 2/14/21

Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.—[MATT. 3:15.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.3.html" \l "Matt.3.15)

I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.—The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.—Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

[Psa. 40:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.40.html" \l "Ps.40.8).[Matt. 5:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.17). -[Isa. 42:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.42.html" \l "Isa.42.21). -[Matt. 5:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.20).[Rom. 8:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.3). -[Rom. 10:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.10.html" \l "Rom.10.4).

“And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.” [2 Kings 25:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiKgs.25.html" \l "iiKgs.25.30)

Jehoiachin was not sent away from the king’s palace with a store to last him for months, but his provision was given him as a daily pension. Herein he well pictures the happy position of all the Lord’s people. A daily portion is all that a man really wants. We do not need tomorrow’s supplies; that day has not yet dawned, and its wants are as yet unborn. The thirst which we may suffer in the month of June does not need to be quenched in February, for we do not feel it yet; if we have enough for each day as the days arrive we shall never know want. Sufficient for the day is all that we can enjoy. We cannot eat or drink or wear more than the day’s supply of food and raiment; the surplus gives us the care of storing it, and the anxiety of watching against a thief. One staff aids a traveller, but a bundle of staves is a heavy burden. Enough is not only as good as a feast, but is all that the greatest glutton can truly enjoy. This is all that we should expect; a craving for more than this is ungrateful. When our Father does not give us more, we should be content with his daily allowance. Jehoiachin’s case is ours, we have a sure portion, a portion given us of the king, a gracious portion, and a perpetual portion. Here is surely ground for thankfulness.

Beloved Christian reader, in matters of grace you need a daily supply. You have no store of strength. Day by day must you seek help from above. It is a very sweet assurance that a daily portion is provided for you. In the word, through the ministry, by meditation, in prayer, and waiting upon God you shall receive renewed strength. In Jesus all needful things are laid up for you. Then enjoy your continual allowance. Never go hungry while the daily bread of grace is on the table of mercy.

# Word Live – 2/14/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/14/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/14/21

# Written on Our Heart

**Read:** [**Romans 8:1–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313)

### **Life Through the Spirit**

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#fen-NIV-28119a)] free from the law of sin and death. 3For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#fen-NIV-28120b)] God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#fen-NIV-28120c)] And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

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

9You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#fen-NIV-28127d)] because of righteousness. 11And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#fen-NIV-28128e)] his Spirit who lives in you.

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

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 8:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#en-NIV-28119) The Greek is singular; some manuscripts me
2. [Romans 8:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#en-NIV-28120) In contexts like this, the Greek word for flesh (sarx) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit; also in verses 4-13.
3. [Romans 8:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#en-NIV-28120) Or flesh, for sin
4. [Romans 8:10](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#en-NIV-28127) Or you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive
5. [Romans 8:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a1%e2%80%9313#en-NIV-28128) Some manuscripts bodies through

The problem of humanity’s inability to keep God’s law was not a New Testament problem. The Old Testament recognized it as well. In Jeremiah 31:33, the Lord delivers this promise: “’This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD. ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”

The law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2

In today’s reading, we discover how God has written His law on the human heart through the Holy Spirit. Paul describes this ministry of the Spirit as a different kind of law. It is “the law of the Spirit who gives life” (v. 2). When the Spirit governs our thoughts, we experience “life and peace” (v. 6). The Spirit, who indwells all those who belong to Christ, is the counter force that enables us to resist the impulses of the sinful nature—”the law of sin and death” (v. 2)—and empowers us to obey all that Christ has commanded.

However, the language Paul uses in these verses makes it clear that our obedience is not automatic. While the Holy Spirit indwells believers, He does not take possession of us the way demonic spirits do in the Gospels (see Mark 8). In verses 5–8, the apostle describes the two different ways open to the Christian. If we follow the impulses of the sinful nature (or “flesh”), we “cannot please God” (v. 8). How much better to “live in accordance with the Spirit” (v. 5), a life that will look markedly different (v. 6).

**Apply the Word**

We have a job to do! With the power given to us by the Spirit, we are to “put to death the misdeeds of the body” (v. 13). There is an element of decision in this. The freedom we experience in Christ is not freedom from temptation but the freedom to obey.

### **Pray with Us**

We take comfort in the Holy Spirit’s indwelling, and we thank you, Father, for the freedom the Spirit gives us to obey you. We may be harassed by temptation, but we need not be conquered.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/14/21

# Sending Out an SOS

### Today's Devotional **Read:** [**Psalm 34:1–10**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2034.1%E2%80%9310) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14390a)**][[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-14390b" \o "See footnote b)]**

#### **Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.**

1I will extol the Lord at all times;  
    his praise will always be on my lips.  
2I will glory in the Lord;  
    let the afflicted hear and rejoice.  
3Glorify the Lord with me;  
    let us exalt his name together.

4I sought the Lord, and he answered me;  
    he delivered me from all my fears.  
5Those who look to him are radiant;  
    their faces are never covered with shame.  
6This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;  
    he saved him out of all his troubles.  
7The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,  
    and he delivers them.

8Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
    blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.  
9Fear the Lord, you his holy people,  
    for those who fear him lack nothing.  
10The lions may grow weak and hungry,  
    but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 34:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-14390) This psalm is an acrostic poem, the verses of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
2. [Psalm 34:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-14390) In Hebrew texts 34:1-22 is numbered 34:2-23.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me. [Psalm 34:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2034.4)

When the hut of a settler in a mountainous region of Alaska caught fire, the settler was left without adequate shelter and with few provisions in the coldest state in the US—in the middle of a frigid winter. Three weeks later, the man was finally rescued when an aircraft flew over and spied the large SOS he had stamped out in the snow and darkened with soot.

The psalmist David was certainly in dire straits. He was being pursued by jealous King Saul who sought to kill him. And so he fled to the city of Gath, where he pretended to be insane in order to preserve his life (see [1 Samuel 21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%2021)). Out of those events emerged [Psalm 34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2034), where David cried out in prayer to God and found peace (vv. 4, 6). God heard his pleas and delivered him.

Are you in a desperate situation and crying out for help? Be assured that God still hears and responds to our desperate prayers today. As with David, He’s attentive to our distress calls and takes away our fears (v. 4)—and sometimes even saves us “out of [our] troubles” (v. 6).

Scripture invites us to “cast [our] cares on the Lord and he will sustain [us]” ([Psalm 55:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2055.22)). When we turn our difficult circumstances over to God, we can trust that He’ll provide the help we need. We’re secure in His capable hands.

By:  [Alyson Kieda](https://odb.org/author/akieda/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you felt peace after crying out to God? When has He rescued you from a desperate situation?

Loving Father, thank You for hearing my prayers and bringing comfort, peace—whatever I need most. And thank You especially for rescuing me from my sin.

#### **Insight**

[Psalms 34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2034), [37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalms%2037), and [73](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalms%2073) deal with what was known in Old Testament times as the law or principle of retribution. At that time, the Scriptures were incomplete and the people of God had limited understanding of the afterlife. As a result, they wrestled with issues of justice and equity and how they would ultimately be realized. Not understanding life after death, they sought to reconcile the seeming inequities of life with the principle of retribution, which taught that in this life the righteous are blessed according to their righteousness and the wicked are cursed according to their wickedness. However, [Psalm 73](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2073) makes it clear that Asaph felt that the principle wasn’t working, for the wicked seemed to flourish while the righteous suffered. Only in Jesus would this problem ultimately be reconciled. He bore the sins of the world on Himself, making possible an eternal home of true justice and equity.

# God Calling – 2/14/21

# In My Presence

You do not realize that you would have broken down under the weight of your cares but for the renewing time with Me. It is not what I say; it is I, Myself. It is not the hearing Me so much as the being in My Presence. The strengthening and curative powers of this you cannot know. Such knowledge is beyond your human reckoning.

This would cure the poor sick world, if every day, each soul, or group of souls, waited before Me. Remember, that you must never fail to keep this time apart with Me. Gradually you will be transformed, physically, mentally, spiritually, into My likeness. All who see you, or contact with you will be, by this intercourse with you, brought near to Me, and gradually the influence will spread.

You are making one spot of earth a Holy Place, and though you must work and spend yourself ceaselessly because that is for the present your appointed task, yet the greatest work either of you can do, and are doing, is done in this time apart with Me. Are you understanding that?

Do you know that every thought, every activity, every prayer, every longing of the day is gathered up and offered to Me, now? Oh! Joy that I am with you. For this I came to earth, to lead man back to spirit-converse with his God.

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." Proverbs 8:34

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/15/21

# “Am I My Brother’s Keeper?”



None of us lives to himself… —[Romans 14:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+14%3A7)

Has it ever dawned on you that you are responsible spiritually to God for other people? For instance, if I allow any turning away from God in my private life, everyone around me suffers. We “sit together in the heavenly places…” ([Ephesians 2:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2:6)). “If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it…” ([1 Corinthians 12:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12:26)). If you allow physical selfishness, mental carelessness, moral insensitivity, or spiritual weakness, everyone in contact with you will suffer. But you ask, “Who is sufficient to be able to live up to such a lofty standard?” “Our sufficiency is from God…” and God alone ([2 Corinthians 3:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+3:5)).

“You shall be witnesses to Me…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)). How many of us are willing to spend every bit of our nervous, mental, moral, and spiritual energy for Jesus Christ? That is what God means when He uses the word witness. But it takes time, so be patient with yourself. Why has God left us on the earth? Is it simply to be saved and sanctified? No, it is to be at work in service to Him. Am I willing to be broken bread and poured-out wine for Him? Am I willing to be of no value to this age or this life except for one purpose and one alone— to be used to disciple men and women to the Lord Jesus Christ. My life of service to God is the way I say “thank you” to Him for His inexpressibly wonderful salvation. Remember, it is quite possible for God to set any of us aside if we refuse to be of service to Him— “…lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” ([1 Corinthians 9:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+9:27)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The great word of Jesus to His disciples is Abandon. When God has brought us into the relationship of disciples, we have to venture on His word; trust entirely to Him and watch that when He brings us to the venture, we take it.  Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, 1459 R

# CCEL – 2/15/21

Who can say, I have made my heart clean?—[PROV. 20:9.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.20.html" \l "Prov.20.9)

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.—They that are in the flesh cannot please God.

To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.—We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf: and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.—God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[Psa. 14:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.14.html" \l "Ps.14.2). -[Rom. 8:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.8).[Rom. 7:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.18). -[Isa. 64:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.64.html" \l "Isa.64.6).[Gal. 3:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.3.html" \l "Gal.3.22). -[II Cor. 5:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.19).[I John 1:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.1.html" \l "iJohn.1.8).

“To him be glory both now and forever.” [2 Peter 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.18)

Heaven will be full of the ceaseless praises of Jesus. Eternity! thine unnumbered years shall speed their everlasting course, but forever and forever, “to him be glory.” Is he not a “Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek?” “To him be glory.” Is he not king forever?—King of kings and Lord of lords, the everlasting Father? “To him be glory forever.” Never shall his praises cease. That which was bought with blood deserves to last while immortality endures. The glory of the cross must never be eclipsed; the lustre of the grave and of the resurrection must never be dimmed. O Jesus! thou shalt be praised forever. Long as immortal spirits live—long as the Father’s throne endures—forever, forever, unto thee shall be glory. Believer, you are anticipating the time when you shall join the saints above in ascribing all glory to Jesus; but are you glorifying him now? The apostle’s words are, “To him be glory both now and forever.” Will you not this day make it your prayer? “Lord, help me to glorify thee; I am poor; help me to glorify thee by contentment; I am sick; help me to give thee honour by patience; I have talents; help me to extol thee by spending them for thee; I have time; Lord, help me to redeem it, that I may serve thee; I have a heart to feel; Lord, let that heart feel no love but thine, and glow with no flame but affection for thee; I have a head to think; Lord, help me to think of thee and for thee; thou hast put me in this world for something; Lord, show me what that is, and help me to work out my life-purpose: I cannot do much; but as the widow put in her two mites, which were all her living, so, Lord, I cast my time and eternity too into thy treasury; I am all thine; take me, and enable me to glorify thee now, in all that I say, in all that I do, and with all that I have.”

# Word Live – 2/15/21

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

# Scripture Union – 2/15/21

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

# Today in the Word – 2/15/21

# God Is for Us!

**Read:** [**Romans 8:14–39**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339)

14For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339" \l "fen-NIV-28132a" \o "See footnote a)] And by him we cry, “Abba,[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28132b)] Father.” 16The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. 17Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

### **Present Suffering and Future Glory**

18I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21that[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28138c)] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

22We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. 24For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

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

28And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28145d)] have been called according to his purpose. 29For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

### **More Than Conquerors**

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

“For your sake we face death all day long;  
    we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28153e)]

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339" \l "fen-NIV-28155f" \o "See footnote f)] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 8:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28132) The Greek word for adoption to sonship is a term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture; also in verse 23.
2. [Romans 8:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28132) Aramaic for father
3. [Romans 8:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28138) Or subjected it in hope. 21For
4. [Romans 8:28](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28145) Or that all things work together for good to those who love God, who; or that in all things God works together with those who love him to bring about what is good—with those who
5. [Romans 8:36](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28153) Psalm 44:22
6. [Romans 8:38](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a14%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28155) Or nor heavenly rulers

A famous saying goes, “God plus you is a majority.” It implies that God is on our side and will help us conquer our opposition. As Christians, we know that God is with us. But because those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God, the real question should not be whether God is with us, but whether He is for us.

If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

The presence of the Holy Spirit answers this question. The Spirit’s indwelling presence is proof that God has accepted us in Christ. The Spirit “testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (v. 16). The Spirit also “intercedes for us through wordless groans” (v. 26). Paul says we have been groaning since creation (v. 22), longing for our future hope in Christ!

This groaning does not seem to be a conversation that we participate in or can even hear. It is the Spirit addressing the Father directly on our behalf. The outcome of these prayers is guaranteed because the Father “knows the mind of the Spirit,” and the Spirit’s requests are “in accordance with the will of God” (v. 27).

When difficulties arise in our lives, we don’t need to worry about whether God’s attitude has changed toward us. Whatever the circumstance, “God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (v. 28). God’s purpose for us is that we should be “conformed to the image of his Son” (v. 29). The worst that can happen cannot separate us from God’s love or His good plan for our lives. Through Christ, we are “more than conquerors” (v. 37).

**Apply the Word**

God is not an ally but a sovereign who not only rules over us but over all of the circumstances that affect us. Read verses 38 and 39 aloud! Whatever your situation might be today, remember that God is for you, and He is always in control!

### **Pray with Us**

Dear God, we celebrate your perfect unity—Father, Son, and Spirit! You are of one mind and purpose, and you have the authority to accomplish your will. There is no room for despair before your unity, power, and goodness.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 2/15/21

# Spitting Image

 **Read:** [**Colossians 1:15–23**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15%E2%80%9323)

### **The Supremacy of the Son of God**

15The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

21Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29487a)] your evil behavior. 22But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Colossians 1:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15%E2%80%9323&version=NIV#en-NIV-29487) Or minds, as shown by

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. [Colossians 1:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15)

During an outing, we met a woman who had known my husband’s family since he was a child. She looked from Alan to our son, Xavier. “He’s the spitting image of his daddy,” she said. “Those eyes. That smile. Yep. Looks just like him.” As the woman delighted in acknowledging such a strong resemblance between father and son, she even noted similarities in their personalities. Still, though they are alike in many ways, my son doesn’t reflect his father perfectly.

There’s only one Son—Jesus—who reflects His Father completely. Christ is the “image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation” ([Colossians 1:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15)). In Him and through Him and for Him all things were created (v. 16). “He is before all things, and in him all things hold together” (v. 17).

We can spend time in prayer and Bible study, discovering the Father’s character by looking at Jesus—God in the flesh. He invites us to witness His love in action by examining how He interacts with others in Scripture and in our day-to-day living. After surrendering our lives to Christ and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, we can grow in knowing and trusting our loving Father. He transforms us to reflect His character, so we can live for Him.

What a joy it would be if others could say we look just like Jesus!

By:  [Xochitl Dixon](https://odb.org/author/xochitldixon/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What character trait of Jesus have you seen cultivated in your life over the last year? What trait would you like to cultivate in the coming year?

Jesus, please help me know You more as You make me more like You!

#### **Insight**

In [Colossians 1:15–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15%E2%80%9323), Paul affirms the deity and the supremacy of Christ over all creation. Man is created “in the image of God” ([Genesis 1:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%201.27)), but Jesus “is the image [Greek eikōn] of the invisible God” ([Colossians 1:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15)). Eikōn carries the meaning of “portrait” or “exact likeness,” which is how the New Living Translation renders it in [2 Corinthians 4:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.4). The writer of Hebrews describes Jesus as “the exact representation of [God’s] being” ([Hebrews 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%201.3)); “the Son . . . expresses the very character of God” (nlt). The apostle John says Jesus “has made [God] known” ([John 1:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.18)); “has revealed God to us” (nlt). Jesus Himself says, “I and the Father are one. . . . Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (10:30; 14:9).

# God Calling – 2/15/21

# Inspiration -- Not Aspiration

You shall be used. The Divine Force is never less. It is sufficient for all the work in the world. I only need the instruments for Me to use. To know that would remake the world.

The world does not need supermen, but supernatural men. Men who will persistently turn the self out of their lives and let Divine Power work through them. England could be saved tomorrow if only her politicians just let Me use them.

Let inspiration take the place of aspiration. All unemployment would cease. I have always plenty of work to be done and always pay My people well as you will see, as more and more you get the right attitude of thought about the work being Mine only.

"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job 32:8