# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/28/20

# God’s Purpose or Mine?



He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side… —[Mark 6:45](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+6%3A45)

We tend to think that if Jesus Christ compels us to do something and we are obedient to Him, He will lead us to great success. We should never have the thought that our dreams of success are God’s purpose for us. In fact, His purpose may be exactly the opposite. We have the idea that God is leading us toward a particular end or a desired goal, but He is not. The question of whether or not we arrive at a particular goal is of little importance, and reaching it becomes merely an episode along the way. What we see as only the process of reaching a particular end, God sees as the goal itself.

What is my vision of God’s purpose for me? Whatever it may be, His purpose is for me to depend on Him and on His power now. If I can stay calm, faithful, and unconfused while in the middle of the turmoil of life, the goal of the purpose of God is being accomplished in me. God is not working toward a particular finish— His purpose is the process itself. What He desires for me is that I see “Him walking on the sea” with no shore, no success, nor goal in sight, but simply having the absolute certainty that everything is all right because I see “Him walking on the sea” ([Mark 6:49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6:49)). It is the process, not the outcome, that is glorifying to God.

God’s training is for now, not later. His purpose is for this very minute, not for sometime in the future. We have nothing to do with what will follow our obedience, and we are wrong to concern ourselves with it. What people call preparation, God sees as the goal itself.

God’s purpose is to enable me to see that He can walk on the storms of my life right now. If we have a further goal in mind, we are not paying enough attention to the present time. However, if we realize that moment-by-moment obedience is the goal, then each moment as it comes is precious.

**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 – 7/28/20

**Walk in love.**—[EPH. 5:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.2)

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.—Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.—Love covereth all sins.

When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.—Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again.—Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.—Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrar-wise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.—If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.—Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

[John 13:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.13.html" \l "John.13.34). -[I Pet. 4:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.8). -[Prov. 10:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.10.html" \l "Prov.10.12).[Mark 11:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.11.html" \l "Mark.11.25). -[Luke 6:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.6.html" \l "Luke.6.35). -[Prov. 24:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.24.html" \l "Prov.24.17). -[I Pet. 3:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.3.html" \l "iPet.3.9). -[Rom. 12:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.18). -[Eph. 4:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.32).[I John 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.18).

“So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee.” **[Psalm 73:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.73.html" \l "Ps.73.22)**

Remember this is the confession of the man after God’s own heart; and in telling us his inner life, he writes, “So foolish was I, and ignorant.” The word “foolish,” here, means more than it signifies in ordinary language. David, in a former verse of the Psalm, writes, “I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked,” which shows that the folly he intended had sin in it. He puts himself down as being thus “foolish,” and adds a word which is to give intensity to it; “so foolish was I.” How foolish he could not tell. It was a sinful folly, a folly which was not to be excused by frailty, but to be condemned because of its perverseness and wilful ignorance, for he had been envious of the present prosperity of the ungodly, forgetful of the dreadful end awaiting all such. And are we better than David that we should call ourselves wise! Do we profess that we have attained perfection, or to have been so chastened that the rod has taken all our wilfulness out of us? Ah, this were pride indeed! If David was foolish, how foolish should we be in our own esteem if we could but see ourselves! Look back, believer: think of your doubting God when he has been so faithful to you—think of your foolish outcry of “Not so, my Father,” when he crossed his hands in affliction to give you the larger blessing; think of the many times when you have read his providences in the dark, misinterpreted his dispensations, and groaned out, “All these things are against me,” when they are all working together for your good! Think how often you have chosen sin because of its pleasure, when indeed, that pleasure was a root of bitterness to you! Surely if we know our own heart we must plead guilty to the indictment of a sinful folly; and conscious of this “foolishness,” we must make David’s consequent resolve our own—“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.”

# Word Live – 7/28/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/28/20

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

# Today in the Word – 7/28/20

# Good and Godly Leaders

**Read:** [**Joshua 23**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+23)

### Joshua’s Farewell to the Leaders

23 After a long time had passed and the Lord had given Israel rest from all their enemies around them, Joshua, by then a very old man, 2summoned all Israel—their elders, leaders, judges and officials—and said to them: “I am very old. 3You yourselves have seen everything the Lord your God has done to all these nations for your sake; it was the Lord your God who fought for you. 4Remember how I have allotted as an inheritance for your tribes all the land of the nations that remain—the nations I conquered—between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. 5The Lord your God himself will push them out for your sake. He will drive them out before you, and you will take possession of their land, as the Lord your God promised you.

6“Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left. 7Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them. 8But you are to hold fast to the Lord your God, as you have until now.

9“The Lord has driven out before you great and powerful nations; to this day no one has been able to withstand you. 10One of you routs a thousand, because the Lord your God fights for you, just as he promised. 11So be very careful to love the Lord your God.

12“But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them, 13then you may be sure that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the Lord your God has given you.

14“Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed. 15But just as all the good things the Lord your God has promised you have come to you, so he will bring on you all the evil things he has threatened, until the Lord your God has destroyed you from this good land he has given you. 16If you violate the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the Lord’s anger will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you.”

Our second child was born the day Billy Graham died. I still remember being in the hospital room as the breaking news of Graham’s death was reported. Understandably, I only heard a small portion of the tributes that poured in on that day, but there was no doubt that the famed evangelist lived a life worth remembering. He was faithful to God until the end.

So be very careful to love the Lord your God. Joshua 23:11

In our text today, Joshua was approaching his personal finish line. Before his time on earth was over, he reminded the people that good leaders are first and foremost godly leaders. First, he gave God all the credit for how far they had come (v. 3). Then, he reminded the people that the Lord had fulfilled all His promises by fighting for them and giving them their inheritance (vv. 4–5).

The rest of the passage contains well-learned lessons on leadership. A godly leader is to be in God’s Word and do what it says. It does little good if one knows what the commandments are but then turns from them (vv. 6, 16). Joshua also warned leaders not to associate with pagan worshipers. As a young nation, he wanted his followers to remain steadfast in their commitment to the Lord and not be persuaded by outside teachings (vv. 7–8, 12–13).

As Joshua reflected on his years of walking with the Lord, the last lesson he taught the people of Israel was that remaining faithful to God is a lifelong pursuit. It is easy to give in to the lies of the enemy. But good leaders are also godly leaders. They are not just godly for a moment, but their entire lives are led by God and His Word.

**Apply the Word**

Whether you realize it or not, you are a leader! In your business, your neighborhood, or your family, you have the potential to influence those around you. Knowingly or unknowingly people watch you. They see how you conduct yourself. Make it your goal to be a godly leader.

### Pray with Us

As we read Joshua’s instructions on godly leadership today, it’s a good time to review the lessons we’ve learned from Joshua’s quest. Ask the Lord to show you how to be a godly leader.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/28/20

# Trusting God in Times of Sorrow

 **Read:** [**2 Timothy 1:6–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%201.6%E2%80%9312)

### Appeal for Loyalty to Paul and the Gospel

6For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. 8So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. 9He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

I know whom I have believed. [2 Timothy 1:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%201.12)

When a man known as “Papa John” learned he had terminal cancer, he and his wife, Carol, sensed God calling them to share their illness journey online. Believing that God would minister through their vulnerability, they posted their moments of joy and their sorrow and pain for two years.

When Carol wrote that her husband “went into the outstretched arms of Jesus,” hundreds of people responded, with many thanking Carol for their openness. One person remarked that hearing about dying from a Christian point of view was healthy, for “we all have to die” someday. Another said that although she’d never met the couple personally, she couldn’t express how much encouragement she’d received through their witness of trusting God.

Although Papa John sometimes felt excruciating pain, he and Carol shared their story so they could demonstrate how God upheld them. They knew their testimony would bear fruit for God, echoing what Paul wrote to Timothy when he suffered: “I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day” ([2 Timothy 1:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%201.12)).

God can use even the death of a loved one to strengthen our faith in Him (and the faith of others) through the grace we receive in Christ Jesus (v. 9). If you’re experiencing anguish and difficulty, know that He can bring comfort and peace.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How have you experienced God’s joy even in times of deep sorrow? How do you explain this? How could you share what you learned with others?

Heavenly Father, fan into flame the gift of faith in me, that I might share with love and power my testimony of how You work in my life.

#### Insight

Timothy was a young pastor whom Paul had left in charge of the church in Ephesus. Paul encouraged him not to let his youth hinder him in his ministry ([1 Timothy 4:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%204.12)). Although Paul wasn’t ashamed of being a prisoner for the sake of Christ, it seems that Timothy struggled with fear and was a little embarrassed that his mentor was in prison ([2 Timothy 1:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%201.8), [12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Timothy%201.12)). For this reason, Paul invited Timothy to suffer with him for the sake of the gospel. For it was by God’s power that they were permitted to suffer for Christ (v. 8).

# God Calling – 7/28/20

# Mistakes

I am your Shield. No buffets of the world can harm you. Feel that between you and all scorn and indignity is a strong shield. Practice feeling this until nothing has the power to spoil the inward peace. Then indeed a marvelous victory shall be won.

You wonder sometimes why you are permitted to make mistakes in your choice when you sought so truly to do My Will in the matter.

To that I say it was no mistake.... All your lessons cannot be learned without difficulty, and this was needed to teach you a lesson. Not to him who walks on, with no obstacles in his way, but to him that overcometh is the promise given.

So to attain peace quickly in your surroundings, as well as in your hearts, learn your lesson quickly. And the overcoming is never the overcoming of the one who troubled you, but the overcoming of the weaknesses and wrong in your own nature, aroused by such a one.

No lower standard than My Standard shall be yours. "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying: Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward. Genesis 15:1

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/29/20

# Do You See Jesus in Your Clouds?



Behold, He is coming with clouds… —[Revelation 1:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Revelation+1%3A7)

In the Bible clouds are always associated with God. Clouds are the sorrows, sufferings, or providential circumstances, within or without our personal lives, which actually seem to contradict the sovereignty of God. Yet it is through these very clouds that the Spirit of God is teaching us how to walk by faith. If there were never any clouds in our lives, we would have no faith. “The clouds are the dust of His feet” ([Nahum 1:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Nahum+1:3)). They are a sign that God is there. What a revelation it is to know that sorrow, bereavement, and suffering are actually the clouds that come along with God! God cannot come near us without clouds— He does not come in clear-shining brightness.

It is not true to say that God wants to teach us something in our trials. Through every cloud He brings our way, He wants us to unlearn something. His purpose in using the cloud is to simplify our beliefs until our relationship with Him is exactly like that of a child— a relationship simply between God and our own souls, and where other people are but shadows. Until other people become shadows to us, clouds and darkness will be ours every once in a while. Is our relationship with God becoming more simple than it has ever been?

There is a connection between the strange providential circumstances allowed by God and what we know of Him, and we have to learn to interpret the mysteries of life in the light of our knowledge of God. Until we can come face to face with the deepest, darkest fact of life without damaging our view of God’s character, we do not yet know Him.

“…they were fearful as they entered the cloud” ([Luke 9:34](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:34)). Is there anyone except Jesus in your cloud? If so, it will only get darker until you get to the place where there is “no one anymore, but only Jesus …” ([Mark 9:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9:8); also see [Mark 2:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+2:7)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Both nations and individuals have tried Christianity and abandoned it, because it has been found too difficult; but no man has ever gone through the crisis of deliberately making Jesus Lord and found Him to be a failure. The Love of God—The Making of a Christian, 680 R

# CCEL – 7/29/20

**Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down.**—[ISA. 64:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.64.html" \l "Isa.64.1)

Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.—We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.—Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.—Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.—It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.—That blessed hope . . . the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.—Our conversation is in heaven.

[Song 8:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.8.html" \l "Song.8.14). -[Rom. 8:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.23). -[Psa. 144:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.144.html" \l "Ps.144.5).[Acts.1:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.1.html" \l "Acts.1.11). -[Heb. 9:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html" \l "Heb.9.28). -[Isa. 25:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.9).[Rev. 22:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.22.html" \l "Rev.22.20). -[Tit. 2:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.2.html" \l "Titus.2.13). -[Phil. 3:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.20).

“Nevertheless I am continually with thee.” **[Psalm 73:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.73.html" \l "Ps.73.23)**

“Nevertheless,”—As if, notwithstanding all the foolishness and ignorance which David had just been confessing to God, not one atom the less was it true and certain that David was saved and accepted, and that the blessing of being constantly in God’s presence was undoubtedly his. Fully conscious of his own lost estate, and of the deceitfulness and vileness of his nature, yet, by a glorious outburst of faith, he sings “nevertheless I am continually with thee.” Believer, you are forced to enter into Asaph’s confession and acknowledgment, endeavour in like spirit to say “nevertheless, since I belong to Christ I am continually with God!” By this is meant continually upon his mind, he is always thinking of me for my good. Continually before his eye;—the eye of the Lord never sleepeth, but is perpetually watching over my welfare. Continually in his hand, so that none shall be able to pluck me thence. Continually on his heart, worn there as a memorial, even as the high priest bore the names of the twelve tribes upon his heart forever. Thou always thinkest of me, O God. The bowels of thy love continually yearn towards me. Thou art always making providence work for my good. Thou hast set me as a signet upon thine arm; thy love is strong as death, many waters cannot quench it; neither can the floods drown it. Surprising grace! Thou seest me in Christ, and though in myself abhorred, thou beholdest me as wearing Christ’s garments, and washed in his blood, and thus I stand accepted in thy presence. I am thus continually in thy favour—“continually with thee.” Here is comfort for the tried and afflicted soul; vexed with the tempest within—look at the calm without. “Nevertheless”—O say it in thy heart, and take the peace it gives. “Nevertheless I am continually with thee.”

# Word Live – 7/29/20

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# Scripture Union – 7/29/20

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

# Today in the Word – 7/29/20

# Serving Nothing Else

**Read:** [**Joshua 24:1–27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a1%e2%80%9327)

### The Covenant Renewed at Shechem

24 Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officials of Israel, and they presented themselves before God.

2Joshua said to all the people, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Long ago your ancestors, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods. 3But I took your father Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led him throughout Canaan and gave him many descendants. I gave him Isaac, 4and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I assigned the hill country of Seir to Esau, but Jacob and his family went down to Egypt.

5“‘Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I afflicted the Egyptians by what I did there, and I brought you out. 6When I brought your people out of Egypt, you came to the sea, and the Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a1%e2%80%9327#fen-NIV-6483a)] as far as the Red Sea.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a1%e2%80%9327#fen-NIV-6483b)] 7But they cried to the Lord for help, and he put darkness between you and the Egyptians; he brought the sea over them and covered them. You saw with your own eyes what I did to the Egyptians. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time.

8“‘I brought you to the land of the Amorites who lived east of the Jordan. They fought against you, but I gave them into your hands. I destroyed them from before you, and you took possession of their land. 9When Balak son of Zippor, the king of Moab, prepared to fight against Israel, he sent for Balaam son of Beor to put a curse on you. 10But I would not listen to Balaam, so he blessed you again and again, and I delivered you out of his hand.

11“‘Then you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The citizens of Jericho fought against you, as did also the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites, but I gave them into your hands. 12I sent the hornet ahead of you, which drove them out before you—also the two Amorite kings. You did not do it with your own sword and bow. 13So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant.’

14“Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

16Then the people answered, “Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods! 17It was the Lord our God himself who brought us and our parents up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we traveled. 18And the Lord drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites, who lived in the land. We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God.”

19Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the Lord. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you.”

21But the people said to Joshua, “No! We will serve the Lord.”

22Then Joshua said, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the Lord.”

“Yes, we are witnesses,” they replied.

23“Now then,” said Joshua, “throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.”

24And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.”

25On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people, and there at Shechem he reaffirmed for them decrees and laws. 26And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak near the holy place of the Lord.

27“See!” he said to all the people. “This stone will be a witness against us. It has heard all the words the Lord has said to us. It will be a witness against you if you are untrue to your God.”

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 24:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a1%e2%80%9327#en-NIV-6483) Or charioteers
2. [Joshua 24:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a1%e2%80%9327#en-NIV-6483) Or the Sea of Reeds

Do you know that the average person makes roughly 30,000 decisions in a single day? Some choices are small, such as “How long should I brush my teeth?” Others are life-altering, such as “Should I marry this person?” Life is full of choices. And as we near the end of the Israelites’ quest, we find that God’s people faced an enormous decision.

As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15

In the first 13 verses, Joshua reminds the leaders about their history. He begins with Terah, the father of Abraham, and concludes with the quest they had just completed. Did Joshua feel the people had forgotten what had just transpired? Did they already need this history lesson? No. Joshua recalled what the Lord had done in order to convince the people of Israel to commit their lives to Yahweh alone (vv. 14–15). Ultimately, he gave them an important choice. Who would they serve? He made his own decision very clear: “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (v. 15).

The people’s response must have been pleasing to Joshua’s ears, reaching to Yahweh’s throne. They responded, “Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods!” (v. 16). They recognized that throughout their quest, the Lord had carried them, so they devoted their lives to Him (v. 21). Joshua warned them that if they turned away from God and were unfaithful to Him, the same judgment and consequences the Canaanites faced would be on them (vv. 19–20). But if they remained obedient to God’s laws and were faithful to Him, then the Lord would bless them all the days of their life. Joshua left the Israelites with this choice. What were they going to do?

**Apply the Word**

What is your choice? Out of all the decisions in your lifetime, none is more important than whether or not you surrender your life to the Lord. I can guarantee there is no greater decision you will ever make. Choose today to serve Him. He will give you courage for your quest!

### Pray with Us

Joshua’s decision for himself and his household to serve the Lord is a wonderful example for us today. Will you make the same choice? Ask for the Holy Spirit’s power to surrender your whole life to God’s will.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/29/20

# Grace Outside the Box

### Today's Devotional Read: [2 Samuel 9:1–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%209.1%E2%80%937)

### David and Mephibosheth

9 David asked, “Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”

2Now there was a servant of Saul’s household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?”

“At your service,” he replied.

3The king asked, “Is there no one still alive from the house of Saul to whom I can show God’s kindness?”

Ziba answered the king, “There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet.”

4“Where is he?” the king asked.

Ziba answered, “He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.”

5So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

6When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor.

David said, “Mephibosheth!”

“At your service,” he replied.

7“Don’t be afraid,” David said to him, “for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfa

Mephibosheth ate at David’s table like one of the king’s sons. [2 Samuel 9:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%209.11)

Tom worked for a law firm that advised Bob’s company. They became friends—until Tom embezzled thousands of dollars from the company. Bob was hurt and angry when he found out, but he received wise counsel from his vice president, a believer in Christ. The VP noticed Tom was deeply ashamed and repentant, and he advised Bob to drop the charges and hire Tom. “Pay him a modest salary so he can make restitution. You’ll never have a more grateful, loyal employee.” Bob did, and Tom was.

Mephibosheth, grandson of King Saul, hadn’t done anything wrong, but he was in a tough spot when David became king. Most kings killed the royal bloodline. But David loved King Saul’s son Jonathan, and treated his surviving son as his own (see [2 Samuel 9:1–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%209.1%E2%80%9313)). His grace won a friend for life. Mephibosheth marveled that he “deserved nothing but death from my lord the king, but you gave your servant a place” (19:28). He remained loyal to David, even when David’s son Absalom chased David from Jerusalem ([2 Samuel 16:1–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2016.1%E2%80%934); [19:24–30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Samuel%2019.24%E2%80%9330)).

Do you want a loyal friend for life? Someone so extraordinary may require you to do something extraordinary. When common sense says punish, choose grace. Hold them accountable, but give the undeserving a chance to make things right. You may never find a more grateful, devoted friend. Think outside the box, with grace.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

Who has sinned against you? How might you hold them accountable while also forgiving them?

Father, I’ve received extraordinary grace from You. Help me show that grace to others—especially to those with a repentant spirit.

#### Insight

Since Saul was king before David, Saul’s descendants were in the royal bloodline and could be a threat to David’s kingship. When Saul was alive, he saw David as his enemy ([1 Samuel 18:29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%2018.29); [19:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Samuel%2019.17)) and tried to kill him (see chs. 19–23). But because God had once anointed Saul as king, David refused to harm him (see ch. 24). After Saul died, however, the tension continued with Saul’s son ([2 Samuel 2:8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%202.8%E2%80%939); [3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Samuel%203.1)).

It wouldn’t have been surprising if David intended to eliminate Saul’s family, which explains why David had to reassure Mephibosheth ([2 Samuel 9:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%209.7)). But despite the tensions, David’s true heart was revealed when he showed kindness to someone in the family for the sake of his friend Jonathan (v. 1).

# God Calling – 7/29/20

# Sunlit Glades

**Lord, bless us and this evening hour, and in Thy Mercy heal us all.**

Do not think that suffering is the only path into My Kingdom. There are sunlit glades, and ways amid the loveliest flowers, along which the steps and hearts of men are drawn to Me. There are birds and laughter and butterflies, and warm, life-giving summer air, and with these as tender companions and friends, the Joy-Way into the Kingdom can be taken.

Bleak, cold, and desolate, brier-beset and stony, are not all the ways. Leave all to Me. The choice of ways, the guidance in the Way. But when the sunlight calls accept it gladly.

Even in the Spirit-World appreciation results from contrary experience. Can the fireside of home be more dear than to the traveler who has forced his way over bleak moor and through blinding storm? Take to your hearts this word of cheer. "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able but will, with the temptation, also find a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it."

The world is not the Kingdom. In the world ye shall have tribulation but "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Live with Me, the Conquering Christ, and the Joy and Peace of conquest shall be yours too.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/30/20

# The Teaching of Disillusionment



Jesus did not commit Himself to them…, for He knew what was in man. —[John 2:24-25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+2%3A24-25)

Disillusionment means having no more misconceptions, false impressions, and false judgments in life; it means being free from these deceptions. However, though no longer deceived, our experience of disillusionment may actually leave us cynical and overly critical in our judgment of others. But the disillusionment that comes from God brings us to the point where we see people as they really are, yet without any cynicism or any stinging and bitter criticism. Many of the things in life that inflict the greatest injury, grief, or pain, stem from the fact that we suffer from illusions. We are not true to one another as facts, seeing each other as we really are; we are only true to our misconceived ideas of one another. According to our thinking, everything is either delightful and good, or it is evil, malicious, and cowardly.

Refusing to be disillusioned is the cause of much of the suffering of human life. And this is how that suffering happens— if we love someone, but do not love God, we demand total perfection and righteousness from that person, and when we do not get it we become cruel and vindictive; yet we are demanding of a human being something which he or she cannot possibly give. There is only one Being who can completely satisfy to the absolute depth of the hurting human heart, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord is so obviously uncompromising with regard to every human relationship because He knows that every relationship that is not based on faithfulness to Himself will end in disaster. Our Lord trusted no one, and never placed His faith in people, yet He was never suspicious or bitter. Our Lord’s confidence in God, and in what God’s grace could do for anyone, was so perfect that He never despaired, never giving up hope for any person. If our trust is placed in human beings, we will end up despairing of everyone.

**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, 395 L

# CCEL – 7/30/20

**Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.**—[COL. 3:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.1)

Get wisdom, get understanding.—The wisdom that is from above.—The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me.—We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.—God . . . hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.—Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness.

[Prov. 4:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.4.html#Prov.4.5). -[Jas. 3:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.3.html" \l "Jas.3.17). -[Job 28:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.28.html" \l "Job.28.14). -[Rom. 6:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.4).[Heb. 12:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.1). -[Eph. 2:4-6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.4).[Heb. 11:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.11.html" \l "Heb.11.14). -[Zeph. 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zeph.2.html" \l "Zeph.2.3).

“And when he thought thereon, he wept.” **[Mark 14:72](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.14.html" \l "Mark.14.72)**

It has been thought by some that as long as Peter lived, the fountain of his tears began to flow whenever he remembered his denying his Lord. It is not unlikely that it was so, for his sin was very great, and grace in him had afterwards a perfect work. This same experience is common to all the redeemed family according to the degree in which the Spirit of God has removed the natural heart of stone. We, like Peter, remember our boastful promise: “Though all men shall forsake thee, yet will not I.” We eat our own words with the bitter herbs of repentance. When we think of what we vowed we would be, and of what we have been, we may weep whole showers of grief. He thought on his denying his Lord. The place in which he did it, the little cause which led him into such heinous sin, the oaths and blasphemies with which he sought to confirm his falsehood, and the dreadful hardness of heart which drove him to do so again and yet again. Can we, when we are reminded of our sins, and their exceeding sinfulness, remain stolid and stubborn? Will we not make our house a Bochim, and cry unto the Lord for renewed assurances of pardoning love? May we never take a dry-eyed look at sin, lest ere long we have a tongue parched in the flames of hell. Peter also thought upon his Master's look of love. The Lord followed up the cock’s warning voice with an admonitory look of sorrow, pity, and love. That glance was never out of Peter’s mind so long as he lived. It was far more effectual than ten thousand sermons would have been without the Spirit. The penitent apostle would be sure to weep when he recollected the Saviour’s full forgiveness, which restored him to his former place. To think that we have offended so kind and good a Lord is more than sufficient reason for being constant weepers. Lord, smite our rocky hearts, and make the waters flow.

# Word Live – 7/30/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/30/20

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

# Today in the Word – 7/30/20

# A Final Resting Place

**Read:** [**Joshua 24:28–33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a28%e2%80%9333)

28Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to their own inheritance.

### Buried in the Promised Land

29After these things, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of a hundred and ten. 30And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Serah[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a28%e2%80%9333#fen-NIV-6507a)] in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

31Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced everything the Lord had done for Israel.

32And Joseph’s bones, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the tract of land that Jacob bought for a hundred pieces of silver[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a28%e2%80%9333#fen-NIV-6509b)] from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. This became the inheritance of Joseph’s descendants.

33And Eleazar son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah, which had been allotted to his son Phinehas in the hill country of Ephraim.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 24:30](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a28%e2%80%9333#en-NIV-6507) Also known as Timnath Heres (see Judges 2:9)
2. [Joshua 24:32](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+24%3a28%e2%80%9333#en-NIV-6509) Hebrew hundred kesitahs; a kesitah was a unit of money of unknown weight and value.

Many books of the Bible end with turmoil, strife, or unanswered questions. Not Joshua. The book ends on a satisfying, harmonious note with calmness in the land and peace among people. As Israelites’ quest ended and they could finally settle down in their long-awaited Promised Land, it must have been a surreal feeling. Perhaps they reflected on the past as they put away their swords and cleaned dirt and blood from their garments.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7

In the next days, there would be no more marching or fighting. However, they might not have realized that another battle was about to begin: a battle for their faithfulness. Would they keep the commandments of the Lord and live their lives for Him? Whether or not they would is a different story to tell, but they had been given a fine example of faithfulness to God in Joshua.

In this closing section, the author records the final resting places of Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar (the religious leader). Joshua is referred to as “the servant of God” (v. 29) which is the first time he is given this descriptor. In chapter 1, Joshua was called Moses’ aid or assistant, but now he has been given the title servant. He came a long way on his quest but through it all, he found the courage to carry on. Joshua’s obedience to the Lord was rewarded, and he died in peace knowing that he had led the Lord’s people into the Promised Land. We can look to Joshua’s life of service as an example of how to live a life in obedience to God. Of course, Joshua had flaws, but his courage to lead people and follow God gives us hope even in the midst of our own quest.

**Apply the Word**

The next several decades for the nation of Israel are anything but peaceful. The book of Judges picks up right where Joshua leaves off and takes the nation through twists and turns that are captivating. If you are curious, continue reading the book of Judges and discover how the story continues.

### Pray with Us

As we read about the end of Joshua’s quest, we pray we would have, like Joshua, the strength and determination to serve God faithfully until the end. May we, like Paul, be able to say: “I have finished the race” (2 Tim. 4:7).

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/30/20

# Touch the Needy

 **Read:** [**Luke 13:10–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2013.10%E2%80%9317)

### Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath

10On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, 11and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. 12When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” 13Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

14Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

15The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? 16Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”

17When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

He put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. [Luke 13:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2013.13)

It wasn’t surprising when Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize. True to form, she received the award “in the name of the hungry, of the naked, of the homeless, of the blind, of the lepers, of all those who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society.” Those were the people she ministered to for most of her life.

Jesus modeled how to care for and love the marginalized, regardless of circumstances. Unlike the synagogue leaders who respected the Sabbath law more than the sick ([Luke 13:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2013.14)), when Jesus saw an ill woman at the temple, He was moved with compassion. He looked beyond the physical impairment and saw God’s beautiful creation in bondage. He called her to Him and said she was healed. Then He “put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God” (v. 13). By touching her, He upset the leader of the synagogue because it was the Sabbath. Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath ([Luke 6:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%206.5)), compassionately chose to heal the woman—a person who had faced discomfort and humiliation for nearly two decades.

I wonder how often we see someone as underserving of our compassion. Or maybe we’ve experienced rejection because we didn’t meet somebody else’s standard. May we not be like the religious elite who cared more about rules than fellow humans. Instead, let’s follow Jesus’ example and treat others with compassion, love, and dignity.

By:  [Estera Pirosca Escobar](https://odb.org/author/esteraescobar/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How have you experienced God’s healing and touch? Who can you show compassion to this week?

Jesus, thank You for Your infinite love and incredible compassion for all humans, including those marred by disease and difficulties.

#### Insight

The Sabbath was a frequent point of contention between Jesus and the religious leaders of Israel. Whether the Pharisees were upset because Jesus healed on the Sabbath ([Luke 6:6–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%206.6%E2%80%9311); [13:10–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2013.10%E2%80%9317)) or because His disciples picked and ate grain on that day ([Matthew 12:1–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2012.1%E2%80%9314)), Jesus often confronted them regarding the Sabbath and gave new insight into how it should be understood.

In today’s passage describing the healing of the woman with the bent back, Jesus highlighted the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. They treated their animals better than they did the poor and needy among them. Jesus’ constant pattern was to affirm the value of the people He ministered to rather than the human laws He may have been violating. By doing so, He proved that He was indeed the Lord of the Sabbath.

# God Calling – 7/30/20

# Faith Rewarded

Think much of My servants of old. How Abraham believed in the promise (when as yet he had no child) that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

How Moses led the Children of Israel through the desert, sure that, at last, they would gain the Promised Land.

Down through the ages there have always been those who obeyed, not seeing but believing, and their Faith was rewarded. So shall it be even with you.

For what saith the scriptures? Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Romans 4:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/31/20

# Becoming Entirely His



Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. —[James 1:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=James+1%3A4)

Many of us appear to be all right in general, but there are still some areas in which we are careless and lazy; it is not a matter of sin, but the remnants of our carnal life that tend to make us careless. Carelessness is an insult to the Holy Spirit. We should have no carelessness about us either in the way we worship God, or even in the way we eat and drink.

Not only must our relationship to God be right, but the outward expression of that relationship must also be right. Ultimately, God will allow nothing to escape; every detail of our lives is under His scrutiny. God will bring us back in countless ways to the same point over and over again. And He never tires of bringing us back to that one point until we learn the lesson, because His purpose is to produce the finished product. It may be a problem arising from our impulsive nature, but again and again, with the most persistent patience, God has brought us back to that one particular point. Or the problem may be our idle and wandering thinking, or our independent nature and self-interest. Through this process, God is trying to impress upon us the one thing that is not entirely right in our lives.

We have been having a wonderful time in our studies over the revealed truth of God’s redemption, and our hearts are perfect toward Him. And His wonderful work in us makes us know that overall we are right with Him. “Let patience have its perfect work….” The Holy Spirit speaking through James said, “Now let your patience become a finished product.” Beware of becoming careless over the small details of life and saying, “Oh, that will have to do for now.” Whatever it may be, God will point it out with persistence until we become entirely His.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 7/31/20

**Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ**—[II TIM. 2:3.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.3)

I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and a commander to the people.—It became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.—We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God.—We do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.)

The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

[Isa. 55:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.55.html#Isa.55.4). -[Heb. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.10). -[Acts 14:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.14.html" \l "Acts.14.22).[Eph. 6:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html" \l "Eph.6.12). -[II Cor. 10:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.10.html" \l "iiCor.10.3).[I Pet. 5:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.10).

“I in them.” **[John 17:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.23)**

If such be the union which subsists between our souls and the person of our Lord, how deep and broad is the channel of our communion! This is no narrow pipe through which a thread-like stream may wind its way, it is a channel of amazing depth and breadth, along whose glorious length a ponderous volume of living water may roll its floods. Behold he hath set before us an open door, let us not be slow to enter. This city of communion hath many pearly gates, every several gate is of one pearl, and each gate is thrown open to the uttermost that we may enter, assured of welcome. If there were but one small loophole through which to talk with Jesus, it would be a high privilege to thrust a word of fellowship through the narrow door; how much we are blessed in having so large an entrance! Had the Lord Jesus been far away from us, with many a stormy sea between, we should have longed to send a messenger to him to carry him our loves, and bring us tidings from his Father’s house; but see his kindness, he has built his house next door to ours, nay, more, he takes lodging with us, and tabernacles in poor humble hearts, that so he may have perpetual intercourse with us. O how foolish must we be, if we do not live in habitual communion with him. When the road is long, and dangerous, and difficult, we need not wonder that friends seldom meet each other, but when they live together, shall Jonathan forget his David? A wife may when her husband is upon a journey, abide many days without holding converse with him, but she could never endure to be separated from him if she knew him to be in one of the chambers of her own house. Why, believer, dost not thou sit at his banquet of wine? Seek thy Lord, for he is near; embrace him, for he is thy Brother. Hold Him fast, for he is thine Husband; and press him to thine heart, for he is of thine own flesh.

# Word Live – 7/31/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/31/20

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

# Today in the Word – 7/31/20

# At Home with Him

**Read:** [**I Peter 2:4–12**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312)

### The Living Stone and a Chosen People

4As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— 5you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#fen-NIV-30405a)] to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion,  
    a chosen and precious cornerstone,  
and the one who trusts in him  
    will never be put to shame.”[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#fen-NIV-30406b)]

7Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected  
    has become the cornerstone,”[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#fen-NIV-30407c)]

8and,

“A stone that causes people to stumble  
    and a rock that makes them fall.”[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#fen-NIV-30408d)]

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

9But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

### Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society

11Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. 12Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Peter 2:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#en-NIV-30405) Or into a temple of the Spirit
2. [1 Peter 2:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#en-NIV-30406) Isaiah 28:16
3. [1 Peter 2:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#en-NIV-30407) Psalm 118:22
4. [1 Peter 2:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Peter+2%3a4%e2%80%9312#en-NIV-30408) Isaiah 8:14

As we end our journey through Joshua, it is important to remember how we fit in the bigger picture. It’s easy to dismiss the people and events of this book as long ago and far away. But the implications of their quest shed significant insight into our daily walk with Jesus.

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God. I Peter 2:12

In today’s text, Peter communicates something that was brand new to the entire world. Previously, the Israelites were the only ones specifically chosen by God. Unless there were special circumstances, for instance, Rahab and her family, the story of God and humanity was mostly about Yahweh and the Israelites. However, because of Jesus, the true living Stone (v. 4), non-Jews are able to be part of God’s family, too.

The Israelites were God’s chosen people whom He was making into a nation. They would always have a special place in God’s heart. But because of Jesus, Peter proclaimed that non-Jews also have a place in the kingdom. Followers of Jesus, regardless of race or ethnicity, “are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession” (v. 9). Because of Jesus, the tent has been widened and the table has been extended. Just as the Israelites were called out of slavery in Egypt, we have been called “out of darkness into his wonderful light” (v. 9).

The Israelites wandered in the desert for decades with no place to call their home. Then Joshua led the people on a quest into the Promised Land. In a similar fashion, you and I have wandered aimlessly looking for purpose and fulfillment. But the Lord leads us on a quest that is sometimes difficult, nevertheless bringing us to a place that is unimaginable—at home with Him.

**Apply the Word**

What have you learned from your study of Joshua? How can you apply those lessons to your own faith journey? Like Joshua, we can step out in faith boldly, obey God’s commands faithfully, and remain loyal to our calling. May you, too, have courage for the quest.

### Pray with Us

As we conclude our study, let’s thank the Lord for how He revealed Himself to the Israelites, and to us as well. What a powerful, mighty God we serve! We can have courage for our quest with Him by our side!

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/31/20

# Shining Light

 **Read:** [**Matthew 5:13–16**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%205.13%E2%80%9316)

### Salt and Light

13“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. [Matthew 5:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%205.16)

I felt nervous about a five-week prayer class I agreed to teach at a local church. Would the students like it? Would they like me? My anxiety was ill-focused, leading me to over-prepare lesson plans, presentation slides, and class handouts. Yet with a week to go, I still hadn’t encouraged many people to attend.

In prayer, however, I was reminded that the class was a service that shined light on God. Because the Holy Spirit would use the class to point people to our heavenly Father, I could set aside my nervousness about public speaking. When Jesus taught His disciples in His Sermon on the Mount, He told them, “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house” ([Matthew 5:14–15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%205.14%E2%80%9315)).

Reading those words, I finally sent out a class announcement on social media. Almost immediately, people started registering—expressing gratitude and excitement. Seeing their reactions, I reflected more on Jesus’ teaching: “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (v. 16).

With that perspective, I taught the class with joy. I pray that my simple deed becomes a beacon and encourages others to shine their light for God as well.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

When have you felt nervous or self-conscious about sharing your deeds and gifts for God? How can your deeds and gifts help others, and what are ways you can share them?

Jesus, empower me to let my God-given light shine so others can see and glorify You.

#### Insight

The concept of light shining in the darkness is one of the primary themes of John’s writings, but it also has a strategic place in Matthew’s gospel. After Jesus returned from being tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Matthew records the launching of Christ’s public ministry by quoting the words of Isaiah the prophet: “The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned” ([Matthew 4:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%204.16); [Isaiah 9:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%209.2)). These words provide the context for His instruction in today’s Scripture text about being a light to others.

# God Calling – 7/31/20

# Gratitude

Give Me the gift of a brave and thankful heart.

Man proves his greatness by his power to see causes for thankfulness in his life.

When life seems hard, and troubles crowd, then very definitely look for causes for thankfulness.

The sacrifice, the offering of thanksgiving, is indeed a sweet incense going up to Me through the busy day. Seek diligently for the something to be glad and thankful about in every happening, and soon no search will be required.

The causes for joy and gratitude will spring to greet your loving hearts.

As the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. 2 Chronicles 5:13

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/1/20

# Learning About His Ways



When Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples…He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. —[Matthew 11:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+11%3A1)

**He comes where He commands us to leave.** If you stayed home when God told you to go because you were so concerned about your own people there, then you actually robbed them of the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself. When you obeyed and left all the consequences to God, the Lord went into your city to teach, but as long as you were disobedient, you blocked His way. Watch where you begin to debate with Him and put what you call your duty into competition with His commands. If you say, “I know that He told me to go, but my duty is here,” it simply means that you do not believe that Jesus means what He says.

**He teaches where He instructs us not to teach.** “Master…let us make three tabernacles…” ([Luke 9:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:33)).

Are we playing the part of an amateur providence, trying to play God’s role in the lives of others? Are we so noisy in our instruction of other people that God cannot get near them? We must learn to keep our mouths shut and our spirits alert. God wants to instruct us regarding His Son, and He wants to turn our times of prayer into mounts of transfiguration. When we become certain that God is going to work in a particular way, He will never work in that way again.

**He works where He sends us to wait.** “…tarry…until…” ([Luke 24:49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24:49)). “Wait on the Lord” and He will work ([Psalm 37:34](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+37:34)). But don’t wait sulking spiritually and feeling sorry for yourself, just because you can’t see one inch in front of you! Are we detached enough from our own spiritual fits of emotion to “wait patiently for Him”? ([Psalm 37:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+37:7)). Waiting is not sitting with folded hands doing nothing, but it is learning to do what we are told.

These are some of the facets of His ways that we rarely recognize.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 8/1/20

**The fruit of the Spirit is . . . faith.**—[GAL. 5:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.22)

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.—Without faith it is impossible to please him.—He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.—Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.—Faith worketh by love.—Faith without works is dead.

We walk by faith, not by sight.—I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.—Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

[Eph. 2:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.8). -[Heb. 11:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.11.html" \l "Heb.11.6). -[John 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.18). -[Mark. 9:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.9.html" \l "Mark.9.24).[I John 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.5). -[Gal. 5:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.6). -[Jas. 2:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html" \l "Jas.2.20).[II Cor. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.7). -[Gal. 2:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.2.html" \l "Gal.2.20). -[I Pet. 1:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.8).

“Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn.” **[Ruth 2:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ruth.2.html" \l "Ruth.2.2)**

Downcast and troubled Christian, come and glean today in the broad field of promise. Here are abundance of precious promises, which exactly meet thy wants. Take this one: “He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.” Doth not that suit thy case? A reed, helpless, insignificant, and weak, a bruised reed, out of which no music can come; weaker than weakness itself; a reed, and that reed bruised, yet, he will not break thee; but on the contrary, will restore and strengthen thee. Thou art like the smoking flax: no light, no warmth, can come from thee; but he will not quench thee; he will blow with his sweet breath of mercy till he fans thee to a flame. Wouldst thou glean another ear? “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” What soft words! Thy heart is tender, and the Master knows it, and therefore he speaketh so gently to thee. Wilt thou not obey him, and come to him even now? Take another ear of corn: “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” How canst thou fear with such a wonderful assurance as this? Thou mayest gather ten thousand such golden ears as these! “I have blotted out thy sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud thy transgressions.” Or this, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Or this, “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.” Our Master’s field is very rich; behold the handfuls. See, there they lie before thee, poor timid believer! Gather them up, make them thine own, for Jesus bids thee take them. Be not afraid, only believe! Grasp these sweet promises, thresh them out by meditation and feed on them with joy.

# Word Live – 8/1/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/1/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/1/20

# What is a Teacher?

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# What is a Teacher?

**Read:** [**Matthew 28:16-20**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28%3a16-20)

### The Great Commission

16Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Even as a young child, Amy Jensen McCaulley would gather her two younger brothers in the backyard and teach them Bible lessons. After graduating from Moody Bible Institute in 1980, Amy dedicated her life to teaching children from a biblical worldview. Recently, one of her first-graders, now a grown married man with children, posted on social media a picture of a postcard Amy had mailed to him when he was in her first-grade class. She encouraged him to keep reading and follow Jesus. Why did this grown man save his teacher’s card for so many years? He wanted to thank his teacher for her powerful influence.

He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. Matthew 7:29

Sixty times in the Gospels, Jesus is called Teacher. The Greek word for teacher is didaskalos, meaning an instructor who is acknowledged for mastery in their field of learning. Everyone who came in contact with Jesus’ instruction, from demons to disciples to the gathered crowds, even the Pharisees, realized He was, indeed, the Master Teacher.

At the end of Christ’s physical time on earth, after His resurrection, Jesus delivered one last lesson to His disciples. Matthew 28 details the important truths found in this final lesson. Notice that Jesus did not spend time walking down memory lane. Instead, He used every moment to teach them, even in this final moment, giving them lessons to last a lifetime. Sadly, some of the eleven gathered disciples doubted (v. 17). Even so, Jesus was intent on delivering His final lesson: “Go and make disciples,” “baptizing” and “teaching” them (vv. 19–20). These final instructions, given with complete authority (v. 18), were intended for those who had learned from Him. He instructed them to go and become teachers themselves, sharing what they had learned from the great Teacher, their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (vv. 19–20).

**Apply the Word**

It’s back to school this month as we learn from Jesus, our great Teacher. We hope you will learn from Jesus how to teach others the truth of the gospel and how to live for His glory. Someday, there just might be someone who contacts you and says, “Thank you for being my teacher.”

### Pray with Us

As we learn from Christ, the great Teacher, let’s pray that the Lord will open our hearts for the lessons He wants to teach us from His Word this month.

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

# Our Daily Bread – 8/1/20

# A Divine Duet

 **Read:** [**John 15:1–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.1%E2%80%9311)

### The Vine and the Branches

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26702a)] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

#### Footnotes:

1. [John 15:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-26702) The Greek for he prunes also means he cleans.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. [John 15:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.5)

At a children’s music recital, I watched a teacher and student seat themselves in front of a piano. Before their duet began, the teacher leaned over and whispered some last-minute instructions. As music flowed from the instrument, I noticed that the student played a simple melody while the teacher’s accompaniment added depth and richness to the song. Near the end of the piece, the teacher nodded his approval.

Our life in Jesus is much more like a duet than a solo performance. Sometimes, though, I forget that He’s “sitting next to me,” and it’s only by His power and guidance that I can “play” at all. I try to hit all the right notes on my own—to obey God in my own strength, but this usually ends up seeming fake and hollow. I try to handle problems with my limited ability, but the result is often discord with others.

My Teacher’s presence makes all the difference. When I rely on Jesus to help me, I find my life is more honoring to God. I serve joyfully, love freely, and am amazed as God blesses my relationships. It’s like Jesus told His first disciples, “If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” ([John 15:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.5)).

Each day we play a duet with our good Teacher—it’s His grace and power that carry the melody of our spiritual lives.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

Why do you sometimes resist the help and encouragement God offers? How could reliance on Him change your outlook and your actions in certain situations?

Dear God, help me to remember that You’re with me in every moment. I welcome Your influence and instruction today. Thank You for Your nearness.

#### Insight

In the Old Testament, God’s people were described as “a vine from Egypt” that God carefully planted in the fertile land of Canaan ([Psalm 80:8–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2080.8%E2%80%9311)). God expected His people to produce “a crop of good grapes, but [they] yielded only bad fruit” ([Isaiah 5:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%205.2); see also 27:2–4). In [John 15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015), Jesus expects us to “be even more fruitful” and “bear much fruit” so that we can glorify God ([John 15:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.2), [8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.8)). We’re to bear the fruit of the Spirit ([Galatians 5:22–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%205.22%E2%80%9323)) and “fruit in every good work” ([Colossians 1:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.10)). When sharing the gospel, “the fruit [we] harvest is people brought to eternal life” ([John 4:36](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%204.36) nlt).

# God Calling – 8/1/20

# Blessed Bond

**Jesus, let Thy Beautiful Presence be always with us.**

"I will never leave you nor forsake you."

There is no bond of union on earth to compare with the union between a soul that loves Me -- and Me.

Priceless beyond all earth's imaginings is that Friendship.

In the merging of heart and mind and will a oneness results that only those who experience it can even dimly realize.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.  Ephesians 2:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/2/20

# The Teaching of Adversity



In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. —[John 16:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+16%3A33)

The typical view of the Christian life is that it means being delivered from all adversity. But it actually means being delivered in adversity, which is something very different. “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling…” ([Psalm 91:1,10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91:1,10))— the place where you are at one with God.

If you are a child of God, you will certainly encounter adversities, but Jesus says you should not be surprised when they come. “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” He is saying, “There is nothing for you to fear.” The same people who refused to talk about their adversities before they were saved often complain and worry after being born again because they have the wrong idea of what it means to live the life of a saint.

God does not give us overcoming life— He gives us life as we overcome. The strain of life is what builds our strength. If there is no strain, there will be no strength. Are you asking God to give you life, liberty, and joy? He cannot, unless you are willing to accept the strain. And once you face the strain, you will immediately get the strength. Overcome your own timidity and take the first step. Then God will give you nourishment— “To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life…” ([Revelation 2:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+2:7)). If you completely give of yourself physically, you become exhausted. But when you give of yourself spiritually, you get more strength. God never gives us strength for tomorrow, or for the next hour, but only for the strain of the moment. Our temptation is to face adversities from the standpoint of our own common sense. But a saint can “be of good cheer” even when seemingly defeated by adversities, because victory is absurdly impossible to everyone, except God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

There is nothing, naturally speaking, that makes us lose heart quicker than decay—the decay of bodily beauty, of natural life, of friendship, of associations, all these things make a man lose heart; but Paul says when we are trusting in Jesus Christ these things do not find us discouraged, light comes through them.  
The Place of Help

# CCEL – 8/2/20

**The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**—[REV. 13:8.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.13.html" \l "Rev.13.8)

Your lamb shall be without blemish, . . . and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it, . . . and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.—The blood of sprinkling.—Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.—Being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.—According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

[Exo. 12:5-7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.12.html#Exod.12.5),[13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.12.html" \l "Exod.12.13). -[Heb. 12:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.24). -[I Cor. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.5.html" \l "iCor.5.7). -[Acts 2:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.2.html" \l "Acts.2.23). -[II Tim. 1:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.1.html" \l "iiTim.1.9).[Eph. 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.7).[I Pet. 4:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.1).

“Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” **[Ephesians 1:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.11)**

Our belief in God’s wisdom supposes and necessitates that he has a settled purpose and plan in the work of salvation. What would creation have been without his design? Is there a fish in the sea, or a fowl in the air, which was left to chance for its formation? Nay, in every bone, joint, and muscle, sinew, gland, and blood-vessel, you mark the presence of a God working everything according to the design of infinite wisdom. And shall God be present in creation, ruling over all, and not in grace? Shall the new creation have the fickle genius of free will to preside over it when divine counsel rules the old creation? Look at Providence! Who knoweth not that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father? Even the hairs of your head are all numbered. God weighs the mountains of our grief in scales, and the hills of our tribulation in balances. And shall there be a God in providence and not in grace? Shall the shell be ordained by wisdom and the kernel be left to blind chance? No; he knows the end from the beginning. He sees in its appointed place, not merely the corner-stone which he has laid in fair colours, in the blood of his dear Son, but he beholds in their ordained position each of the chosen stones taken out of the quarry of nature, and polished by his grace; he sees the whole from corner to cornice, from base to roof, from foundation to pinnacle. He hath in his mind a clear knowledge of every stone which shall be laid in its prepared space, and how vast the edifice shall be, and when the top-stone shall be brought forth with shoutings of “Grace! Grace! unto it.” At the last it shall be clearly seen that in every chosen vessel of mercy, Jehovah did as he willed with his own; and that in every part of the work of grace he accomplished his purpose, and glorified his own name.

# Word Live – 8/2/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/2/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/2/20

# Check Your Mindset

**Read:** [**Luke 6:17-38**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6%3a17-38)

### Blessings and Woes

17He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, 18who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, 19and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

20Looking at his disciples, he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,  
    for yours is the kingdom of God.  
21Blessed are you who hunger now,  
    for you will be satisfied.  
Blessed are you who weep now,  
    for you will laugh.  
22Blessed are you when people hate you,  
    when they exclude you and insult you  
    and reject your name as evil,  
        because of the Son of Man.

23“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

24“But woe to you who are rich,  
    for you have already received your comfort.  
25Woe to you who are well fed now,  
    for you will go hungry.  
Woe to you who laugh now,  
    for you will mourn and weep.  
26Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,  
    for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

### Love for Enemies

27“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. 30Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

### Judging Others

37“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Many of my college students are intimidated by the Teaching Elementary Math Methods course. They say, “I’m just not good at math. I’m worried I won’t be a good math teacher.” How did they develop such a negative mindset? My goal is that they will be able to teach mathematics with a positive mindset. Your mindset reveals what you believe about yourself in a specific situation. Being willing to learn and work through struggles produces a positive mindset and opens your mind to learning.

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Luke 6:20

In today’s passage, Jesus taught His disciples the importance of developing a heavenly mindset because He knew their earthly lives as His followers would be difficult. Verse 17 describes the huge crowd that had gathered to hear from Jesus. But when this famous sermon began, Jesus looked specifically at His disciples (v. 20). He taught them the “blessing” that comes through difficult things: poverty, hunger, sorrow, and hatred (vv. 20–22). Certainly, this upside-down view of life was surprising. The poor would receive God’s kingdom, the hungry would be satisfied, those who weep would laugh.

While we may want great things in our lives right now, our true reward is in heaven (v. 23). That’s why Jesus was teaching those who listened to keep a heavenly mindset. They needed to view the hard things that happened in light of what was to come. Jesus then taught the same lesson in reverse, associating desirable things with the word “woe.” He said, “Woe to you” to those who are rich and well-fed, to those who laugh and are flattered. Why? When we become too satisfied with the blessings of the present day, it’s easy to take our eyes off our eternal purpose. The lesson is clear: we need to maintain a heavenly perspective.

**Apply the Word**

What is affecting your mindset today? Are you suffering? Take comfort in Jesus’ promise that your eternal future is filled with hope. Are you content? Be wary of getting so comfortable that you neglect to turn your heart and mind to God.

### Pray with Us

Pray for the humility to accept Jesus’ hard lessons. Ask Him to help you develop a heavenly perspective and look at life’s trials and difficulties through the truth and hope of God’s Word.

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

# Our Daily Bread – 8/2/20

# Kind Correction



**Read:** [**James 5:19–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%205.19%E2%80%9320)

19My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, 20remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death. [James 5:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%205.20)

The early spring weather was refreshing and my traveling companion, my wife, couldn’t have been better. But the beauty of those moments together could have quickly morphed into tragedy if it weren’t for a red and white warning sign that informed me I was headed in the wrong direction. Because I hadn’t turned wide enough, I momentarily saw a “Do Not Enter” sign staring me in the face. I quickly adjusted, but shudder to think of the harm I could have brought to my wife, myself, and others if I’d ignored the sign that reminded me I was going the wrong way.

The closing words of James emphasize the importance of correction. Who among us hasn’t needed to be “brought back” by those who care for us from paths or actions, decisions or desires that could’ve been hurtful? Who knows what harm might have been done to ourselves or others had someone not courageously intervened at the right time.

James stresses the value of kind correction with these words, “Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins” (5:20). Correction is an expression of God’s mercy. May our love and concern for the well-being of others compel us to speak and act in ways that He can use to “bring that person back” (v. 19).

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What risks or rewards are associated with helping a wanderer find his or her way back to where they belong? When did God use someone to bring you back from a not-so-good place?

Father, keep me from straying from Your truth and grant me courage to help bring back those who are wandering.

#### Insight

The book of James opens like many New Testament letters by identifying the author and the recipients (1:1). However, it lacks some personal details and characteristics often included in letters, such as a final greeting. Some scholars consider James to be a form of wisdom literature, but it’s more often described as a diatribe—a writing style intended to move readers to action. The author, James, likely the half-brother of Jesus, writes in an abrupt tone, getting straight to the point of his message. The end of his letter follows suit with a formal call to action—a call to the readers to bring believers who’ve sinned back to the truth (5:19–20).

To further study, visit christianuniversity.org/nt315.

# God Calling – 8/2/20

# Harvest

**My Lord, we seek Thy Blessing.**

I love to pour My blessings down in rich, in choicest measure. But like the seed-sowing -- the ground must be prepared before the seed is dropped in.

Yours to prepare the soil -- Mine to drop the seed-blessing into the prepared soil.

Together we share in, and joy in, the harvest.

Spend more time in soil-preparing. Prayer fertilizes soil. There is much to do in preparation.

So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.  Job 42:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/3/20

# The Compelling Purpose of God



He…said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem…" —[Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+18%3A31)

Jerusalem, in the life of our Lord, represents the place where He reached the culmination of His Father’s will. Jesus said, “I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” ([John 5:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+5:30)). Seeking to do “the will of the Father” was the one dominating concern throughout our Lord’s life. And whatever He encountered along the way, whether joy or sorrow, success or failure, He was never deterred from that purpose. “…He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem…” ([Luke 9:51](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:51)).

The greatest thing for us to remember is that we go up to Jerusalem to fulfill God’s purpose, not our own. In the natural life our ambitions are our own, but in the Christian life we have no goals of our own. We talk so much today about our decisions for Christ, our determination to be Christians, and our decisions for this and that, but in the New Testament the only aspect that is brought out is the compelling purpose of God. “You did not choose Me, but I chose you…” ([John 15:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:16)).

We are not taken into a conscious agreement with God’s purpose— we are taken into God’s purpose with no awareness of it at all. We have no idea what God’s goal may be; as we continue, His purpose becomes even more and more vague. God’s aim appears to have missed the mark, because we are too nearsighted to see the target at which He is aiming. At the beginning of the Christian life, we have our own ideas as to what God’s purpose is. We say, “God means for me to go over there,” and, “God has called me to do this special work.” We do what we think is right, and yet the compelling purpose of God remains upon us. The work we do is of no account when compared with the compelling purpose of God. It is simply the scaffolding surrounding His work and His plan. “He took the twelve aside…” ([Luke 18:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+18:31)). God takes us aside all the time. We have not yet understood all there is to know of the compelling purpose of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 8/3/20

**His mercy is on them that fear Him.**—[LUKE 1:50.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.1.html" \l "Luke.1.50)

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.—The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, . . . and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.—To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.—The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

[Psa. 31:19,20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html#Ps.31.19).[I Pet. 1:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.17). -[Psa. 145:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.145.html" \l "Ps.145.18).[II Kgs. 22:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiKgs.22.html" \l "iiKgs.22.19). -[Isa. 66:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.66.html" \l "Isa.66.2). -[Psa. 34:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.18).

“The Lamb is the light thereof.” **[Revelation 21:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.23)**

Quietly contemplate the Lamb as the light of heaven. Light in Scripture is the emblem of joy. The joy of the saints in heaven is comprised in this: Jesus chose us, loved us, bought us, cleansed us, robed us, kept us, glorified us: we are here entirely through the Lord Jesus. Each one of these thoughts shall be to them like a cluster of the grapes of Eshcol. Light is also the cause of beauty. Nought of beauty is left when light is gone. Without light no radiance flashes from the sapphire, no peaceful ray proceedeth from the pearl; and thus all the beauty of the saints above comes from Jesus. As planets, they reflect the light of the Sun of Righteousness; they live as beams proceeding from the central orb. If he withdrew, they must die; if his glory were veiled, their glory must expire. Light is also the emblem of knowledge. In heaven our knowledge will be perfect, but the Lord Jesus himself will be the fountain of it. Dark providences, never understood before, will then be clearly seen, and all that puzzles us now will become plain to us in the light of the Lamb. Oh! what unfoldings there will be and what glorifying of the God of love! Light also means manifestation. Light manifests. In this world it doth not yet appear what we shall be. God’s people are a hidden people, but when Christ receives his people into heaven, he will touch them with the wand of his own love, and change them into the image of his manifested glory. They were poor and wretched, but what a transformation! They were stained with sin, but one touch of his finger, and they are bright as the sun, and clear as crystal. Oh! what a manifestation! All this proceeds from the exalted Lamb. Whatever there may be of effulgent splendour, Jesus shall be the centre and soul of it all. Oh! to be present and to see him in his own light, the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

# Word Live – 8/3/20

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

# Scripture Union – 8/3/20

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

# Today in the Word – 8/3/20

# Be an Influencer

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

### The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was with God in the beginning. 3Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26050a)] it.

6There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

9The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

14The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) 16Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. 17For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26063b)] is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

### John the Baptist Denies Being the Messiah

19Now this was John’s testimony when the Jewish leaders[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26064c)] in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. 20He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, “I am not the Messiah.”

21They asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?”

He said, “I am not.”

“Are you the Prophet?”

He answered, “No.”

22Finally they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

23John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’”[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26068d)]

24Now the Pharisees who had been sent 25questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

26“I baptize with[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26071e)] water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. 27He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.”

28This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

### John Testifies About Jesus

29The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ 31I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ 34I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26079f)]

### John’s Disciples Follow Jesus

35The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. 36When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

37When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. 38Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

39“Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

40Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. 41The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). 42And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter[[g](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26087g)]).

### Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

43The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

44Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. 45Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

46“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

47When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

48“How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

49Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

50Jesus said, “You believe[[h](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26095h)] because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” 51He then added, “Very truly I tell you,[[i](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1" \l "fen-NIV-26096i" \o "See footnote i)] you[[j](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26096j)] will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’[[k](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#fen-NIV-26096k)] the Son of Man.”

#### Footnotes:

1. [John 1:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26050) Or understood
2. [John 1:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26063) Some manuscripts but the only Son, who
3. [John 1:19](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26064) The Greek term traditionally translated the Jews (hoi Ioudaioi) refers here and elsewhere in John’s Gospel to those Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus; also in 5:10, 15, 16; 7:1, 11, 13; 9:22; 18:14, 28, 36; 19:7, 12, 31, 38; 20:19.
4. [John 1:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26068) Isaiah 40:3
5. [John 1:26](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26071) Or in; also in verses 31 and 33 (twice)
6. [John 1:34](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26079) See Isaiah 42:1; many manuscripts is the Son of God.
7. [John 1:42](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26087) Cephas (Aramaic) and Peter (Greek) both mean rock.
8. [John 1:50](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26095) Or Do you believe … ?
9. [John 1:51](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26096) The Greek is plural.
10. [John 1:51](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26096) The Greek is plural.
11. [John 1:51](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1#en-NIV-26096) Gen. 28:12

A website called Rate My Professor allows college students to evaluate their teachers, rating them on their level of difficulty and expertise. Many students, when selecting courses, will look at those reviews and use that information to decide which course to enroll in. These student reviews are highly influential! What one student, who has been through the course, says carries significance for those deciding whether or not to enroll.

I am the voice of the one calling in the wilderness, “Make straight the way for the Lord.” John 1:23

In his review of Jesus, John the Baptist declared Him “the Lamb of God” (v. 35), a statement that heavily influenced Andrew and John. Jesus then issued this life-changing invitation to His disciples to experience Him for themselves: “Come and you will see” (v. 39). He invited them to come, to walk alongside Him. After spending the day with Jesus, Andrew enthusiastically went to his brother Simon and proclaimed, “We have found the Messiah” (v. 41).

Both John and Andrew became influencers, sharing the good news that the Messiah had come. Word of Jesus quickly spread to many others, including Philip, Andrew, and Peter. History now records the disciples’ day-to-day experiences as they walked alongside God’s Son and learned from His example. And Jesus’ influence did not stop with His death, resurrection, and ascension. His life has been recorded in the bestselling book of all time spreading from Jew to Gentile and to every continent.

When we share how Christ has worked in our own lives, we influence others. Since September 2, 1981, my life has truly never been the same. Hallelujah! September 2 was the day of my salvation. Tell others how your life has been miraculously influenced by the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

**Apply the Word**

How has your life been changed by Jesus? Tell someone about it today, in a conversation, with a letter, or even on social media. While you might not write a bestselling book, you can certainly tell someone today Who has influenced your life.

### Pray with Us

You may think you are not an influencer. But Christ is! Ask the Lord to show you someone who needs to hear about God’s work in your life. Your testimony can change someone’s life for eternity.

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

# Our Daily Bread – 8/3/20

# The Battle’s Over. Really.

 **Read:** [**Romans 6:1–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%206.1%E2%80%9311)

### Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

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

5For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28075a)] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

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

11In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Romans 6:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-28075) Or be rendered powerless

We were . . . buried with him. [Romans 6:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%206.4)

For twenty-nine years after World War II ended, Hiroo Onoda hid in the jungle, refusing to believe his country had surrendered. Japanese military leaders had dispatched Onoda to a remote island in the Philippines (Lubang) with orders to spy on the Allied forces. Long after a peace treaty had been signed and hostilities ceased, Onoda remained in the wilderness. In 1974, Onoda’s commanding officer traveled to the island to find him and convince him the war was over.

For three decades, Onoda lived a meager, isolated existence, because he refused to surrender—refused to believe the conflict was done. We can make a similar mistake. Paul proclaims the stunning truth that “all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death” ([Romans 6:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%206.3)). On the cross, in a powerful, mysterious way, Jesus put to death Satan’s lies, death’s terror, and sin’s tenacious grip. Though we’re “dead to sin” and “alive to God” (v. 11), we often live as though evil still holds the power. We yield to temptation, succumbing to sin’s seduction. We listen to lies, failing to trust Jesus. But we don’t have to yield. We don’t have to live in a false narrative. By God’s grace we can embrace the true story of Christ’s victory.

While we’ll still wrestle with sin, liberation comes as we recognize that Jesus has already won the battle. May we live out that truth in His power.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How are you tempted to believe that death and sin still hold power over your life? Where can you see Christ’s victory already present in the world?

Jesus, I know You’ve won the battle over evil and darkness. Would You help me to live this out?

#### Insight

Paul’s question in [Romans 6:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%206.1)—“Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase”—flows from his observation in the previous chapter that when sin increases, grace increases “all the more” (5:20). So Paul asks if grace is a license to sin. Not if we value being in the gracious care of Christ rather than in the custody and condemnation of the law (v. 21). Not when we see that what we lost in Adam now overflows in the life, love, peace, and hope that comes in the awareness of what it means to be united in and with Jesus (chs. 5–6).

# God Calling – 8/3/20

# Give Every Moment

My children, how dear to my Heart is the cry of Love that asks for all of Me, that wishes every action, thought, word and moment to be Mine. How poor the understanding of the one who thinks that money to be used in this good work or that, is the great gift to offer. Above all, I desire Love, true, warm, childlike Love, the trusting understanding Love, and then the gift I prize next is the gift of the moments, of all the moments.

I think even when Love's impetuous longing to serve Me has offered Me all Life, every day, every hour, I think even then it is a long, and not an easy lesson, to learn, what it means to give Me the moments.

The little things you planned to do, given up gladly at My suggestion, the little services joyfully rendered. See Me in all and then it will be an easy task

This is the priceless time of initiation, but remember that the path of initiation is not for all; but only for those who have felt the sorrow-cry of the world that needs a Savior and the tender plea of a Savior Who needs followers through whom He can accomplish His great work of Salvation joyfully.

Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing is from me. 1 Kings 12:24