# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/21/20

# Recall What God Remembers

# Recall What God Remembers

I remember . . . the kindness of thy youth. — [Jeremiah 2:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Jeremiah+2%3A2)

Am I as spontaneously kind to God as I used to be, or am I only expecting God to be kind to me? Am I full of the little things that cheer His heart over me, or am I whimpering because things are going hardly with me? There is no joy in the soul that has forgotten what God prizes. It is a great thing to think that Jesus Christ has need of me – "Give Me to drink." How much kindness have I shown Him this past week? Have I been kind to His reputation in my life?

God is saying to His people – You are not in love with Me now, but I remember the time when you were – "I remember . . . the love of thine espousals." Am I as full of the extravagance of love to Jesus Christ as I was in the beginning, when I went out of my way to prove my devotion to Him? Does He find me recalling the time when I did not care for anything but Himself? Am I there now, or have I become wise over loving Him? Am I so in love with Him that I take no account of where I go? or am I watching for the respect due to me; weighing how much service I ought to give?

If, as I recall what God remembers about me, I find He is not what He used to be to me, let it produce shame and humiliation, because that shame will bring the godly sorrow that works repentance.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We have no right to judge where we should be put, or to have preconceived notions as to what God is fitting us for. God engineers everything; wherever He puts us, our one great aim is to pour out a whole-hearted devotion to Him in that particular work. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” My Utmost for His Highest, April 23, 773 L

# CCEL – 1/21/20

**Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it.**—[JOHN 15:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.2)

He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

We glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.—If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.

[Mal. 3:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.2).[Rom. 5:3-5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.3). -[Heb. 12:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.7),[11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.11).

“And so all Israel shall be saved.” [Romans 11:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.11.html" \l "Rom.11.26)

When Moses sang at the Red Sea, it was his joy to know that all Israel were safe. Not a drop of spray fell from that solid wall until the last of God’s Israel had safely planted his foot on the other side the flood. That done, immediately the floods dissolved into their proper place again, but not till then. Part of that song was, “Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed.” In the last time, when the elect shall sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb, it shall be the boast of Jesus, “Of all whom thou hast given me, I have lost none.” In heaven there shall not be a vacant throne.

“For all the chosen race

Shall meet around the throne,

Shall bless the conduct of his grace,

And make his glories known.”

As many as God hath chosen, as many as Christ hath redeemed, as many as the Spirit hath called, as many as believe in Jesus, shall safely cross the dividing sea. We are not all safely landed yet:

“Part of the host have crossed the flood,

And part are crossing now.”

The vanguard of the army has already reached the shore. We are marching through the depths; we are at this day following hard after our Leader into the heart of the sea. Let us be of good cheer: the rear-guard shall soon be where the vanguard already is; the last of the chosen ones shall soon have crossed the sea, and then shall be heard the song of triumph, when all are secure. But oh! if one were absent—oh! if one of his chosen family should be cast away—it would make daily breadan everlasting discord in the song of the redeemed, and cut the strings of the harps of paradise, so that music could never be extorted from them.

# Word Live – 1/21/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/21/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/21/20

# Waiting on the Lord’s Return

**Read:** [**Isaiah 52:1–12**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+52%3a1%e2%80%9312)

1 Awake, awake, Zion,  
    clothe yourself with strength!  
Put on your garments of splendor,  
    Jerusalem, the holy city.  
The uncircumcised and defiled  
    will not enter you again.  
2Shake off your dust;  
    rise up, sit enthroned, Jerusalem.  
Free yourself from the chains on your neck,  
    Daughter Zion, now a captive.

3For this is what the Lord says:

“You were sold for nothing,  
    and without money you will be redeemed.”

4For this is what the Sovereign Lord says:

“At first my people went down to Egypt to live;  
    lately, Assyria has oppressed them.

5“And now what do I have here?” declares the Lord.

“For my people have been taken away for nothing,  
    and those who rule them mock,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+52%3a1%e2%80%9312" \l "fen-NIV-18702a" \o "See footnote a)]”  
declares the Lord.  
“And all day long  
    my name is constantly blasphemed.  
6Therefore my people will know my name;  
    therefore in that day they will know  
that it is I who foretold it.  
    Yes, it is I.”

7How beautiful on the mountains  
    are the feet of those who bring good news,  
who proclaim peace,  
    who bring good tidings,  
    who proclaim salvation,  
who say to Zion,  
    “Your God reigns!”  
8Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;  
    together they shout for joy.  
When the Lord returns to Zion,  
    they will see it with their own eyes.  
9Burst into songs of joy together,  
    you ruins of Jerusalem,  
for the Lord has comforted his people,  
    he has redeemed Jerusalem.  
10The Lord will lay bare his holy arm  
    in the sight of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth will see  
    the salvation of our God.

11Depart, depart, go out from there!  
    Touch no unclean thing!  
Come out from it and be pure,  
    you who carry the articles of the Lord’s house.  
12But you will not leave in haste  
    or go in flight;  
for the Lord will go before you,  
    the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Isaiah 52:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+52%3a1%e2%80%9312#en-NIV-18702) Dead Sea Scrolls and Vulgate; Masoretic Text wail

Adoniram Judson (A. J.) Gordon was an American preacher, writer, and founder of Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The New England pastor would often join evangelist D. L. Moody at his Northfield conventions. Under his leadership, Clarendon Street Baptist Church became one of the most vibrant and missions-oriented churches of its day.

Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Isaiah 52:8

Today’s text contains one of Gordon’s favorite verses, Isaiah 52:8. The prophet Isaiah is delivering a message of great hope for the people of Israel; they will be delivered from their exile in Babylon. However, Isaiah states that an even greater hope awaits in the future when a restored Jerusalem will unite all nations in peace under the Messianic King.

Isaiah 52 begins by calling Zion, or Jerusalem, to “Wake up!” The prophet foresees the restoration of the strength, beauty, and vibrancy of God’s holy city. In verses 3–6, Isaiah reminds the Israelites of their history of oppression. The God who would deliver them had predicted their exile (v. 6).

Isaiah describes the celebration to take place when the land would be restored (vv. 7–12). This passage foretells the future deliverance of all God’s people through the Messiah. Isaiah’s words, “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news” (v. 7), are repeated by the apostle Paul in Romans 10:15. This good news—Israel’s restoration and the coming Messiah—will be carried over the mountains for all to hear.

Both Gordon and Moody were passionate about preaching the imminent Second Coming of Christ that would usher in Jesus’ thousand-year rule and reign over the New Jerusalem. When the Lord returns, we too will see Him with our own eyes (v. 8).

**>>** The book of Isaiah and theology about the end times can be challenging to understand. Use free online resources like the videos from The Bible Project to help you understand God’s Word even better.

### **Pray with Us**

Please lift up in prayer the ministry of Moody Radio, headed by vice president Doug Hastings. We pray for God’s blessing on its 37 stations, 1,700 affiliates, digital channels and podcasts, and on its faithful listeners across the globe.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/21/20

# Where Are You Headed?

 **Read: 2 Samuel 12:1–14**

### **Nathan Rebukes David**

12 The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, “There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. 2The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, 3but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

4“Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.”

5David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, “As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! 6He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.”

7Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man! This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8I gave your master’s house to you, and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. 9Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. 10Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’

11“This is what the Lord says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. 12You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”

13Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

Nathan replied, “The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. 14But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+12%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8301a)] the Lord, the son born to you will die.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [2 Samuel 12:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+12%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-8301) An ancient Hebrew scribal tradition; Masoretic Text for the enemies of

Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man!” [2 Samuel 12:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2012.7)

In northern Thailand, the Wild Boars youth soccer team decided to explore a cave together. After an hour they turned to go back and found that the entrance to the cave was flooded. Rising water pushed them deeper into the cave, day after day, until they were finally trapped more than two miles (four kilometers) inside. When they were heroically rescued two weeks later, many wondered how they had become so hopelessly trapped. Answer: one step at a time.

In Israel, Nathan confronted David for killing his loyal soldier, Uriah. How did the man “after [God’s] own heart” ([1 Samuel 13:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%2013.14)) become guilty of murder? One step at a time. David didn’t go from zero to murder in one afternoon. He warmed up to it, over time, as one bad decision bled into others. It started with a second glance that turned into a lustful stare. He abused his kingly power by sending for Bathsheba, then tried to cover up her pregnancy by calling her husband home from the front. When Uriah refused to visit his wife while his comrades were at war, David decided he would have to die.

We may not be guilty of murder or trapped in a cave of our own making, but we’re either moving toward Jesus or toward trouble. Big problems don’t develop overnight. They break upon us gradually, one step at a time.

By: [Mike Wittmer](https://odb.org/author/mwittmer/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What decision can you make right now to move toward Jesus and away from trouble? What must you do to confirm this decision?

Jesus, I’m running to You!

#### **Insight**

David committed adultery and murder ([2 Samuel 11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2011)) and assumed that as king he was answerable to no one. A year later, God sent the prophet Nathan to confront him about his wickedness (ch. 12). After confessing and repenting of his sins, David wrote [Psalm 51](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2051), and many believe this is also the context for [Psalm 32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2032). Though forgiven, David had to face the consequences of his sin. His son conceived with Bathsheba died ([2 Samuel 12:13–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2012.13%E2%80%9318)). And just as Uriah was killed by the sword (vv. 9–10), three of David’s other sons—Amnon (13:28–29), Absalom (18:14–15), and Adonijah (1 King 2:23–25)—died by the sword.

# God Calling – 1/21/20

# A Crowded Day

Be glad all the time.

Believe that I am with you and controlling all. When My Word has gone forth, all are powerless against it.

Be calm. Never fear. You have much to learn. Go on until you can take the most crowded day with a song. "Sing unto the Lord." The finest accompaniment to a Song of Praise to Me is a very crowded day. Let Love be the motif running through all.

Be glad all the time. Rejoice exceedingly. Joy in Me. Rest in Me. Never be afraid. Pray more. Do not get worried. I am thy Helper. "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms." You cannot get below that. Rest in them, as a tired child rests.

"Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." - Hebrews 13:5

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/22/20

# What Am I Looking At?

# Am I Looking To God?

Look unto Me, and be ye saved. — [Isaiah 45:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+45%3A22)

Do we expect God to come to us with His blessings and save us? He says – Look unto Me, and be saved. The great difficulty spiritually is to concentrate on God, and it is His blessings that make it difficult. Troubles nearly always make us look to God; His blessings are apt to make us look elsewhere. The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is, in effect – Narrow all your interests until the attitude of mind and heart and body is concentration on Jesus Christ. "Look unto Me."

Many of us have a mental conception of what a Christian should be, and the lives of the saints become a hindrance to our concentration on God. There is no salvation in this way, it is not simple enough. "Look unto Me" and – not "you will be saved," but "you are saved." The very thing we look for, we shall find if we will concentrate on Him. We get preoccupied and sulky with God, while all the time He is saying – "Look up and be saved." The difficulties and trials – the casting about in our minds as to what we shall do this summer, or to-morrow, all vanish when we look to God.

Rouse yourself up and look to God. Build your hope on Him. No matter if there are a hundred and one things that press, resolutely exclude them all and look to Him. "Look unto Me," and salvation is, the moment you look.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 1/22/20

**This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.**—[PSA. 48:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.48.html" \l "Ps.48.14)

O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.—The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.—Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.—Our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.—The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

[Isa. 25:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.1). -[Psa. 16:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.16.html" \l "Ps.16.5).[Psa. 23:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.23.html" \l "Ps.23.3). -[Psa. 73:23-26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.73.html" \l "Ps.73.23). -[Psa. 33:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.33.html" \l "Ps.33.21). -[Psa. 138:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.138.html" \l "Ps.138.8).

“Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest?” [Ezekiel 15:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.15.html" \l "Ezek.15.2)

These words are for the humbling of God’s people; they are called God’s vine, but what are they by nature more than others? They, by God’s goodness, have become fruitful, having been planted in a good soil; the Lord hath trained them upon the walls of the sanctuary, and they bring forth fruit to his glory; but what are they without their God? What are they without the continual influence of the Spirit, begetting fruitfulness in them? O believer, learn to reject pride, seeing that thou hast no ground for it. Whatever thou art, thou hast nothing to make thee proud. The more thou hast, the more thou art in debt to God; and thou shouldst not be proud of that which renders thee a debtor. Consider thine origin; look back to what thou wast. Consider what thou wouldst have been but for divine grace. Look upon thyself as thou art now. Doth not thy conscience reproach thee? Do not thy thousand wanderings stand before thee, and tell thee that thou art unworthy to be called his son? And if he hath made thee anything, art thou not taught thereby that it is grace which hath made thee to differ? Great believer, thou wouldst have been a great sinner if God had not made thee to differ. O thou who art valiant for truth, thou wouldst have been as valiant for error if grace had not laid hold upon thee. Therefore, be not proud, though thou hast a large estate—a wide domain of grace, thou hadst not once a single thing to call thine own except thy sin and misery. Oh! strange infatuation, that thou, who hast borrowed everything, shouldst think of exalting thyself; a poor dependent pensioner upon the bounty of thy Saviour, one who hath a life which dies without fresh streams of life from Jesus, and yet proud! Fie on thee, O silly heart!

# Word Live – 1/22/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/22/20

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# Today in the Word – 1/22/20

# He Began a Good Work in You

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

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+1%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-29363a)]:

2Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Thanksgiving and Prayer

3I thank my God every time I remember you. 4In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me. 8God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

9And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Philippians 1:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+1%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-29363) The word deacons refers here to Christians designated to serve with the overseers/elders of the church in a variety of ways; similarly in Romans 16:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8,12.

Over Moody Bible Institute’s 134-year history there have been hundreds of faculty members who have influenced the lives of future Christian ministry leaders. In July 2019, Dr. Rosalie de Rosset celebrated 50 years of teaching. During her tenure, she has taught more than 8,000 students. When I asked her about her favorite passage of Scripture she replied, “Nothing seems more true of my life than Philippians 1:6.”

He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

This verse comes in the middle of Paul’s greeting to the believers in Philippi, “all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus” (v. 1). He opens with a prayer of thankfulness to the Philippians for their generosity and faithfulness while he has been in prison (v. 7). He expresses his confidence that God has started a good work in them and will continue to see it through “until the day of Christ Jesus” (v. 6).

Paul’s emphasis in verse 11 is not on the Philippians, but rather it is on God! Paul believes that it is only through God’s grace that anything good will become of them. Notice his prayer that the Philippian church will be shaped by God’s love (v. 9), able to discern godly behavior (v. 19), be pure and blameless (v. 10), and produce fruit of righteousness (v. 11). How? It is only “through Jesus Christ” and to give “glory and praise” to God (v. 11). De Rosset says, “I think of these words [Phil. 1:6] often because like many, my life has been a series of what I would call stumblings forward, taking escapes and being brought back. Each decade of my life is a new lesson in obedience, experiencing greater conviction, wanting more to obey and love the Lord and to follow Him more profoundly no matter what. What rings in my soul most fully and moves me most deeply is that He performed the work in my life.”

**>>**Since the day you were born, God was beginning a good work in you. God is still working in your life to complete what He started. Each decade and each moment of your life is a testimony of what He has done. Praise Him for your journey.

### **Pray with Us**

Thank the Lord for His encouraging words in today’s reading. We are grateful for our journey with Him, for His work in our lives, and for His assurance that this work will be carried on “to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6).

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/22/20

# Demonstrating Grace

 **Read: Micah 7:18–20**

18Who is a God like you,  
    who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
    of the remnant of his inheritance?  
You do not stay angry forever  
    but delight to show mercy.  
19You will again have compassion on us;  
    you will tread our sins underfoot  
    and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.  
20You will be faithful to Jacob,  
    and show love to Abraham,  
as you pledged on oath to our ancestors  
    in days long ago.

You will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. [Micah 7:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%207.19)

“In moments where tragedy happens or even hurt, there are opportunities to demonstrate grace or to exact vengeance,” the recently bereaved man remarked. “I chose to demonstrate grace.” Pastor Erik Fitzgerald’s wife had been killed in a car accident caused by an exhausted firefighter who fell asleep while driving home, and legal prosecutors wanted to know whether he would seek the maximum sentence. The pastor chose to practice the forgiveness he often preached about. To the surprise of both him and the firefighter, the men eventually became friends.

Pastor Erik was living out of the grace he’d received from God, who’d forgiven him all of his sins. Through his actions he echoed the words of the prophet Micah, who praised God for pardoning sin and forgiving when we do wrong ([Micah 7:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%207.18)). The prophet uses wonderfully visual language to show just how far God goes in forgiving His people, saying that He will “tread our sins underfoot” and hurl our wrongdoings into the deep sea (v. 19). The firefighter received a gift of freedom that day, which brought him closer to God.

Whatever difficulty we face, we know that God reaches out to us with loving, open arms, welcoming us into His safe embrace. He “delights to show mercy” (v. 18). As we receive His love and grace, He gives us the strength to forgive those who hurt us—even as Pastor Erik did.

By: [Amy Boucher Pye](https://odb.org/author/amyboucherpye/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How do you respond to this story of amazing forgiveness? Can you think of someone you need to forgive? If so, ask God to help you.

Father God, You love us without ceasing, and You delight to forgive us when we return to You. Envelop us with Your love, that we might demonstrate grace to those who hurt us.

#### **Insight**

The prophet Micah declares, “What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (6:8). However, Israel had not lived up to those requirements. In chapter 7, the author reviews the nation’s grim prospects because of their disobedience (vv. 1–6). But verse 7 of this final chapter signals a sudden change in tone, and the book’s last thirteen verses comprise a surprisingly triumphant hymn. Why is it triumphant? Because the prophet praises God’s character. Despite all the harsh (and deserved) pronouncements of judgment, God will be true to His word. He will redeem His people. And so Micah asks, “Who is a God like you?” (v. 18). Israel’s loving God will keep His covenant as He “pledged on oath . . . in days long ago” (v. 20).

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

# God Calling – 1/22/20

# Gray Days

You must say 'Thank You' on the grayest days.

Be not afraid. I am your God, your Deliverer. From all evil, I will deliver you. Trust Me. Fear not.

Never forget your "Thank you." Do you not see it is a lesson? You MUST say "Thank You" on the grayest days. You MUST do it. All cannot be light unless you do. There is gray-day practice. It is absolutely necessary.

My death upon the Cross was not only necessary to save a world, it was necessary if only to train My disciples. It was all a part of their training: My entering Jerusalem in triumph; My washing the disciples' feet; My sorrow-time in Gethsemane; My being despised, judged, crucified, buried. Every step was necessary to their development - and so with you.

If a gray day is not one of thankfulness, the lesson has to be repeated until it is. Not to everyone is it so. But only to those who ask to serve Me well, and to do much for Me. A great work requires a great and careful training.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." - Isaiah 41:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/23/20

# Transformed By Beholding

# Transformed by Beholding

We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image. — [2 Corinthians 3:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+3%3A18)

The outstanding characteristic of a Christian is this unveiled frankness before God so that the life becomes a mirror for other lives. By being filled with the Spirit we are transformed, and by beholding we become mirrors. You always know when a man has been beholding the glory of the Lord, you feel in your inner spirit that he is the mirror of the Lord’s own character. Beware of anything which would sully that mirror in you; it is nearly always a good thing, the good that is not the best.

The golden rule for your life and mine is this concentrated keeping of the life open towards God. Let everything else – work, clothes, food, everything on earth – go by the board, saving that one thing. The rush of other things always tends to obscure this concentration on God. We have to maintain ourselves in the place of beholding, keeping the life absolutely spiritual all through. Let other things come and go as they may, let other people criticize as they will, but never allow anything to obscure the life that is hid with Christ in God. Never be hurried out of the relationship of abiding in Him. It is the one thing that is apt to fluctuate but it ought not to. The severest discipline of a Christian’s life is to learn how to keep "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord."

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

There is no condition of life in which we cannot abide in Jesus. We have to learn to abide in Him wherever we are placed. Our Brilliant Heritage

# CCEL – 1/23/20

**Hope maketh not ashamed.**—[ROM. 5:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.5)

I am the Lord: . . . they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.—Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.—Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord **JEHOVAH** is everlasting strength.—My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved.—I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed.

God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.

[Isa. 49:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.23). -[Jer. 17:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.17.html" \l "Jer.17.7). -[Isa. 26:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.26.html" \l "Isa.26.3). -[Psa. 62:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.62.html" \l "Ps.62.5). -[II Tim. 1:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.1.html" \l "iiTim.1.12).[Heb. 6:17-20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.6.html" \l "Heb.6.17).

“I have exalted one chosen out of the people.” [Psalm 89:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.89.html" \l "Ps.89.19)

Why was Christ chosen out of the people? Speak, my heart, for heart-thoughts are best. Was it not that he might be able to be our brother, in the blest tie of kindred blood? Oh, what relationship there is between Christ and the believer! The believer can say, “I have a Brother in heaven; I may be poor, but I have a Brother who is rich, and is a King, and will he suffer me to want while he is on his throne? Oh, no! He loves me; he is my Brother.” Believer, wear this blessed thought, like a necklace of diamonds, around the neck of thy memory; put it, as a golden ring, on the finger of recollection, and use it as the King’s own seal, stamping the petitions of thy faith with confidence of success. He is a brother born for adversity, treat him as such.

Christ was also chosen out of the people that he might know our wants and sympathize with us. “He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” In all our sorrows we have his sympathy. Temptation, pain, disappointment, weakness, weariness, poverty—he knows them all, for he has felt all. Remember this, Christian, and let it comfort thee. However difficult and painful thy road, it is marked by the footsteps of thy Saviour; and even when thou reachest the dark valley of the shadow of death, and the deep waters of the swelling Jordan, thou wilt find his footprints there. In all places whithersoever we go, he has been our forerunner; each burden we have to carry, has once been laid on the shoulders of Immanuel.

“His way was much rougher and darker than mine

Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?”

Take courage! Royal feet have left a blood-red track upon the road, and consecrated the thorny path forever.

# Word Live – 1/23/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/23/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/23/20

# By Faith Alone

**Read:** [**Romans 1:11–17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317)

11I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— 12that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith. 13I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317" \l "fen-NIV-27944a" \o "See footnote a)] that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

14I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. 15That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

16For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317" \l "fen-NIV-27948b" \o "See footnote b)] just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317#fen-NIV-27948c)]

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 1:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317#en-NIV-27944) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 7:1, 4; 8:12, 29; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 15:14, 30; 16:14, 17.
2. [Romans 1:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317#en-NIV-27948) Or is from faith to faith
3. [Romans 1:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3a11%e2%80%9317#en-NIV-27948) Hab. 2:4

One of the major reformers of Christianity was the German monk Martin Luther. Before he posted his 95 Theses on the church doors in 1517, protesting the church’s corruption, Luther wrestled with his own salvation. He was tormented by his own sinfulness, God’s judgment, and the way to salvation. While searching for answers, he read the beginning of Paul’s epistle to the Romans, and the gospel finally made sense to him.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Romans 1:16

In Romans, Paul was writing to dear friends and relatives and was excited to announce that he would soon be visiting them. He hoped that his visit would be edifying for them and other believers in Rome (vv. 11–12). He was also eager to preach the gospel to all those who were willing to listen (vv. 14–15). Paul made it abundantly clear that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ (v. 16).

Paul understood that some, especially those living in a hostile environment, might be timid, even fearful, about expressing their faith. However, this was not the case for those in Rome, nor was it the case with Paul. He was adamant about proclaiming that a right standing before God, or righteousness, comes through Sola Fide, faith in Christ alone. Here Paul explains that righteousness is “by faith from first to last” (v. 17).

When Martin Luther came across this theological concept, his life was changed forever. He says, “Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that ‘the just shall live by faith.’ Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn . . . this passage of Paul became to me a gate of heaven.”

**>>** Are you afraid to express your faith? We live in a culture that can be antagonistic toward Christianity. But we are not to be ashamed of the gospel! We are saved by the grace of God, an even greater reason not to be ashamed of the gospel and live rightly!

### **Pray with Us**

What a wonderful example Paul gives us today with his zeal for missions! As we reflect on Romans 1, ask God that we also will be eager to preach the gospel to all people’s groups, everywhere.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/23/20

# Waiting with the Turtle

### Today's Devotional **Read: Psalm 40:1–5 [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+14%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14527a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.**

1I waited patiently for the Lord;  
    he turned to me and heard my cry.  
2He lifted me out of the slimy pit,  
    out of the mud and mire;  
he set my feet on a rock  
    and gave me a firm place to stand.  
3He put a new song in my mouth,  
    a hymn of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear the Lord  
    and put their trust in him.

4Blessed is the one  
    who trusts in the Lord,  
who does not look to the proud,  
    to those who turn aside to false gods.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+14%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14530b)]  
5Many, Lord my God,  
    are the wonders you have done,  
    the things you planned for us.  
None can compare with you;  
    were I to speak and tell of your deeds,  
    they would be too many to declare.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 40:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+14%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#en-NIV-14527) In Hebrew texts 40:1-17 is numbered 40:2-18.
2. [Psalm 40:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+14%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#en-NIV-14530) Or to lies

**Read: Psalm 40:14–17**

14May all who want to take my life  
    be put to shame and confusion;  
may all who desire my ruin  
    be turned back in disgrace.  
15May those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!”  
    be appalled at their own shame.  
16But may all who seek you  
    rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who long for your saving help always say,  
    “The Lord is great!”

17But as for me, I am poor and needy;  
    may the Lord think of me.  
You are my help and my deliverer;  
    you are my God, do not delay.

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. [Psalm 40:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2040.1)

Every fall, when the painted turtle senses winter coming, she dives to the bottom of her pond, burying herself in the muck and mud. She pulls into her shell and goes still: her heart rate slows, almost stopping. Her body temperature drops, staying just above freezing. She stops breathing, and she waits. For six months, she stays buried, and her body releases calcium from her bones into her bloodstream, so that she slowly begins even to lose her shape.

But when the pond thaws, she will float up and breathe again. Her bones will reform, and she will feel the warmth of the sun on her shell.

I think of the painted turtle when I read the psalmist’s description of waiting for God. The psalmist is in a “slimy pit” of “mud and mire,” but God hears him ([Psalm 40:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2040.2)). God lifts him out, and gives him a firm place to stand. God is “my help and my deliverer,” he sings (v. 17).

Perhaps it feels like you’ve been waiting forever for something to change—for a new direction in your career, for a relationship to be restored, for the willpower to break a bad habit, or for deliverance from a difficult situation. The painted turtle and the psalmist are here to remind us to trust in God: He hears, and He will deliver.

By: [Amy Peterson](https://odb.org/author/petersonamy/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What do you need to trust God with? What might that look like today?

God, sometimes it’s hard to wait. But we trust in You and in Your deliverance. Please give us patience, and allow Your greatness and glory to be evident in our lives.

#### **Insight**

[Psalm 40](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2040) both praises God for His help in the past (vv. 1–10) and pleads for His help once more in a new crisis (vv. 11–17). The “pit” and “mud and mire” of verse 2 were images associated with death; for the psalmist, God’s deliverance in the past was experienced as dramatically as being given a new life after death. Although the writer’s sufferings are too many to name (v. 12), so are God’s many wonders (v. 5). God’s long history of faithfulness gives His people a solid foundation for trust and confidence (v. 2).

By: [**Monica La Rose**](https://odb.org/author/monicabrands/)

# God Calling – 1/23/20

# How Power Comes

Learn to shut yourself away in My Presence.

Lord, Thou art our Refuge. Our God, in Thee do we trust. O Master, come and talk with us.

All power is given unto Me. It is Mine to give, Mine to withhold, but even I have to acknowledge that I cannot withhold it from the soul that dwells near Me, because it is then not a gift, but passes insensibly from Me to My disciples.

It is breathed in by the soul who lives in My Presence.

Learn to shut yourself away in My Presence - and then, without speaking, you have those things you desire of Me, Strength - Power - Joy - Riches.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." - Psalm 91:1

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/24/20

# God’s Overpowering Purpose

# God’s Overpowering Purpose

I have appeared unto thee for this purpose. — [Acts 26:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Acts+26%3A16)

The vision Paul had on the road to Damascus was no passing emotion, but a vision that had very clear and emphatic directions for him, and he says, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Our Lord said, in effect, to Paul – Your whole life is to be overmastered by Me; you are to have no end, no aim, and no purpose but Mine. "I have chosen him."

When we are born again we all have visions, if we are spiritual at all, of what Jesus wants us to be, and the great thing is to learn not to be disobedient to the vision, not to say that it cannot be attained. It is not sufficient to know that God has redeemed the world, and to know that the Holy Spirit can make all that Jesus did effectual in me; I must have the basis of a personal relationship to Him. Paul was not given a message or a doctrine to proclaim, he was brought into a vivid, personal, overmastering relationship to Jesus Christ. Verse 16 is immensely commanding – "to make thee a minister and a witness." There is nothing there apart from the personal relationship. Paul was devoted to a Person not to a cause. He was absolutely Jesus Christ’s, he saw nothing else, he lived for nothing else. "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Jesus Christ is always unyielding to my claim to my right to myself. The one essential element in all our Lord’s teaching about discipleship is abandon, no calculation, no trace of self-interest.  
Disciples Indeed

# CCEL – 1/24/20

**The Lord is at hand.**—[PHI. 4:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.5)

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.—He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.—Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

[I Thes. 4:16-18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.4.html" \l "iThess.4.16). -[Rev. 22:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.22.html" \l "Rev.22.20).[II Pet. 3:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.14).[I Thes. 5:22-24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.22).[Jas. 5:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.5.html" \l "Jas.5.8).

“Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler.” [Psalm 91:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.91.html" \l "Ps.91.3)

God delivers his people from the snare of the fowler in two senses. From, and out of. First, he delivers them from the snare—does not let them enter it; and secondly, if they should be caught therein, he delivers them out of it. The first promise is the most precious to some; the second is the best to others.

“He shall deliver thee from the snare.” How? Trouble is often the means whereby God delivers us. God knows that our backsliding will soon end in our destruction, and he in mercy sends the rod. We say, “Lord, why is this?” not knowing that our trouble has been the means of delivering us from far greater evil. Many have been thus saved from ruin by their sorrows and their crosses; these have frightened the birds from the net. At other times, God keeps his people from the snare of the fowler by giving them great spiritual strength, so that when they are tempted to do evil they say, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” But what a blessed thing it is that if the believer shall, in an evil hour, come into the net, yet God will bring him out of it! O backslider, be cast down, but do not despair. Wanderer though thou hast been, hear what thy Redeemer saith—“Return, O backsliding children; I will have mercy upon you.” But you say you cannot return, for you are a captive. Then listen to the promise—“Surely he shall deliver thee out of the snare of the fowler.” Thou shalt yet be brought out of all evil into which thou hast fallen, and though thou shalt never cease to repent of thy ways, yet he that hath loved thee will not cast thee away; he will receive thee, and give thee joy and gladness, that the bones which he has broken may rejoice. No bird of paradise shall die in the fowler’s net.

# Word Live – 1/24/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/24/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/24/20

# I Will Be Content

**Read:** [**Philippians 4:4–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4%3a4%e2%80%9313)

### **Final Exhortations**

4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

### **Thanks for Their Gifts**

10I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Although blind from infancy, Fanny Crosby went on to write more than 9,000 hymns, many of which are still sung today, including: “Blessed Assurance,” “All the Way My Savior Leads Me,” “To God Be the Glory,” and “Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross.” A well known poet, she became friends with many members of Congress and several Presidents. Crosby refused to be bitter because of her disability. At age eight she wrote: Oh, what a happy soul I am, although I cannot see! I am resolved that in this world, Contented I will be.

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. Philippians 4:11

In our text today, Paul shared his own life lessons on contentment. He had learned that it was not dependent on his circumstances (v. 11). Throughout his lifetime Paul had experienced a multitude of setbacks, disappointments, and cruel punishment (v. 12). He has known times of need and times of plenty (v. 12). Nonetheless, he had learned not to let those negative experiences define him. How? He says, “I have learned the secret of being content” (v. 12). In verse 13, he explains how: “I can do all this through Him who gives me strength” (v. 13). By focusing on God and through His strength, Paul was able to overcome.

At the beginning of today’s passage, in verse 4, Paul says, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” This does not mean Paul always felt emotionally happy, but it does mean that he had a deep joy based on his relationship with God. He also spent time in prayer and thanksgiving, letting God know everything that was on his heart (vv. 6–7). Here we can learn one of the most valuable lessons in life: Be content because you can do anything through Christ who gives you strength.

**>>** Some of our readers, more than 4,000 of you, are serving time in prison. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we want to join in prayer for you today. We pray that you will feel God’s presence and His strength. May God use this time in your life to shape you for His glory.

### **Pray with Us**

Ask God to show you what true contentment looks like and how to be content in your specific circumstances. May we remember to lift up one another in prayer and help those going through trials and hardships.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/24/20

# No Line to Love

 **Read: Isaiah 46:3–10**

3“Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob,  
    all the remnant of the people of Israel,  
you whom I have upheld since your birth,  
    and have carried since you were born.  
4Even to your old age and gray hairs  
    I am he, I am he who will sustain you.  
I have made you and I will carry you;  
    I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

5“With whom will you compare me or count me equal?  
    To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?  
6Some pour out gold from their bags  
    and weigh out silver on the scales;  
they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god,  
    and they bow down and worship it.  
7They lift it to their shoulders and carry it;  
    they set it up in its place, and there it stands.  
    From that spot it cannot move.  
Even though someone cries out to it, it cannot answer;  
    it cannot save them from their troubles.

8“Remember this, keep it in mind,  
    take it to heart, you rebels.  
9Remember the former things, those of long ago;  
    I am God, and there is no other;  
    I am God, and there is none like me.  
10I make known the end from the beginning,  
    from ancient times, what is still to come.  
I say, ‘My purpose will stand,  
    and I will do all that I please.’

I have made you and I will carry you. [Isaiah 46:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2046.4)

Sometimes when my Labrador retriever wants attention, he’ll take something of mine and parade it in front of me. One morning as I was writing at the desk with my back turned, Max snatched my wallet and ran off. But realizing I hadn’t seen him do it, he returned and nudged me with his nose—wallet in mouth, eyes dancing, tail wagging, taunting me to play.

Max’s antics made me laugh, but they also reminded me of my limitations when it comes to being attentive to others. So often I’ve intended to spend time with family or friends, but other things occupy my time and awareness; and before I know it the day slips away and love is left undone.

How comforting to know that our heavenly Father is so great that He’s able to attend to each of us in the most intimate ways—even sustaining every breath in our lungs for as long as we live. He promises His people, “Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you” ([Isaiah 46:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2046.4)).

God always has time for us. He understands every detail of our circumstances—no matter how complex or difficult—and is there whenever we call on Him in prayer. We never have to wait in line for our Savior’s unlimited love.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

In what ways does God take care of your daily needs? How can you share His love with others?

You always have time for me, Jesus. Please help me to live every moment for You!

#### **Insight**

In [Isaiah 46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2046), God contrasts Himself to idols (“burdensome” gods, v. 1) made by man. They not only are incapable of rescuing their worshipers but they themselves have to be carried to safety (vv. 1–2, 6–7). These gods included Bel (a variant of Baal), the principal god of the Babylonians, and his son Nebo. In contrast, God created us, carries us, and sustains us (v. 4). He alone is the one true God: “I am God, and there is no other” (v. 9). The Bible repeatedly points to this truth ([Deuteronomy 4:39](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%204.39); [2 Samuel 7:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%207.22); [Nehemiah 9:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Neh%209.6); [Isaiah 44:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2044.6)).

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

# God Calling – 1/24/20

# Your Great Reward

"I am your God. Your Great Reward. Yours to look up and say, 'All is Well.'"

You pray for Faith, and you are told to do so. But I make provision in the House of My Abiding for those who turn towards Me and yet have weak knees and hearts that faint. Be not afraid. I am your God. Your Great Reward. Yours to look up and say, "All is well."

I am your Guide. Do not want to see the road ahead. Go just one step at a time. I rarely grant the long vista to My disciples, especially in personal affairs, for one step at a time is the best way to cultivate Faith.

You are in uncharted waters. But the Lord of all Seas is with you, the Controller of all Storms is with you. Sing with Joy. You follow the Lord of Limitations, as well as the God in whose service is perfect freedom.

He, the God of the Universe, confined Himself within the narrow limits of a Baby-form and, in growing Boyhood, and young Manhood, submitted to your human limitations, and you have to learn that your vision and power, boundless as far as spiritual things are concerned, must in temporal affairs submit to limitations, too.

But I am with you. It was when the disciples gave up effort after a night of fruitless fishing, that I came, and the nets broke with the overabundance of supply.

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." - John 15:5

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/25/20

# Leave Room For God

# Leave Room for God

But when it pleased God. . . — [Galatians 1:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Galatians+1%3A15)

As workers for God we have to learn to make room for God – to give God "elbow room." We calculate and estimate, and say that this and that will happen, and we forget to make room for God to come in as He chooses. Would we be surprised if God came into our meeting or into our preaching in a way we had never looked for Him to come? Do not look for God to come in any particular way, but look for Him. That is the way to make room for Him. Expect Him to come, but do not expect Him only in a certain way. However much we may know God, the great lesson to learn is that at any minute He may break in. We are apt to over look this element of surprise, yet God never works in any other way. All of a sudden God meets the life – "When it was the good pleasure of God. . ."

Keep your life so constant in its contact with God that His surprising power may break out on the right hand and on the left. Always be in a state of expectancy, and see that you leave room for God to come in as He likes.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Much of the misery in our Christian life comes not because the devil tackles us, but because we have never understood the simple laws of our make-up. We have to treat the body as the servant of Jesus Christ: when the body says “Sit,” and He says “Go,” go! When the body says “Eat,” and He says “Fast,” fast! When the body says “Yawn,” and He says “Pray,” pray! Biblical Ethics, 107 R

# CCEL – 1/25/20

**The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.**—[ROM. 3:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.3.html" \l "Rom.3.22)

He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.—Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.—Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.—Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

[II Cor. 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.21). -[Gal. 3:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.3.html" \l "Gal.3.13). -[I Cor. 1:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.30). -[Tit. 3:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.3.html" \l "Titus.3.5).[Phi. 3:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.8).

“I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us.” [Isaiah 63:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.63.html" \l "Isa.63.7)

And canst thou not do this? Are there no mercies which thou hast experienced? What, though thou art gloomy now, canst thou forget that blessed hour when Jesus met thee, and said, “Come unto me”? Canst thou not remember that rapturous moment when he snapped thy fetters, dashed thy chains to the earth, and said, “I came to break thy bonds and set thee free”? Or if the love of thine espousals be forgotten, there must surely be some precious milestone along the road of life not quite grown over with moss, on which thou canst read a happy memorial of his mercy towards thee? What, didst thou never have a sickness like that which thou art suffering now, and did he not restore thee? Wert thou never poor before, and did he not supply thy wants? Wast thou never in straits before, and did he not deliver thee? Arise, go to the river of thine experience, and pull up a few bulrushes, and plait them into an ark, wherein thine infant—faith—may float safely on the stream. Forget not what thy God has done for thee; turn over the book of thy remembrance, and consider the days of old. Canst thou not remember the hill Mizar? Did the Lord never meet with thee at Hermon? Hast thou never climbed the Delectable Mountains? Hast thou never been helped in time of need? Nay, I know thou hast. Go back, then, a little way to the choice mercies of yesterday, and though all may be dark now, light up the lamps of the past, they shall glitter through the darkness, and thou shalt trust in the Lord till the day break and the shadows flee away. “Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses, for they have been ever of old.”

# Word Live – 1/25/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/25/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/25/20

# Blood-Bought Grace

**Read:** [**Romans 8:28–39**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339)

28And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28145a)] have been called according to his purpose. 29For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

### **More Than Conquerors**

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

“For your sake we face death all day long;  
    we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339#fen-NIV-28153b)]

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339" \l "fen-NIV-28155c" \o "See footnote c)] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 8:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%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
2. [Romans 8:36](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28153) Psalm 44:22
3. [Romans 8:38](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3a28%e2%80%9339#en-NIV-28155) Or nor heavenly rulers

John Piper, author, speaker, and pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, is known for his passion and zeal. Recently, he spoke on his favorite verse in the Bible, Romans 8:32. “When all is said and done, we owe every good in our lives to blood- bought grace,” Piper says. “The logic of that verse is the most beautiful logic in the universe.” He goes on to say that since God did not spare even His own Son, “He will most certainly give us absolutely everything we need to get to heaven and glorify His name.”

He 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? Romans 8:32

Verse 32 comes as further explanation to the believers in Rome that all things work together for good (v. 28). This is not just positive thinking. Paul bases this declaration on the solid fact that God is ultimately sovereign (vv. 28–31). In verse 32, Paul describes how God sacrificially and selflessly offered His own Son, Jesus, to die for us. He then asks a series of five rhetorical questions (vv. 31–34). Paul is pushing his point, digging into the character of God, and wanting it to sink deeply into the hearts of his readers: Our God is the final judge (v. 33) and those who believe in Jesus will not be condemned because Christ Himself is interceding on our behalf (v. 34).

Nothing in heaven or on earth can separate God’s powerful love from us (vv. 35–39)! Our justification through faith is a direct result of God not sparing His own Son, but sacrificing Him to pay our debt (v. 32). Piper concludes, “Without the cross, nothing, nothing good for us. Only hell. If you didn’t wake up in hell this morning, it was a good day. It was because He did not spare His own Son.”

**>>** Reflecting on your own life, what were some difficult events that God ultimately used for good? Perhaps it was a letter of rejection, a failed marriage, or a death of a loved one. Even in the midst of our difficulties God is still for us (v. 31). Remember, He is in your corner because He freely gave up His Son for you.

### **Pray with Us**

Looking at your life, are you able to thank God for the suffering and hardships in your past? The Word of God says that all things (not only good things) come together for good for those who love God. Do you believe it?

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/25/20

# The Greatest Mystery

 **Read: Colossians 1:15–22**

### **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://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15%E2%80%9322+&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—

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Colossians 1:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15%E2%80%9322+&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)

Before I came to faith in Jesus, I’d heard the gospel preached but wrestled with His identity. How could He offer forgiveness for my sins when the Bible says only God can forgive sins? I discovered I wasn’t alone in my struggles after reading J. I. Packer’s Knowing God. Packer suggests that for many unbelievers the “really staggering Christian claim is that Jesus of Nazareth was God made man . . . as truly and fully divine as He was human.” Yet this is the truth that makes salvation possible.

When the apostle Paul refers to Christ as “the image of the invisible God,” he’s saying Jesus is completely and perfectly God—Creator and Sustainer of all things in heaven and earth‒but also fully human ([Colossians 1:15–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15%E2%80%9317)). Because of this truth, we can be confident that through Christ’s death and resurrection, He’s not only carried the consequences for our sins but has also redeemed human nature, so that we—and all of creation—can be reconciled to God (vv. 20–22).

In an amazing, initiating act of love, God the Father reveals Himself in and through Scripture by the power of God the Holy Spirit and through the life of God the Son. Those who believe in Jesus are saved because He is Emmanuel—God with us. Hallelujah!

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you wrestled with your understanding of Jesus? What was the result?

Loving God, thank You for revealing Yourself and reconciling us through Jesus.

#### **Insight**

Paul wrote Colossians to refute false teachings. He doesn’t specifically state what these heresies were other than they pertained to who Christ is. Paul sets forth the deity of Jesus (1:15–16), His superiority and authority (vv. 17–23), and His sufficiency for salvation and spiritual growth (2:6–15). Probably no passage in the New Testament contains more concentrated doctrine about Christ than [Colossians 1:15–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.15%E2%80%9323). Paul affirmed four things about His identity and authority: He’s God (v. 15); He’s the Creator and Sustainer of all creation (vv. 16–17); He’s the Head of the church, His new creation (v. 18); and He’s our Redeemer and Savior (vv. 19–23).

# God Calling – 1/25/20

# The Way of Happiness

"Complete surrender of every moment to God is the foundation of happiness."

Complete surrender of every moment to God is the foundation of happiness, the superstructure is the joy of Communion with Him. And that is, for each, the place, the mansion, I went to prepare for you.

My followers have misunderstood that, and looked too often upon that promise as referring only to an After-Life, and too often - far too often - upon this life as a something to be struggled through in order to get the reward and the joy of the next.

Seek to carry out all I say, and such understanding, insight, vision, and joy will be yours as shall pass indeed all understanding. The plans of God are very wonderful - beyond your highest hopes.

Cling to thoughts of protection, safety, guidance.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." - Romans 12:1

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/26/20

# Look Again And Consecrate

If God so clothe the grass of the field . . . shall He not much more clothe you? — [Matthew 6:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A30)

A simple statement of Jesus is always a puzzle to us if we are not simple. How are we going to be simple with the simplicity of Jesus? By receiving His Spirit, recognizing and relying on Him, obeying Him as He brings the word of God, and life will become amazingly simple. "Consider," says Jesus, "how much more your Father Who clothes the grass of the field will clothe you, if you keep your relationship right with Him." Every time we have gone back in spiritual communion it has been because we have impertinently known better than Jesus Christ. We have allowed the cares of the world to come in, and have forgotten the "much more" of our Heavenly Father.

"Behold the fowls of the air" – their main aim is to obey the principle of life that is in them and God looks after them. Jesus says that if you are rightly related to Him and obey His Spirit that is in you, God will look after your ‘feathers.’

"Consider the lilies of the field" – they grow where they are put. Many of us refuse to grow where we are put, consequently we take root nowhere. Jesus says that if we obey the life God has given us, He will look after all the other things. Has Jesus Christ told us a lie? If we are not experiencing the "much more," it is because we are not obeying the life God has given us, we are taken up with confusing considerations. How much time have we taken up worrying God with questions when we should have been absolutely free to concentrate on His work? Consecration means the continual separating of myself to one particular thing. We cannot consecrate once and for all. Am I continually separating myself to consider God every day of my life?

**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 – 1/26/20

**Let us go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.**—[HEB. 13:13,14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.13)

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.—As ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.—Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

[I Pet. 4:12.13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.12). -[II Cor. 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.1.html" \l "iiCor.1.7).[I Pet. 4:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.14).[Acts 5:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.5.html" \l "Acts.5.41). -[Heb. 11:25,26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.11.html" \l "Heb.11.25).

“Your heavenly Father.” [Matthew 6:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.26)

God’s people are doubly his children, they are his offspring by creation, and they are his sons by adoption in Christ. Hence they are privileged to call him, “Our Father which art in heaven.” Father! Oh, what precious word is that. Here is authority: “If I be a Father, where is mine honour?” If ye be sons, where is your obedience? Here is affection mingled with authority; an authority which does not provoke rebellion; an obedience demanded which is most cheerfully rendered—which would not be withheld even if it might. The obedience which God’s children yield to him must be loving obedience. Do not go about the service of God as slaves to their taskmaster’s toil, but run in the way of his commands because it is your Father's way. Yield your bodies as instruments of righteousness, because righteousness is your Father’s will, and his will should be the will of his child. Father!—Here is a kingly attribute so sweetly veiled in love, that the King’s crown is forgotten in the King’s face, and his sceptre becomes, not a rod of iron, but a silver sceptre of mercy—the sceptre indeed seems to be forgotten in the tender hand of him who wields it. Father!—Here is honour and love. How great is a Father’s love to his children! That which friendship cannot do, and mere benevolence will not attempt, a father’s heart and hand must do for his sons. They are his offspring, he must bless them; they are his children, he must show himself strong in their defence. If an earthly father watches over his children with unceasing love and care, how much more does our heavenly Father? Abba, Father! He who can say this, hath uttered better music than cherubim or seraphim can reach. There is heaven in the depth of that word—Father! There is all I can ask; all my necessities can demand; all my wishes can desire. I have all in all to all eternity when I can say, “Father.”

# Word Live – 1/26/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/26/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/26/20

# Be a Difference-Maker

**Read:** [**John 16:25–33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16%3a25%e2%80%9333)

25“Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

29Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. 30Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

31“Do you now believe?” Jesus replied. 32“A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Moody’s seventh president, Joseph M. Stowell, received plenty of attention growing up as a pastor’s kid. However, he admits it was not always the good kind of notoriety. Congregants expected the young Stowell to stand up straight and be an example. The young Joe would often get into mischief. He often wished blending in would have been easy, but as he began to make his faith his own he realized that the Lord had called him to be different in another way.

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33

In John’s gospel, Jesus talked about being different in a world that seeks conformity. He had just finished a lengthy discourse with His closest friends about His imminent departure. They did not fully grasp it yet, but His ministry on earth was coming to an end. He had been speaking in figurative language, but in John 16:25–28 He began to address their misconceptions. It wasn’t until then that the disciples had begun to believe that Jesus came from God (v. 30).

Jesus warned them that a time would come when their belief in Him as the true Messiah and Redeemer would be tested (vv. 31–32). However, Jesus gave them the hope that He knew what they needed, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (v. 33). Stowell comments, “Following Christ has never been about ‘blending in.’ Following Him means to be like Him, to respond to life and relate to people the way He did. . . . You will no doubt have opportunities to be different—to go against the flow. Don’t be intimidated. Make a difference by daring to be different for Jesus.” Strive to be a Jesus-follower-difference-maker.

**>>** Did you notice the Bible doesn’t say in this world you may have trouble? It says you will have trouble. Being a difference-maker is hard work. It can be risky and uncomfortable. It may cost you friendships, relationships, or a job. But rest assured that Jesus has overcome the world and will help you become a difference maker for Him.

### **Pray with Us**

Ken Heulitt, chief financial officer, on behalf of us all at Moody, would like to thank you, our faithful friends, for your prayer and financial partnership with Moody’s ministries. He welcomes your prayers for the continued financial health of MBI.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/26/20

# Guiding Children to God

 **Read: 2 Timothy 3:10–15**

### **A Final Charge to Timothy**

10You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 12In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Continue in what you have learned . . . how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures. [2 Timothy 3:14–15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.14%E2%80%9315)

An outspoken atheist believes it’s immoral for parents to teach their children religion as though it were actually true. He even claims that parents who pass along their faith to their children are committing child abuse. Though these views are extreme, I do hear from parents who are hesitant to boldly encourage their children toward faith. While most of us readily hope to influence our children with our view of politics or nutrition or sports, for some reason some of us treat our convictions about God differently.

In contrast, Paul wrote of how Timothy had been taught “from infancy . . . the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” ([2 Timothy 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.15)). Timothy didn’t arrive at faith as an adult through the power of his own, unaided reason. Rather, his mother nurtured his heart toward God; then he continued in what he had learned (v. 14). If God is life, the source of true wisdom, then it’s vital for us to tenderly cultivate a love for God in our families.

There are many belief systems that are influencing our children. TV shows, movies, music, teachers, friends, the media—each of these carry assumptions (either obvious or under the radar) about faith that exert real influence. May we choose not to be silent. The beauty and grace we’ve experienced compels us to guide our children toward God.

By: [Winn Collier](https://odb.org/author/wcollier/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Reflect on the myriad influences and messages children (or all of us) receive in a given day. How do these forces shape you and those you love?

Dear Father, thank You for the joy and privilege to gracefully nurture children’s hearts toward You.

#### **Insight**

Paul loves Timothy like a son ([2 Timothy 1:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%201.2)) and wants him to grow strong in a love and faith worth living and dying for (2:1–3). But while referring often in his letter to themes of suffering and harassment (1:8–9, 11–12, 15; 2:8–10; 3:10–12; 4:17–18), the apostle didn’t have a persecution complex. In fact, when he tells Timothy that all who want to live in the spirit and reverence of Jesus will experience opposition ([2 Timothy 3:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.12)), he does so in the context of warning that those who live only for themselves will be doing greater harm to themselves and one another in the long run (vv. 1–9, 13). Paul reminded Timothy that that those who opposed them weren’t the real enemy. Without realizing it, such persons had been snared by the devil to distract from the goodness and grace of Christ (2:22–26; [Ephesians 6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%206.12)).

By: [**Mart DeHaan**](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

# God Calling – 1/26/20

# Keep Calm

"Keep your Spirit-Life calm and unruffled."

Keep your Spirit-Life calm and unruffled. Nothing else matters. Leave all to Me. This is your great task, to get calm in My Presence, not to let one ruffled feeling stay for one moment. Years of blessing may be checked in one moment by that.

No matter who frets you or what, yours is the task to stop all else until absolute calm comes. Any block means My Power diverted into other channels.

Pour forth - pour forth - pour forth - I cannot bless a life that does not act as a channel. My Spirit brooks no stagnation, not even in rest. Its Power must flow on. Pass on everything, every blessing. Abide in Me.

See how many you can bless each day. Dwell much in My Presence.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." - Proverbs 4:23

# My Utmost for His Highest – 1/27/20

# Look Again And Think

Take no thought for your life. — [Matthew 6:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A25)

A warning which needs to be reiterated is that the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, will choke all that God puts in. We are never free from the recurring tides of this encroachment. If it does not come on the line of clothes and food, it will come on the line of money or lack of money; of friends or lack of friends; or on the line of difficult circumstances. It is one steady encroachment all the time, and unless we allow the Spirit of God to raise up the standard against it, these things will come in like a flood.

"Take no thought for your life." "Be careful about one thing only," says our Lord – "your relationship to Me." Common sense shouts loud and says – "That is absurd, I must consider how I am going to live, I must consider what I am going to eat and drink." Jesus says you must not. Beware of allowing the thought that this statement is made by One Who does not understand our particular circumstances. Jesus Christ knows our circumstances better than we do, and He says we must not think about these things so as to make them the one concern of our life. Whenever there is competition, be sure that you put your relationship to God first.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How much evil has begun to threaten you to-day? What kind of mean little imps have been looking in and saying – Now what are you going to do next month – this summer? "Be anxious for nothing," Jesus says. Look again and think. Keep your mind on the "much more" of your heavenly Father.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Beware of bartering the Word of God for a more suitable conception of your own.  Disciples Indeed, 386 R

# CCEL – 1/27/20

**Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins: and in him is no sin.**—[I JOHN 3:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.5)

God, . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.—He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.—The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

[Heb. 1:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.1.html" \l "Heb.1.13). -[II Cor. 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html#iiCor.5.21).[I Pet. 1:17-20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.17). -[II Cor. 5:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.14).

“And of his fulness have all we received.” [John 1:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.16)

These words tell us that there is a fulness in Christ. There is a fulness of essential Deity, for “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead.” There is a fulness of perfect manhood, for in him, bodily, that Godhead was revealed. There is a fulness of atoning efficacy in his blood, for “the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” There is a fulness of justifying righteousness in his life, for “there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” There is a fulness of divine prevalence in his plea, for “He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” There is a fulness of victory in his death, for through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. There is a fulness of efficacy in his resurrection from the dead, for by it “we are begotten again unto a lively hope.” There is a fulness of triumph in his ascension, for “when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.” There is a fulness of blessings of every sort and shape; a fulness of grace to pardon, of grace to regenerate, of grace to sanctify, of grace to preserve, and of grace to perfect. There is a fulness at all times; a fulness of comfort in affliction; a fulness of guidance in prosperity. A fulness of every divine attribute, of wisdom, of power, of love; a fulness which it were impossible to survey, much less to explore. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Oh, what a fulness must this be of which all receive! Fulness, indeed, must there be when the stream is always flowing, and yet the well springs up as free, as rich, as full as ever. Come, believer, and get all thy need supplied; ask largely, and thou shalt receive largely, for this “fulness” is inexhaustible, and is treasured up where all the needy may reach it, even in Jesus, Immanuel—God with us.

# Word Live – 1/27/20

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

# Scripture Union – 1/27/20

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

# Today in the Word – 1/27/20

# Glorifying God No Matter What

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 9:19–27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+9%3a19%e2%80%9327)

### **Paul’s Use of His Freedom**

19Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. 22To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

### **The Need for Self-Discipline**

24Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Through her ministry, Joni & Friends, Joni Eareckson Tada shares the hope of the gospel and gives practical help to people impacted by disability. Her passion comes from personal experience. In 1967, at age 17, Joni took a dive that left her a quadriplegic. Her story became a movie and then a ministry. In 2018, Joni announced that the cancer she thought had gone into remission had returned. During this challenging and exhausting season, Joni said God’s Word helped her thrive. In a recent interview she referred to First Corinthians 9:25 as her inspiration to keep fighting for the eternal prize.

They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 1 Corinthians 9:25

In today’s text, Paul was explaining his passion for ministry to the believers in Corinth. He was committed to proclaiming the gospel as often as he was able. He summed up his approach by stating, “I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some” (v. 22). Of course, there were theological boundaries that Paul would apply to this statement, but he would always go the extra mile to reach people with hope found in Christ.

Not surprisingly, in verses 24–27, Paul used sports metaphors to make his point. Runners and boxers go “into strict training” (v. 25) to win rewards that will eventually perish and be forgotten. In the original language this phrase referred to athletes who practiced chastity and restraint in diet. Paul had chosen a similar approach to self-discipline and exhibited a steadfast commitment to spreading the gospel. Paul wasn’t striving for a temporary, reward, but for a crown that would last for eternity! As we support others through the battles in their lives, remember we are doing so not for earthly crowns but for heavenly rewards that will last for eternity.

**>>** If you, or someone you know, has been impacted by cancer or another illness, be encouraged by Paul’s words. Pray today for those in your life who are facing this fight.

### **Pray with Us**

The Alumni Association works to stay connected with former students. Will you pray for their staff as they nurture Moody’s relationship with alumni through the Moody Alumni & Friends magazine, class reunions, and Founder’s Week?

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 1/27/20

# Friendship Bench

 **Read: Exodus 33:9–11**

9As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses. 10Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to their tent. 11The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent.

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. [Exodus 33:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2033.11)

In the African country of Zimbabwe, war trauma and high unemployment can leave people in despair—until they find hope on a “friendship bench.” Hopeless people can go there to talk with trained “grandmothers”—elderly women taught to listen to people struggling with depression, known in that nation’s Shona language as kufungisisa, or “thinking too much.”

The Friendship Bench Project is being launched in other places, including Zanzibar, London, and New York City. “We were thrilled to bits with the results,” said one London researcher. A New York counselor agreed. “Before you know it, you’re not on a bench, you’re just inside a warm conversation with someone who cares.”

The project evokes the warmth and wonder of talking with our Almighty God. Moses put up not a bench but a tent to commune with God, calling it the tent of meeting. There, “the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend” ([Exodus 33:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2033.11)). Joshua, his assistant, wouldn’t even leave the tent, perhaps because he so valued his time with God (v. 11).

Today we no longer need a tent of meeting. Jesus has brought the Father near. As He told His disciples, “I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you” ([John 15:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.15)). Yes, our God awaits us. He’s our heart’s wisest helper, our understanding Friend. Talk with Him now.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What worries consume your thoughts today? As you talk to God about these concerns, what good thoughts about Him can you focus on instead?

Dear God, thank You for encouraging our hearts with noble thoughts of You. When we’re sick with worry, point our minds back to You.

#### **Insight**

In [Exodus 25:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2025.8), God gave Moses specific instructions for building a “tabernacle” or place of worship: “Have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.” In obedience to this command, Moses directed the building of a very elaborate, portable, tent-like structure (chs. 25–31). This dwelling was often referred to as the “tent of meeting” (27:21; 29:44; 40:2).

While God was giving Moses instructions on how to build the tabernacle, the children of Israel sinned by worshiping a golden calf (ch. 32). Now under God’s judgment (v. 35), they faced the threat of God not journeying with them (33:3). So Moses set up a “tent of meeting” outside the camp (vv. 7–11), which provided a degree of separation between God and His rebellious people. There Moses conducted God’s business with His people. This tent of meeting was a separate structure from the tabernacle described in chapters 25–31, which wasn’t completed until later (see 39:32).

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

# God Calling – 1/27/20

# Height of the Storm

"It is a part of My method to wait till the storm is at its full violence."

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." - John 6:68

I am with you both. Go forward unafraid. Health and strength, peace and happiness and joy - they are all My gifts. Yours for the asking. In the spiritual (as in the material) world there is no empty space, and as self and fears and worries depart out of your lives, it follows that the things of the Spirit, that you crave so, rush in to take their places. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. What a wonderful cycle, because ye are God's.

Be not afraid. Fear not. It is to the drowning man the Rescuer comes. To the brave swimmer who can fare well alone He comes not. And no rush of Joy can be like that of a man towards his Rescuer.

It is a part of My method to wait till the storm is at its full violence. So did I with My disciples on the Lake. I could have bidden the first angry wave be calm, the first gust of wind be still, but what a lesson unlearned? What a sense of tender nearness of refuge and safety would have been lost.

Remember this - My disciples thought that in sleep I had forgotten them. Remember how mistaken they were. Gain strength and confidence and joyful dependence and anticipation from that.

Never fear. Joy is yours, and the radiant joy of the rescued shall be yours.

"Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths." - Psalm 25:4