# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/17/22

# His Ascension and Our Access



It came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. —[Luke 24:51](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+24%3A51)

We have no experiences in our lives that correspond to the events in our Lord’s life after the transfiguration. From that moment forward His life was altogether substitutionary. Up to the time of the transfiguration, He had exhibited the normal, perfect life of a man. But from the transfiguration forward— Gethsemane, the Cross, the resurrection— everything is unfamiliar to us. His Cross is the door by which every member of the human race can enter into the life of God; by His resurrection He has the right to give eternal life to anyone, and by His ascension our Lord entered heaven, keeping the door open for humanity.

The transfiguration was completed on the Mount of Ascension. If Jesus had gone to heaven directly from the Mount of Transfiguration, He would have gone alone. He would have been nothing more to us than a glorious Figure. But He turned His back on the glory, and came down from the mountain to identify Himself with fallen humanity.

The ascension is the complete fulfillment of the transfiguration. Our Lord returned to His original glory, but not simply as the Son of God— He returned to His father as the Son of Man as well. There is now freedom of access for anyone straight to the very throne of God because of the ascension of the Son of Man. As the Son of Man, Jesus Christ deliberately limited His omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. But now they are His in absolute, full power. As the Son of Man, Jesus Christ now has all the power at the throne of God. From His ascension forward He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

We should always choose our books as God chooses our friends, just a bit beyond us, so that we have to do our level best to keep up with them. Shade of His Hand, 1216 L

# CCEL – 5/17/22

I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them.—[EZEK. 20:19.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.20.html" \l "Ezek.20.19)

As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.—He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.—Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.—Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.—Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—The God of peace, . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

[I Pet. 1:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html#iPet.1.15). -[I John 2:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.6),[29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.29). -[I Cor. 7:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.7.html#iCor.7.19). -[Jas. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html#Jas.2.10).[II Cor. 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.3.html#iiCor.3.5). -[Psa. 119:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html#Ps.119.33).[Phi. 2:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html#Phil.2.12). -[Heb. 13:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html#Heb.13.20).

“So to walk even as he walked.” [1 John 2:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.6)

Why should Christians imitate Christ? They should do it for their own sakes. If they desire to be in a healthy state of soul—if they would escape the sickness of sin, and enjoy the vigour of growing grace, let Jesus be their model. For their own happiness’ sake, if they would drink wine on the lees, well refined; if they would enjoy holy and happy communion with Jesus; if they would be lifted up above the cares and troubles of this world, let them walk even as he walked. There is nothing which can so assist you to walk towards heaven with good speed, as wearing the image of Jesus on your heart to rule all its motions. It is when, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you are enabled to walk with Jesus in his very footsteps, that you are most happy, and most known to be the sons of God. Peter afar off is both unsafe and uneasy. Next, for religion’s sake, strive to be like Jesus. Ah! poor religion, thou hast been sorely shot at by cruel foes, but thou hast not been wounded one-half so dangerously by thy foes as by thy friends. Who made those wounds in the fair hand of Godliness? The professor who used the dagger of hypocrisy. The man who with pretences, enters the fold, being nought but a wolf in sheep’s clothing, worries the flock more than the lion outside. There is no weapon half so deadly as a Judas-kiss. Inconsistent professors injure the gospel more than the sneering critic or the infidel. But, especially for Christ’s own sake, imitate his example. Christian, lovest thou thy Saviour? Is his name precious to thee? Is his cause dear to thee? Wouldst thou see the kingdoms of the world become his? Is it thy desire that he should be glorified? Art thou longing that souls should be won to him? If so, imitate Jesus; be an “epistle of Christ, known and read of all men.”

# Word Live – 5/17/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/17/22

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

# Today in the Word – 5/17/22

# Two Commitments

**Read: Psalm 132**

#### A song of ascents.

1Lord, remember David  
    and all his self-denial.

2He swore an oath to the Lord,  
    he made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:  
3“I will not enter my house  
    or go to my bed,  
4I will allow no sleep to my eyes  
    or slumber to my eyelids,  
5till I find a place for the Lord,  
    a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.”

6We heard it in Ephrathah,  
    we came upon it in the fields of Jaar:[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+132&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16158a)]  
7“Let us go to his dwelling place,  
    let us worship at his footstool, saying,  
8‘Arise, Lord, and come to your resting place,  
    you and the ark of your might.  
9May your priests be clothed with your righteousness;  
    may your faithful people sing for joy.’”

10For the sake of your servant David,  
    do not reject your anointed one.

11The Lord swore an oath to David,  
    a sure oath he will not revoke:  
“One of your own descendants  
    I will place on your throne.  
12If your sons keep my covenant  
    and the statutes I teach them,  
then their sons will sit  
    on your throne for ever and ever.”

13For the Lord has chosen Zion,  
    he has desired it for his dwelling, saying,  
14“This is my resting place for ever and ever;  
    here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.  
15I will bless her with abundant provisions;  
    her poor I will satisfy with food.  
16I will clothe her priests with salvation,  
    and her faithful people will ever sing for joy.

17“Here I will make a horn[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+132&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16169b)] grow for David  
    and set up a lamp for my anointed one.  
18I will clothe his enemies with shame,  
    but his head will be adorned with a radiant crown.”

#### Footnotes

1. [Psalm 132:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+132&version=NIV#en-NIV-16158) Or *heard of it in Ephrathah, / we found it in the fields of Jearim.* (See 1 Chron. 13:5,6) (And no quotation marks around verses 7-9)
2. [Psalm 132:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+132&version=NIV#en-NIV-16169) *Horn* here symbolizes strong one, that is, king.

May your faithful people sing for joy. Psalm 132:9

In January 2020, the German government announced that they had created a "help desk" for families who were trying to recover artwork looted by the Nazis during World War II. For many families, the paintings represent an important connection to parents or grandparents who had died in the holocaust. There was a sense of joy and relief when a long-lost piece of art was returned home.

Psalm 132 tells of two important commitments. The first was David's commitment to return the Ark of the Covenant back to its central location in Israel's worship. He “swore an oath" and "made a vow" not to rest until this job was completed (vv. 2-5). The Ark was not lost. After its capture by the Philistines and subsequent return, it had been residing at Kiriath Jearim (1 Sam. 4-6). The Ark of the Covenant presented God's presence among His people and needed to be treated with respect. David was eventually successful in bringing the Ark into use until the Temple could be built (2 Sam. 6). This provided a focal place for Israel to worship the Lord.

The second commitment was made by the Lord to David. He promised that a descendant of David would sit on the throne in Israel "for ever and ever" (Ps. 132:12). He also committed to dwell in Jerusalem and bless it (vv. 13-16). But we should not skip past the "if" statement in

verse 12. God expected David's descendants to be faithful to the law. If they disobeyed God, there would be consequences, including exile to Babylon and the destruction of the Temple. Even so, God promised that He would ultimately keep his commitment to David (v. 11).

**Apply the Word**

Jesus is the promised descendant of David (Rom. 1:1). Today, Jesus reigns at the right hand of the Father. And, we look forward to the day when He will come again (Rev. 20:4-6). Jesus was the fulfillment of God's commitment to David and to us!

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/17/22

# Uncommon Courage

# Today's DevotionalRead: [Daniel 2:24–30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%202.24%E2%80%9330)

### Daniel Interprets the Dream

24Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, “Do not execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him.”

25Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the king what his dream means.”

26The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), “Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?”

27Daniel replied, “No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, 28but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you were lying in bed are these:

29“As Your Majesty was lying there, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. 30As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than anyone else alive, but so that Your Majesty may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind.

Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him. [Daniel 2:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%202.24)

In 1478, Lorenzo de Medici, the ruler of Florence, Italy, escaped an attack on his life. His countrymen sparked a war when they tried to retaliate against the attack on their leader. As the situation worsened, the cruel King Ferrante I of Naples became Lorenzo’s enemy, but a courageous act by Lorenzo changed everything. He visited the king unarmed and alone. This bravery, paired with his charm and brilliance, won Ferrante’s admiration and ended the war.

Daniel also helped a king experience a change of heart. No one in Babylon could describe or interpret King Nebuchadnezzar’s troubling dream. This made him so angry that he decided to execute all his advisors—including Daniel and his friends. But Daniel asked to visit the king who wanted him dead ([Daniel 2:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%202.24)).

Standing before Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel gave God all the credit for revealing the mystery of the dream (v. 28). When the prophet described and deciphered it, Nebuchadnezzar honored the “God of gods and the Lord of kings” (v. 47). Daniel’s uncommon courage, which was born of his faith in God, helped him, his friends, and the other advisors avoid death that day.

In our lives, there are times when bravery and boldness are needed to communicate important messages. May God guide our words and give us the wisdom to know what to say and the ability to say it well.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How has someone’s bravery made a difference in your life? How can you rest in God’s power to act courageously for Him?

Dear Jesus, thank You for the courage You showed during Your life on earth. Fill me with Your wisdom and power when I face tense situations.

#### Insight

The book of Daniel spans seventy years (605–535 bc) of the Babylonian exile, Judah’s punishment for her covenantal unfaithfulness ([Deuteronomy 28:36](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2028.36), [64](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deuteronomy%2028.64); [Jeremiah 25:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2025.11); [29:10–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jeremiah%2029.10%E2%80%9311)). Daniel, given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar ([Daniel 1:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%201.7)), was one of the many teenagers of royal and noble descent deported to Babylon and educated in the ways of the Babylonians to serve the victorious Babylonian king (vv. 3–7). [Daniel 2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%202) tells of how Daniel rose to become Nebuchadnezzar’s chief adviser and right-hand man. He became adviser and confidante to the kings of Babylon (chs. 1–5) and Medo-Persia (ch. 6)—the superpowers of the ancient world. In chapters 7–12, God gave Daniel four apocalyptic visions of the course of human history, reminding His people that He’s the sovereign God of all creation.

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

# God Calling – 5/17/22

# Sorrow into Joy

“Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

My bravest are those who can anticipate the morning and feel in the night of sorrow that underlying Joy that tells of confident expectations of the morning.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,  that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/18/22

# Living Simply— Yet Focused



Look at the birds of the air….Consider the lilies of the field… —[Matthew 6:26, 28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A26%2C+28)

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin”— they simply are! Think of the sea, the air, the sun, the stars, and the moon— all of these simply are as well— yet what a ministry and service they render on our behalf! So often we impair God’s designed influence, which He desires to exhibit through us, because of our own conscious efforts to be consistent and useful. Jesus said there is only one way to develop and grow spiritually, and that is through focusing and concentrating on God. In essence, Jesus was saying, “Do not worry about being of use to others; simply believe on Me.” In other words, pay attention to the Source, and out of you “will flow rivers of living water” ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). We cannot discover the source of our natural life through common sense and reasoning, and Jesus is teaching here that growth in our spiritual life comes not from focusing directly on it, but from concentrating on our Father in heaven. Our heavenly Father knows our circumstances, and if we will stay focused on Him, instead of our circumstances, we will grow spiritually— just as “the lilies of the field.”

The people who influence us the most are not those who detain us with their continual talk, but those who live their lives like the stars in the sky and “the lilies of the field”— simply and unaffectedly. Those are the lives that mold and shape us.

If you want to be of use to God, maintain the proper relationship with Jesus Christ by staying focused on Him, and He will make use of you every minute you live— yet you will be unaware, on the conscious level of your life, that you are being used of Him.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

There is no condition of life in which we cannot abide in Jesus. We have to learn to abide in Him wherever we are placed.  Our Brilliant Heritage, 946 R

# CCEL – 5/18/22

As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.—[JOHN 5:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.5.html#John.5.26)

Our Saviour Jesus Christ, . . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.—I am the resurrection, and the life.—Because I live, ye shall live also.—We are made partakers of Christ.—Partakers of the Holy Ghost.—Partakers of the divine nature.—The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.—Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.—Who liveth for ever and ever.—The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality.—Unto the King eternal, immortal, . . . be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[II Tim. 1:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.1.html#iiTim.1.10). -[John 11:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.11.html#John.11.25). -[John 14:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html#John.14.19). -[Heb. 3:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.3.html#Heb.3.14). -[Heb. 6:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.6.html#Heb.6.4). –[II Pet. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.1.html#iiPet.1.4). -[I Cor. 15:45](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html#iCor.15.45),[51,52](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html#iCor.15.51).[Rev. 4:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.4.html#Rev.4.8). -[Rev. 4:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.4.html#Rev.4.9). -[I Tim. 6:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html#iTim.6.15). -[I Tim. 1:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.1.html#iTim.1.17).

“In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him.” [Colossians 2:9, 10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html#Col.2.9)

All the attributes of Christ, as God and man, are at our disposal. All the fulness of the Godhead, whatever that marvellous term may comprehend, is ours to make us complete. He cannot endow us with the attributes of Deity; but he has done all that can be done, for he has made even his divine power and Godhead subservient to our salvation. His omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability and infallibility, are all combined for our defence. Arise, believer, and behold the Lord Jesus yoking the whole of his divine Godhead to the chariot of salvation! How vast his grace, how firm his faithfulness, how unswerving his immutability, how infinite his power, how limitless his knowledge! All these are by the Lord Jesus made the pillars of the temple of salvation; and all, without diminution of their infinity, are covenanted to us as our perpetual inheritance. The fathomless love of the Saviour’s heart is every drop of it ours; every sinew in the arm of might, every jewel in the crown of majesty, the immensity of divine knowledge, and the sternness of divine justice, all are ours, and shall be employed for us. The whole of Christ, in his adorable character as the Son of God, is by himself made over to us most richly to enjoy. His wisdom is our direction, his knowledge our instruction, his power our protection, his justice our surety, his love our comfort, his mercy our solace, and his immutability our trust. He makes no reserve, but opens the recesses of the Mount of God and bids us dig in its mines for the hidden treasures. “All, all, all are yours,” saith he, “be ye satisfied with favour and full of the goodness of the Lord.” Oh! how sweet thus to behold Jesus, and to call upon him with the certain confidence that in seeking the interposition of his love or power, we are but asking for that which he has already faithfully promised.

# Word Live – 5/18/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/18/22

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

# Today in the Word – 5/18/22

# Life Together

**Read: Psalms 133**

#### A song of ascents. Of David.

1How good and pleasant it is  
    when God’s people live together in unity!

2It is like precious oil poured on the head,  
    running down on the beard,  
running down on Aaron’s beard,  
    down on the collar of his robe.  
3It is as if the dew of Hermon  
    were falling on Mount Zion.  
For there the Lord bestows his blessing,  
    even life forevermore.

### Psalm 134

#### A song of ascents.

1Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord  
    who minister by night in the house of the Lord.  
2Lift up your hands in the sanctuary  
    and praise the Lord.

3May the Lord bless you from Zion,  
    he who is the Maker of heaven and earth.

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity. Psalm 133:1

One of the most powerful books about Christian community is Dietrich

Bonhoeffer's Life Together. Written during the Nazi regime, it says, “The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community."

Our dream of what Christian community should be may prevent us from experiencing it. The reality may not live up to our dreams. Bonhoeffer shifts our focus away from imaginary Christian fellowship, urging us instead to love the flesh-and-blood people

around us.

Psalm 133 celebrates unity within the worshiping community: "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in Unity! (v. 1). The word "God's people" literally

means "brothers." Anyone who has grown up with brothers or sisters knows that siblings do not always live in unity. From Cain and Abel to the latest church meeting, evidence of brothers and sisters fighting is all around us. Despite this reality, Psalm 133 reminds us of how powerful it

is when (with God's help) we live in unity.

The psalm uses two metaphors to celebrate our spiritual unity. First, unity is compared to oil running down a person's head. The imagery here comes from Exodus 29 where instructions were given on how to consecrate priests. Anointing oil represented a time of celebration in the presence of God. When we are unified in God, we are set apart to celebrate and worship Him as one. Second, unity is like the dew on Mt. Hermon. This area is well known for its heavy dew which results in lush and vibrant vegetation. This life-giving image is transferred to the more arid region of Zion. The dew shows us how Christian community brings life and blessing.

**Apply the Word**

Have you experienced unity within the body of Christ? What things do we do that divide us? What can you do to promote this type of life-giving, refreshing unity among your brothers and sisters in the Lord?

**Pray with Us .**

Father, the older we get, the more we understand the pervasiveness of sin. You exhort us to unity, but how can we love people who are so flawed? Show us how to love the unlovable and forgive the unforgivable.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/18/22

# Crave Him

**Read:** [**John 6:25–35**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.25%E2%80%9335)

### Jesus the Bread of Life

25When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

26Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. 27Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

28Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

29Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

30So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? 31Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6%3A25%E2%80%9335&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26289a)]”

32Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

34“Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

35Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

#### Footnotes

1. [John 6:31](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6%3A25%E2%80%9335&version=NIV#en-NIV-26289) Exodus 16:4; Neh. 9:15; Psalm 78:24,25

Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” [John 6:35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.35)

Why is it that when we say, “This is the last potato chip I’m going to eat,” five minutes later we’re looking for more? Michael Moss answers that question in his book Salt Sugar Fat. He describes how America’s largest snack producers know how to “help” people crave junk food. In fact, one popular company spent $30 million a year and hired “crave consultants” to determine the bliss point for consumers so it could exploit our food cravings.

Unlike that company, Jesus helps us to long for real food—spiritual food—that brings satisfaction to our souls. He said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” ([John 6:35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.35)). By making this claim, He communicated two important things: First, the bread of which He spoke is a person, not a commodity (v. 32). Second, when people put their trust in Jesus for forgiveness of sin, they enter into a right relationship with Him and find fulfillment for every craving of their soul. This Bread is everlasting, spiritual food that leads to satisfaction and life.

When we place our trust in Jesus, the true Bread from heaven, we’ll crave Him, and He’ll strengthen and transform our lives.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

Why do you think we crave things we know can never satisfy the deepest cravings of our souls? What are some practical practices that will help you crave Jesus more?

Jesus, Bread of Life, may I crave You and find all I need in Your perfect provision.

#### Insight

The gospel of John includes seven “I am” statements of Jesus. Each of these statements reveals something about Him that helps us understand Him better and is supported by something He’s done. The first of these statements—“I am the bread of life”—comes after Jesus had just fed the five thousand (6:35). The remaining statements are found in chapters 8–15: “I am the light of the world” (8:12); “I am the gate [or door]” (10:7); “I am the good shepherd” (v. 11); “I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25); “I am the way and the truth and the life” (14:6); “I am the true vine” (15:1).

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

# God Calling – 5/18/22

# New and Vital Power

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”   Not for merit was salvation, the promise was to all who looked.

To look is surely within the Power of everyone.  One look suffices. Salvation follows.

Look and you are saved from despair.  Look and you are saved from care. Look and you are saved from worry. Look, and into you there flows a peace beyond all understanding, a Power new and vital, a Joy wonderful indeed.

Look and keep looking. Doubt flees, Joy reigns, and Hope conquers.

Life, Eternal Life, is yours – revitalizing, renewing.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.  John 10:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/19/22

# Out of the Wreck I Rise



Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? —[Romans 8:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+8%3A35)

God does not keep His child immune from trouble; He promises, “I will be with him in trouble…” ([Psalm 91:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91:15)). It doesn’t matter how real or intense the adversities may be; nothing can ever separate him from his relationship to God. “In all these things we are more than conquerors…” ([Romans 8:37](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:37)). Paul was not referring here to imaginary things, but to things that are dangerously real. And he said we are “super-victors” in the midst of them, not because of our own ingenuity, nor because of our courage, but because none of them affects our essential relationship with God in Jesus Christ. I feel sorry for the Christian who doesn’t have something in the circumstances of his life that he wishes were not there.

“Shall tribulation…?” Tribulation is never a grand, highly welcomed event; but whatever it may be— whether exhausting, irritating, or simply causing some weakness— it is not able to “separate us from the love of Christ.” Never allow tribulations or the “cares of this world” to separate you from remembering that God loves you ([Matthew 13:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13:22)).

“Shall…distress…?” Can God’s love continue to hold fast, even when everyone and everything around us seems to be saying that His love is a lie, and that there is no such thing as justice?

“Shall…famine…?” Can we not only believe in the love of God but also be “more than conquerors,” even while we are being starved?

Either Jesus Christ is a deceiver, having deceived even Paul, or else some extraordinary thing happens to someone who holds on to the love of God when the odds are totally against him. Logic is silenced in the face of each of these things which come against him. Only one thing can account for it— the love of God in Christ Jesus. “Out of the wreck I rise” every time.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The message of the prophets is that although they have forsaken God, it has not altered God. The Apostle Paul emphasizes the same truth, that God remains God even when we are unfaithful (see 2 Timothy 2:13). Never interpret God as changing with our changes. He never does; there is no variableness in Him.  Notes on Ezekiel, 1477 L

# CCEL – 5/19/22

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity.—[PSA. 51:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html#Ps.51.2)

I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.—Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

He saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.—Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

[Jer. 33:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.33.html#Jer.33.8). -[Ezek. 36:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.36.html#Ezek.36.25).[John 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html#John.3.5). -[Heb. 9:13,14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html#Heb.9.13).[Psa. 106:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.106.html#Ps.106.8). -[Psa. 115:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.115.html#Ps.115.1).

“I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.” [Ecclesiastes 10:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eccl.10.html#Eccl.10.7)

Upstarts frequently usurp the highest places, while the truly great pine in obscurity. This is a riddle in providence whose solution will one day gladden the hearts of the upright; but it is so common a fact, that none of us should murmur if it should fall to our own lot. When our Lord was upon earth, although he is the Prince of the kings of the earth, yet he walked the footpath of weariness and service as the Servant of servants: what wonder is it if his followers, who are princes of the blood, should also be looked down upon as inferior and contemptible persons? The world is upside down, and therefore, the first are last and the last first. See how the servile sons of Satan lord it in the earth! What a high horse they ride! How they lift up their horn on high! Haman is in the court, while Mordecai sits in the gate; David wanders on the mountains, while Saul reigns in state; Elijah is complaining in the cave while Jezebel is boasting in the palace; yet who would wish to take the places of the proud rebels? and who, on the other hand, might not envy the despised saints? When the wheel turns, those who are lowest rise, and the highest sink. Patience, then, believer, eternity will right the wrongs of time.

Let us not fall into the error of letting our passions and carnal appetites ride in triumph, while our nobler powers walk in the dust. Grace must reign as a prince, and make the members of the body instruments of righteousness. The Holy Spirit loves order, and he therefore sets our powers and faculties in due rank and place, giving the highest room to those spiritual faculties which link us with the great King; let us not disturb the divine arrangement, but ask for grace that we may keep under our body and bring it into subjection. We were not new created to allow our passions to rule over us, but that we, as kings, may reign in Christ Jesus over the triple kingdom of spirit, soul, and body, to the glory of God the Father.

# Word Live – 5/19/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/19/22

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# Today in the Word – 5/19/22

# Who Do You Worship?

**Read: Psalm 135**

1Praise the Lord.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+135&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16177a)]

Praise the name of the Lord;  
    praise him, you servants of the Lord,  
2you who minister in the house of the Lord,  
    in the courts of the house of our God.

3Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good;  
    sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant.  
4For the Lord has chosen Jacob to be his own,  
    Israel to be his treasured possession.

5I know that the Lord is great,  
    that our Lord is greater than all gods.  
6The Lord does whatever pleases him,  
    in the heavens and on the earth,  
    in the seas and all their depths.  
7He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;  
    he sends lightning with the rain  
    and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

8He struck down the firstborn of Egypt,  
    the firstborn of people and animals.  
9He sent his signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt,  
    against Pharaoh and all his servants.  
10He struck down many nations  
    and killed mighty kings—  
11Sihon king of the Amorites,  
    Og king of Bashan,  
    and all the kings of Canaan—  
12and he gave their land as an inheritance,  
    an inheritance to his people Israel.

13Your name, Lord, endures forever,  
    your renown, Lord, through all generations.  
14For the Lord will vindicate his people  
    and have compassion on his servants.

15The idols of the nations are silver and gold,  
    made by human hands.  
16They have mouths, but cannot speak,  
    eyes, but cannot see.  
17They have ears, but cannot hear,  
    nor is there breath in their mouths.  
18Those who make them will be like them,  
    and so will all who trust in them.

19All you Israelites, praise the Lord;  
    house of Aaron, praise the Lord;  
20house of Levi, praise the Lord;  
    you who fear him, praise the Lord.  
21Praise be to the Lord from Zion,  
    to him who dwells in Jerusalem.

Praise the Lord.

#### Footnotes

1. [Psalm 135:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+135&version=NIV#en-NIV-16177) Hebrew *Hallelu Yah*; also in verses 3 and 21

Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant. Psalm 135:3

The worship of idols was an important part of life for Israel's neighbors. Skilled craftsmen created idols from the finest materials available. Priests would perform elaborate ceremonies to endow the idol with the presence of the god. The idol would then be treated as royalty. The object would be clothed and "fed" with the best, treated with awe and reverence.

Today's reading is a rousing praise psalm to remind Israel that the Lord is greater than the gods of the nations. It was also a stern reminder to Israel that worshiping idols was foolish. These idols were "silver and gold, made by human hands" (v. 15). They had mouths, eyes and ears that did not work (vv. 16-18). These gods could never save or deliver like the Lord. The psalm reminds Israel that the Lord is the One who delivered them from Egypt and brought them

into the land of Canaan (vv. 8-12).

Living in the twenty-first century, it is easy to think we are immune to the danger of worshiping idols. But an idol is anything in which we place our allegiance, trust, or hope instead

of God. An idol could be our reliance on social media for affirmation or the hope we entrust to politicians. There are hundreds of ways we can fall into the trap of idol worship. An added

danger is that we become similar to what we worship (v. 18).

The good news is that if we worship God, we will grow to become like Him. As Paul explained, "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory" (2 Cor. 3:18).

**Apply the Word**

One of the benefits of praise is that it reminds us who God is, so that we do not fall into the trap of idol worship. Today listen to a praise song that reminds of God's character. If you

need a suggestion, start with the hymn "O Worship the King."

**Pray with Us**

"I know that the LORD is great, that our LORD is greater than all gods. The LORD

ttoes whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on th e earth, in the seas and in

all their depths" (Ps. 135:~) .

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/19/22

# Food from Heaven

**Read:** [**Exodus 16:4–5**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.4%E2%80%935)

4Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. 5On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.”

**Read:**[**Exodus 16:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.4%E2%80%935)[**13–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exodus%2016.13%E2%80%9318)

13That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 15When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was.

Moses said to them, “It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. 16This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+16%3A4%E2%80%935+%2C+13%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-1964a)] for each person you have in your tent.’”

17The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. 18And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

The Lord said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you.” [Exodus 16:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.4)

In August 2020, residents of Olten, Switzerland, were startled to find that it was snowing chocolate! A malfunction in the ventilation system of the local chocolate factory had caused chocolate particles to be diffused into the air. As a result, a dusting of edible chocolate flakes covered cars and streets and made the whole town smell like a candy store.

When I think of delicious food “magically” falling from the heavens, I can’t help but think of God’s provision for the people of Israel in Exodus. Following their dramatic escape from Egypt, the people faced significant challenges in the desert, especially a scarcity of food and water. And God, moved by the plight of the people, promised to “rain down bread from heaven” ([Exodus 16:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.4)). The next morning, a layer of thin flakes appeared on the desert ground. This daily provision, known as manna, continued for the next forty years.

When Jesus came to earth, people began to believe He was sent from God when He miraculously provided bread for a large crowd ([John 6:5–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.5%E2%80%9314)). But Jesus taught that He Himself was the “bread of life” (v. 35), sent to bring not just temporary nourishment but eternal life (v. 51).

For those of us hungry for spiritual nourishment, Jesus extends the offer of unending life with God. May we believe and trust that He came to satisfy those deepest longings.

By:  [Lisa M. Samra](https://odb.org/author/lisasamra/)

#### Reflect & Pray

When did you come to realize your need for Jesus? How have you experienced being spiritually satisfied?

Jesus, thank You for choosing to come to earth to offer Your life so that I could enjoy a relationship with God for all eternity.

Learn more about [growing spiritually](https://odbu.org/courses/sf104/?utm_source=May+19+ODB+article+&utm_medium=email%2C+app%2C+web&utm_campaign=Spiritual+Life+Basics+ODBU-ODB+).

#### Insight

Scholars have attempted to explain the source of manna that fed Israel during the exodus from Egypt. Some have theorized that it was the product of tamarisk bushes that grow in the Sinai region. But this isn’t likely. Such desert plants are insufficient in number to have fed an entire nation. The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible reports another theory, suggesting that manna may have been a type of insect secretion. Regardless of how the manna appeared, the fact remains that God said, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you” ([Exodus 16:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.4)).

[John 6:30–51](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.30%E2%80%9351) provides insight on this. Here, Jesus referred to “my Father” (v. 32) as the source of the manna. He said, “The bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (v. 33). He then applied this to Himself: “I am the bread of life” (v. 35).

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

# God Calling – 5/19/22

# Rescued and Guided

Rest knowing all is so safe in My Hands. Rest is Trust. Ceaseless activity is distrust. Without the knowledge that I am working for you, you do not rest. Inaction then would be the outcome of despair.

My Hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Know that, repeat it, rely on it, welcome the knowledge, delight in it. Such a truth is a hope flung to a drowning man. Every repetition of it is one pull nearer shore and safety.

Let that illustration teach you a great truth.  Lay hold of the truth, pray it, affirm it, hold on to the rope.  How foolish are your attempts to save yourself, one hand on the  rope, and one making efforts to swim ashore!  You may relinquish your hold of the rope and hinder the rescuer – who has to act with the greater caution lest he lose you.

The storms and tempests are not all of life.  The Psalmist who said “All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me” wrote also “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”

Meditate upon that wonder – truth, the three steps safety, security, guidance.  (1) “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit” – Safety.  (2) “He set my feet upon a rock” – Security (3) “He established my goings” – Guidance. No. 3 is the final stage when the saved soul trusts Me so entirely it seeks no more its own way but leaves all future plans to Me its Rescuer.

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.  Deuteronomy 33:27

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/20/22

# Taking Possession of Our Own Soul



By your patience possess your souls. —[Luke 21:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+21%3A19)

When a person is born again, there is a period of time when he does not have the same vitality in his thinking or reasoning that he previously had. We must learn to express this new life within us, which comes by forming the mind of Christ (see [Philippians 2:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+2:5)). [Luke 21:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+21:19) means that we take possession of our souls through patience. But many of us prefer to stay at the entrance to the Christian life, instead of going on to create and build our soul in accordance with the new life God has placed within us. We fail because we are ignorant of the way God has made us, and we blame things on the devil that are actually the result of our own undisciplined natures. Just think what we could be when we are awakened to the truth!

There are certain things in life that we need not pray about— moods, for instance. We will never get rid of moodiness by praying, but we will by kicking it out of our lives. Moods nearly always are rooted in some physical circumstance, not in our true inner self. It is a continual struggle not to listen to the moods which arise as a result of our physical condition, but we must never submit to them for a second. We have to pick ourselves up by the back of the neck and shake ourselves; then we will find that we can do what we believed we were unable to do. The problem that most of us are cursed with is simply that we won’t. The Christian life is one of spiritual courage and determination lived out in our flesh.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

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

# CCEL – 5/20/22

Take heed unto thyself.—[I TIM. 4:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.4.html#iTim.4.16)

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.—Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against the flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.—For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.—Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

[I Cor. 9:25-27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.9.html#iCor.9.25). -[Eph. 6:11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html#Eph.6.11).[Gal. 5:24,25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html#Gal.5.24). -[Rom. 8:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html#Rom.8.14). -[I Tim. 4:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.4.html#iTim.4.15).

“Marvellous lovingkindness.” [Psalm 17:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.17.html#Ps.17.7)

When we give our hearts with our alms, we give well, but we must often plead to a failure in this respect. Not so our Master and our Lord. His favours are always performed with the love of his heart. He does not send to us the cold meat and the broken pieces from the table of his luxury, but he dips our morsel in his own dish, and seasons our provisions with the spices of his fragrant affections. When he puts the golden tokens of his grace into our palms, he accompanies the gift with such a warm pressure of our hand, that the manner of his giving is as precious as the boon itself. He will come into our houses upon his errands of kindness, and he will not act as some austere visitors do in the poor man’s cottage, but he sits by our side, not despising our poverty, nor blaming our weakness. Beloved, with what smiles does he speak! What golden sentences drop from his gracious lips! What embraces of affection does he bestow upon us! If he had but given us farthings, the way of his giving would have gilded them; but as it is, the costly alms are set in a golden basket by his pleasant carriage. It is impossible to doubt the sincerity of his charity, for there is a bleeding heart stamped upon the face of all his benefactions. He giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Not one hint that we are burdensome to him; not one cold look for his poor pensioners; but he rejoices in his mercy, and presses us to his bosom while he is pouring out his life for us. There is a fragrance in his spikenard which nothing but his heart could produce; there is a sweetness in his honey-comb which could not be in it unless the very essence of his soul’s affection had been mingled with it. Oh! the rare communion which such singular heartiness effecteth! May we continually taste and know the blessedness of it!

# Word Live – 5/20/22

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# Today in the Word – 5/20/22

# Loved by God

**Read: Psalm 136**

1Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.  
His love endures forever.  
2Give thanks to the God of gods.  
His love endures forever.  
3Give thanks to the Lord of lords:  
His love endures forever.

4to him who alone does great wonders,  
His love endures forever.  
5who by his understanding made the heavens,  
His love endures forever.  
6who spread out the earth upon the waters,  
His love endures forever.  
7who made the great lights—  
His love endures forever.  
8the sun to govern the day,  
His love endures forever.  
9the moon and stars to govern the night;  
His love endures forever.

10to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt  
His love endures forever.  
11and brought Israel out from among them  
His love endures forever.  
12with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;  
His love endures forever.

13to him who divided the Red Sea[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Psalm+136&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16210a)] asunder  
His love endures forever.  
14and brought Israel through the midst of it,  
His love endures forever.  
15but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;  
His love endures forever.

16to him who led his people through the wilderness;  
His love endures forever.

17to him who struck down great kings,  
His love endures forever.  
18and killed mighty kings—  
His love endures forever.  
19Sihon king of the Amorites  
His love endures forever.  
20and Og king of Bashan—  
His love endures forever.  
21and gave their land as an inheritance,  
His love endures forever.  
22an inheritance to his servant Israel.  
His love endures forever.

23He remembered us in our low estate  
His love endures forever.  
24and freed us from our enemies.  
His love endures forever.  
25He gives food to every creature.  
His love endures forever.

26Give thanks to the God of heaven.  
His love endures forever.

#### Footnotes

1. [Psalm 136:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Psalm+136&version=NIV#en-NIV-16210) Or the Sea of Reeds; also in verse 15

His love endures forever. Psalm 136:1

When I put my children to bed at night, I remind them that I love them. They already know this. I have told them thousands of times. But the repetition has a purpose. I want them

to know that they are loved and that my love for them has not changed.

In today's reading, the Psalmist repeats the same line 26 times. This could be because the psalm was originally sung antiphonally with a worship leader singing the first line and the congregation the second. But there is more significance to it than that. The repeated line is "His

love endures forever." The word “love" used here communicates "commitment" or "faithfulness." Just like the line repeats again and again, the Psalmist is emphasizing that God is

not going to give up on His people.

God's unfailing love is celebrated through His amazing works. Sometimes we need to be reminded of what God has done. God is the Creator. He made the sun, moon, and stars (vv. 5-9). When we gaze at the night sky, we are humbled by its immensity and power. But for God

it is simply one of the many things He made. In the ancient world, most people believed that the sun, moon, and stars were gods to be worshiped. This hymn reminds Israel that they are objects that God created for His own purpose.

God is our Redeemer. This hymn celebrates God's deliverance of Israel from bondage (vv. 10-15). God's redemption did not stop there. The New Testament proclaims that through Jesus, we have been redeemed from our slavery to sin and death (Rom. 6:1 7-18). God is our

Provider. He loves us by providing our daily bread both physically and spiritually (vv. 23- 25).

**Apply the Word**

Before you finish your devotional time, join with the Psalmist in praising God. Sing to Him or thank God for His enduring love. Go forward today knowing that you are loved by God who created, redeemed, and continually provides for you.

**Pray with Us**

We praise You, the Ruler above all politicians-Your love endures forever. We praise You, the Power over all diseases-Your love endures forever. We praise You, the God beyond time-Your love endures forever.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/20/22

# Refreshed at Simon’s House

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 16:15–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2016.15%E2%80%9318)

15You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, 16to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. 17I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. 18For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.

They refreshed my spirit and yours also. [1 Corinthians 16:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2016.18)

My trip to Simon’s house was unforgettable. Under the cover of a starlit sky in Nyahururu, Kenya, we made our way to his modest home for dinner. The dirt floor and the lantern light reflected Simon’s limited means. What was on the menu, I don’t recall. What I can’t forget was Simon’s joy that we were his guests. His gracious hospitality was Jesus like—selfless, life-touching, and refreshing.

In [1 Corinthians 16:15–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2016.15%E2%80%9318), Paul mentioned a family—the household of Stephanas (v. 15)—who had a reputation for their caregiving. They’d “devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people” (v. 15). While their service likely included tangible things (v. 17), the impact was such that Paul wrote, “they refreshed my spirit and yours also” (v. 18).

When we have opportunities to share with others, we rightly give attention to matters of food, setting, and other things that are fitting for such occasions. But we sometimes forget that although “the what” and “the where” matter, they’re not the most important things. Memorable meals are great and pleasant settings have their place, but food is limited in its capacity to fully nourish and encourage. True refreshment flows from God and is a matter of the heart; it reaches the hearts of others, and it continues to nourish long after the meal is over.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What occasions stand out where you were memorably refreshed by the hospitality or welcome of others? How can you change the way you serve others to make such occasions more spiritually meaningful?

Father, forgive me for the times I’ve made welcoming others more about me than those I seek to serve. Help me to extend myself in ways that truly refresh others.

#### Insight

In the conclusion of his letter to the Corinthians, Paul reemphasized a central theme of his message to them—to “do everything in love” ([1 Corinthians 16:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2016.14)). One example of what love looks like in action is found in the service of the household of Stephanas, the “first converts in Achaia” (v. 15), who were also baptized by Paul (1:16). Stephanas and his companions had come to Paul delivering a letter from the Corinthians along with an update on the church, and they were also likely the ones to deliver this return letter from Paul. By pointing to Stephanas and his companions’ character as examples of love—“devoted . . . to the service of the Lord’s people” (16:15), Paul could help ensure they’d be received with welcome and respect (vv. 16–18).

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

# God Calling – 5/20/22

# Win Me – Win All

You will conquer.  The conquering spirit is never crushed.  Keep a brave and trusting heart. Face all your difficulties in the spirit of Conquest.

Rise to greater heights than you have known before. Remember where I am is Victory. Forces of evil, within and without you, flee at My Presence.

Win Me and all is won.  All.

Only be thou strong and very courageous. Joshua 1:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/21/22

# Having God’s “Unreasonable” Faith



Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. —[Matthew 6:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A33)

When we look at these words of Jesus, we immediately find them to be the most revolutionary that human ears have ever heard. “…seek first the kingdom of God….” Even the most spiritually-minded of us argue the exact opposite, saying, “But I must live; I must make a certain amount of money; I must be clothed; I must be fed.” The great concern of our lives is not the kingdom of God but how we are going to take care of ourselves to live. Jesus reversed the order by telling us to get the right relationship with God first, maintaining it as the primary concern of our lives, and never to place our concern on taking care of the other things of life.

“…do not worry about your life…” ([Matthew 6:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:25)). Our Lord pointed out that from His standpoint it is absolutely unreasonable for us to be anxious, worrying about how we will live. Jesus did not say that the person who takes no thought for anything in his life is blessed— no, that person is a fool. But Jesus did teach that His disciple must make his relationship with God the dominating focus of his life, and to be cautiously carefree about everything else in comparison to that. In essence, Jesus was saying, “Don’t make food and drink the controlling factor of your life, but be focused absolutely on God.” Some people are careless about what they eat and drink, and they suffer for it; they are careless about what they wear, having no business looking the way they do; they are careless with their earthly matters, and God holds them responsible. Jesus is saying that the greatest concern of life is to place our relationship with God first, and everything else second.

It is one of the most difficult, yet critical, disciplines of the Christian life to allow the Holy Spirit to bring us into absolute harmony with the teaching of Jesus in these verses.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

We can understand the attributes of God in other ways, but we can only understand the Father’s heart in the Cross of Christ.  The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption, 558 L

# CCEL – 5/21/22

My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.—[EPH. 6:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html#Eph.6.10)

My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.—I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.—The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.—I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.—We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The joy of the Lord is your strength.—Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

[II Cor. 12:9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.12.html#iiCor.12.9). -[Psa. 71:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.71.html#Ps.71.16). -[Rom. 1:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.1.html#Rom.1.16).[Phi. 4:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html#Phil.4.13). -[Col. 1:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html#Col.1.29). -[II Cor. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html#iiCor.4.7).[Neh. 8:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Neh.8.html#Neh.8.10). -[Col. 1:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html#Col.1.11).

“If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” [1 Peter 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html#iPet.2.3)

If:—then, this is not a matter to be taken for granted concerning every one of the human race. “If:”—then there is a possibility and a probability that some may not have tasted that the Lord is gracious. “If:”—then this is not a general but a special mercy; and it is needful to enquire whether we know the grace of God by inward experience. There is no spiritual favour which may not be a matter for heart-searching.

But while this should be a matter of earnest and prayerful inquiry, no one ought to be content whilst there is any such thing as an “if” about his having tasted that the Lord is gracious. A jealous and holy distrust of self may give rise to the question even in the believer’s heart, but the continuance of such a doubt would be an evil indeed. We must not rest without a desperate struggle to clasp the Saviour in the arms of faith, and say, “I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.” Do not rest, O believer, till thou hast a full assurance of thine interest in Jesus. Let nothing satisfy thee till, by the infallible witness of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with thy spirit, thou art certified that thou art a child of God. Oh, trifle not here; let no “perhaps” and “peradventure” and “if” and “maybe” satisfy thy soul. Build on eternal verities, and verily build upon them. Get the sure mercies of David, and surely get them. Let thine anchor be cast into that which is within the veil, and see to it that thy soul be linked to the anchor by a cable that will not break. Advance beyond these dreary “ifs;” abide no more in the wilderness of doubts and fears; cross the Jordan of distrust, and enter the Canaan of peace, where the Canaanite still lingers, but where the land ceaseth not to flow with milk and honey.

# Word Live – 5/21/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/21/22

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

# Today in the Word – 5/21/22

# We Sat and Wept

**Read: Psalm 137**

**1**By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept  
    when we remembered Zion.  
**2**There on the poplars  
    we hung our harps,  
**3**for there our captors asked us for songs,  
    our tormentors demanded songs of joy;  
    they said, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

**4**How can we sing the songs of the Lord  
    while in a foreign land?  
**5**If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
    may my right hand forget its skill.  
**6**May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth  
    if I do not remember you,  
if I do not consider Jerusalem  
    my highest joy.

**7**Remember, Lord, what the Edomites did  
    on the day Jerusalem fell.  
“Tear it down,” they cried,  
    “tear it down to its foundations!”  
**8**Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction,  
    happy is the one who repays you  
    according to what you have done to us.  
**9**Happy is the one who seizes your infants  
    and dashes them against the rocks.

Do not lake revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. Romans 12:19

In 586 BC, the Babylonian army invaded Jerusalem destroying the city and the Temple. They took many people captive and forced them into exile. Today's reading provides a glimpse of how God's people responded to their situation.

Psalm 137 opens with a heartbreaking description: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept

when we remembered Zion" (v. 1). To make matters worse, their Babylonian captors taunted them by asking them to sing songs that celebrated Jerusalem (v. 3). They were the people who had destroyed

the city. It was the kind of request a bully would make to shame someone weaker than them.

The people recognized that they could not bring themselves to sing about Jerusalem, but they did

not want to forget the city either (vv. 4-5). They understood that in exile it would probably be easier if they could just forget about Jerusalem and assimilate into Babylonian life. But that would mean turning their back on who they were and on God's promised restoration .

The psalm takes a dark turn in verses 7-9. The people ask God to remember the atrocities that the

Edomites and Babylonians did to them and not to let them go unpunished. Israel's exile was due to their own sin and unfaithfulness to the covenant. Still, the Babylonians and Edomites went above and beyond the demands of justice in their behavior toward Israel (Lam. 4:22; Ezek. 35:15; Jer. 50). In this lament the people vent their anger and frustration to God and beg Him to act. In voicing their disturbing

feelings toward their oppressors, they are giving these feelings over to God.

**Apply the Word**

It is good to know that when we walk through difficult times, we can be honest to God in our prayers.

Be reassured that God cares about justice and will one day right all wrongs. But because of Christ's death and resurrection, there is also room for forgiveness and grace even for our enemies if they turn to Him in repentance and faith.

**Pray with Us**

Lord, Your ways are higher than our ways. Give us a godly sense of justice and help us see through false, worldly justice. Move us to forgive others, for You have forgiven us much.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/21/22

# The Fruit Sells the Tree

**Read: Galatians 5:22–26**

**22**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23**gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. **24**Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25**Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. **26**Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. [Galatians 5:22–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%205.22%E2%80%9323)

A nursery owner set out to sell peach trees. She considered various approaches. Should she line up leafy saplings in burlap sacks in a beautiful display? Should she create a colorful catalog picturing peach trees in various seasons of growth? At last she realized what really sells a peach tree. It’s the peach it produces: sweet-smelling, deep orange, and fuzzy-skinned. The best way to sell a peach tree is to pluck a ripe peach, cut it open until the juice dribbles down your arm, and hand a slice to a customer. When they taste the fruit, they want the tree.

God reveals Himself in a wrapper of spiritual fruit in His followers: love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control ([Galatians 5:22–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%205.22%E2%80%9323)). When believers in Jesus exhibit such fruit, others will want that fruit as well, and, therefore, will seek the Source of the fruit that’s so attractive.

Fruit is the external result of an internal relationship—the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Fruit is the dressing that beckons others to know the God we represent. Like the bright peaches standing out against the green leaves of a tree, the fruit of the Spirit announces to a starving world, “Here is food! Here is life! Come and find a way out of exhaustion and discouragement. Come and meet God!”

#### Reflect & Pray

What first drew you to Jesus? How are you exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit in your life so that others are attracted to its Source, God?

Holy Spirit, I welcome You to continue to grow Your fruit in my life that others might see You and want You in their lives.

Learn more about [walking by the Spirit](https://odbu.org/courses/nt050/?utm_source=May+21+ODB+article+&utm_medium=email%2C+app%2C+web&utm_campaign=Walk+by+the+Spirit+ODBU-ODB+).

#### Insight

The apostle Paul has quite a few things to teach us about the Holy Spirit’s role in the life of the believer. The moment a person believes in Jesus through faith, they receive the Holy Spirit ([Galatians 3:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%203.2), [14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Galatians%203.14)). Referred to as “the Spirit of his Son” (4:6), God sent Him to dwell in our hearts, adopting us to become His children and empowering us to call Him “Abba, Father” (4:6–7). Paul warned that the sinful human nature continues to resist the indwelling Spirit (5:17). The key to victory is to live in the power of the Spirit, being led by Him and walking and keeping in step with Him. Only in this way can we overcome the vices of the sinful nature and live in a right relationship with God (5:5, 16, 18, 25). Such a Spirit-controlled life is one that pleases God; it’s a life that bears the “fruit of the Spirit” (v. 22).

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

# God Calling – 5/21/22

# Fling It At My Feet

To see Me you must bring Me your cares and show Me your heart of Trust.  Then, as you leave your cares, you become conscious of My Presence.

This consciousness persisted in brings its reward of Me.  Through a mist of care no man may see My Face.  Only when the burden is flung at My Feet do you pass on to consciousness and spiritual sight.

Remember, obedience, obedience, obedience – the straight and narrow way into the Kingdom.

Not of you must it be said, even in lovingly tender reproach – “Why call ye Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not the things which I say.”

Character is chiseled into Beauty by the daily discipline and daily duties done.  For in many ways, My disciples must work out their own salvation, though this is not possible without My strength and Help, and without converse with Me.

Even for the Spiritual Life the training is different for different spirits.  The man who would fain live a life of prayer and meditation is thrust into the busy ways of life, and the busy man is bidden to rest and wait patiently for Me.  O joy, O rest, and in the busy ways be ever at peace.

“And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”  Mark 4:19

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/22/22

# The Explanation For Our Difficulties



…that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us… —[John 17:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+17%3A21)

If you are going through a time of isolation, seemingly all alone, read [John 17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17) . It will explain exactly why you are where you are— because Jesus has prayed that you “may be one” with the Father as He is. Are you helping God to answer that prayer, or do you have some other goal for your life? Since you became a disciple, you cannot be as independent as you used to be.

God reveals in John 17 that His purpose is not just to answer our prayers, but that through prayer we might come to discern His mind. Yet there is one prayer which God must answer, and that is the prayer of Jesus— “…that they may be one just as We are one…” ([John 17:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:22)). Are we as close to Jesus Christ as that?

God is not concerned about our plans; He doesn’t ask, “Do you want to go through this loss of a loved one, this difficulty, or this defeat?” No, He allows these things for His own purpose. The things we are going through are either making us sweeter, better, and nobler men and women, or they are making us more critical and fault-finding, and more insistent on our own way. The things that happen either make us evil, or they make us more saintly, depending entirely on our relationship with God and its level of intimacy. If we will pray, regarding our own lives, “Your will be done” ([Matthew 26:42](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26:42)), then we will be encouraged and comforted by John 17, knowing that our Father is working according to His own wisdom, accomplishing what is best. When we understand God’s purpose, we will not become small-minded and cynical. Jesus prayed nothing less for us than absolute oneness with Himself, just as He was one with the Father. Some of us are far from this oneness; yet God will not leave us alone until we are one with Him— because Jesus prayed, “…that they all may be one….”

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

Our danger is to water down God’s word to suit ourselves. God never fits His word to suit me; He fits me to suit His word. Not Knowing Whither, 901 R

# CCEL – 5/22/22

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.—[JOHN 14:27.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html#John.14.27)

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.—Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches. and knoweth not who shall gather them.—What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

Martha, Martha, thou are careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.—I would have you without carefulness.

These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.—The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.—The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

[I John 2:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.17). -[Psa. 39:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.39.html#Ps.39.6). -[Rom. 6:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html#Rom.6.21).[Luke 10:41,42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html#Luke.10.41). -[I Cor.7:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.7.html#iCor.7.32).[John 16:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html#John.16.33). -[II Thes. 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiThess.3.html#iiThess.3.16). -[Num. 6:24-26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.6.html#Num.6.24).

“He led them forth by the right way.” [Psalm 107:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.107.html#Ps.107.7)

Changeful experience often leads the anxious believer to inquire “Why is it thus with me?” I looked for light, but lo, darkness came; for peace, but behold, trouble. I said in my heart, my mountain standeth firm; I shall never be moved. Lord, thou dost hide thy face, and I am troubled. It was but yesterday that I could read my title clear; today my evidences are bedimmed, and my hopes are clouded. Yesterday, I could climb to Pisgah’s top, and view the landscape o'er, and rejoice with confidence in my future inheritance; today, my spirit has no hopes, but many fears; no joys, but much distress. Is this part of God’s plan with me? Can this be the way in which God would bring me to heaven? Yes, it is even so. The eclipse of your faith, the darkness of your mind, the fainting of your hope, all these things are but parts of God’s method of making you ripe for the great inheritance upon which you shall soon enter. These trials are for the testing and strengthening of your faith—they are waves that wash you further upon the rock—they are winds which waft your ship the more swiftly towards the desired haven. According to David’s words, so it might be said of you, “So he bringeth them to their desired haven.” By honour and dishonour, by evil report and by good report, by plenty and by poverty, by joy and by distress, by persecution and by peace, by all these things is the life of your souls maintained, and by each of these are you helped on your way. Oh, think not, believer, that your sorrows are out of God’s plan; they are necessary parts of it. “We must, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom.” Learn, then, even to “count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.”

“O let my trembling soul be still,

And wait thy wise, thy holy will!

I cannot, Lord, thy purpose see,

Yet all is well since ruled by thee.”

# Word Live – 5/22/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/22/22

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

# Today in the Word – 5/22/22

# Longing for the Past

**Read: Psalm 138**

#### Of David.

**1**I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;  
    before the “gods” I will sing your praise.  
**2**I will bow down toward your holy temple  
    and will praise your name  
    for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,  
for you have so exalted your solemn decree  
    that it surpasses your fame.  
**3**When I called, you answered me;  
    you greatly emboldened me.

**4**May all the kings of the earth praise you, Lord,  
    when they hear what you have decreed.  
**5**May they sing of the ways of the Lord,  
    for the glory of the Lord is great.

**6**Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;  
    though lofty, he sees them from afar.  
**7**Though I walk in the midst of trouble,  
    you preserve my life.  
You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes;  
    with your right hand you save me.  
**8**The Lord will vindicate me;  
    your love, Lord, endures forever—  
    do not abandon the works of your hands.

I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart. Psalm 138:1

Often we don't appreciate what we have until it's gone. As I am writing this, my ankle is in a walking cast. The experience has made me long for the days when I could walk normally, and I look forward to being able to do so soon!

Psalm 138 is written from the perspective of those living outside Israel. We can be sure that the exiles longed for all that was in their past. They were surrounded by opposing beliefs and cultural practices. But instead of being tempted to give in and worship the gods of foreign lands, David dedares that "before the 'gods' I will sing your praise" (v. 1).

You and I also live in a culture surrounded by other gods, including wealth, influence, pleasure, and power. When we praise God as being the sale object worthy of praise, we are also naming and condemning the idols and idol worship that surrounds us. Only one way is the true way.

Perhaps because of the exposure to other gods, the Psalmist has a deepened appreciation for the God of Israel. He recounts what makes our God unique: "Though the LORD is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly; though lofty, he sees them from afar" (v. 6). Although God is the Creator of the universe and Lord of all people, he still cares for and sees the humble. God's compassion and faithfulness to His covenant is on full display.

Because of God's greatness, the Psalmist prays, "May all the kings of the earth praise you, LORD, when they hear what you have decreed" (v. 4). He desires that people from all the

nations will join him in worshiping the God of Israel.

>>We can be grateful that we worship the one, true and living God! Today, reflect on God's compassion and care. He sees and knows you (v. 6). Remember the times He has delivered you in the past (v. 3) and anticipate His faithfulness now and in the future.

**Pray with Us**

Heavenly Father, You know us more intimately than we know ourselves. In Scripture we hear again and again that Your love endures forever. Remind us of these truths when we begin to doubt that You will take care of us.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/22/22

# Something Deep and Binding

**Genesis 1:26–28**

**26**Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A26%E2%80%9328&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26a)] and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

**27**So God created mankind in his own image,  
    in the image of God he created them;  
    male and female he created them.

**28**God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

#### Footnotes

1. [Genesis 1:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A26%E2%80%9328&version=NIV#en-NIV-26) Probable reading of the original Hebrew text (see Syriac); Masoretic Text the earth

God created mankind in his own image. [Genesis 1:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%201.27)

Amina, an Iraqi immigrant, and Joseph, an American from birth, attended a political protest on opposite sides. We’ve been taught to believe that those who are separated by ethnicity and politics carry unbridled animosity toward each other. However, when a small mob accosted Joseph, trying to set his shirt on fire, Amina rushed to his defense. “I don’t think we could be any further apart as people,” Joseph told a reporter, “and yet, it was just kinda like this common ‘that’s not OK’ moment.” Something deeper than politics knit Amina and Joseph together.

Though we often have genuine disagreements with one another—substantial differences we often can’t ignore—there are far deeper realities that bind us together. We’re all created by God and bound together in one beloved human family. God has created each of us—regardless of gender, social class, ethnic identity or political persuasion—“in his own image” ([Genesis 1:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%201.27)). Whatever else might be true, God is reflected in both you and me. Further, He’s given us a shared purpose to “fill” and “rule” God’s world with wisdom and care (v. 28).

Whenever we forget how we’re bound together in God, we do damage to ourselves and others. But whenever we come together in His grace and truth, we participate in His desire to make a good and flourishing world.

#### Reflect & Pray

Who seems to be completely different from you? What would it be like to spend time with them, sharing what you have in common?

God, the way the world is right now, it’s hard to believe that because of You every person shares something deep inside. Help me see this truth.

#### Insight

The Latin term imago Dei means “image of God.” Biblically speaking, the lofty notion that humans are created in the likeness of God is rooted in [Genesis 1:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%201.26): “Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ ” Contextually understood, humans are created by God and are like Him in unique ways that allow them, on His behalf, to “rule over” (to have dominion over) what He’s created. This grand governing assignment includes the capacity to reason critically, to judge wisely, and to create with beauty and utility. These and other aspects of being like God are included in humans being “crowned . . . with glory and honor” ([Psalm 8:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%208.5)).

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

# God Calling – 5/22/22

# Command Your Lord

Lord, I claim Thy help.

Yes!  Claim, be constantly claiming.  There is a trust that waits long, and a trust that brooks no delay – that once convinced of the right of a course, once sure of God’s guidance, says with all the persistence of a child, “Now.”  “Make no long tarrying, oh, my God.”

You are no longer servants but friends.  A friend can command his friend – can know that all the friend, the true friend, has is his by right.  That does not mean an idle living at the expense of a friend, but claiming the friend’s means:  name, time, all that he has, when your supply is exhausted.

Friendship – true friendship, implies the right to appropriate.  And in God’s service is perfect freedom.  Heirs of God – you are joint heirs with Me in the inheritance.  We share the Father’s property. You have the same right to use and claim I have.  Use your right.  A beggar supplicates.  A son, a daughter, appropriates.

Small wonder when I see My children sitting before My House supplicating and waiting – that I leave them there until they realize how foolish such action, when they have only to walk into their Home and take.

This cannot be the attitude of all.  There must be first a definite realization of Sonship.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall receive them.  Mark 11:24

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/23/22

# Our Careful Unbelief



…do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. —[Matthew 6:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A25)

Jesus summed up commonsense carefulness in the life of a disciple as unbelief. If we have received the Spirit of God, He will squeeze right through our lives, as if to ask, “Now where do I come into this relationship, this vacation you have planned, or these new books you want to read?” And He always presses the point until we learn to make Him our first consideration. Whenever we put other things first, there is confusion.

“…do not worry about your life….” Don’t take the pressure of your provision upon yourself. It is not only wrong to worry, it is unbelief; worrying means we do not believe that God can look after the practical details of our lives, and it is never anything but those details that worry us. Have you ever noticed what Jesus said would choke the Word He puts in us? Is it the devil? No— “the cares of this world” ([Matthew 13:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13:22)). It is always our little worries. We say, “I will not trust when I cannot see”— and that is where unbelief begins. The only cure for unbelief is obedience to the Spirit.

The greatest word of Jesus to His disciples is abandon.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

When you are joyful, be joyful; when you are sad, be sad. If God has given you a sweet cup, don’t make it bitter; and if He has given you a bitter cup, don’t try and make it sweet; take things as they come.  Shade of His Hand, 1226 L

# CCEL – 5/23/22

Thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord.—[EXO. 28:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.28.html" \l "Exod.28.12)

Jesus . . . because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.—Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.

Seeing . . . that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace.

The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him: and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

[Heb. 7:24,25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.24). -[Jude 24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24).[Heb. 4:14-16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html" \l "Heb.4.14).[Deut. 33:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.33.html" \l "Deut.33.12).

“The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.” **[Psalm 138:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.138.html" \l "Ps.138.8)**

Most manifestly the confidence which the Psalmist here expressed was a divine confidence. He did not say, “Ihave grace enough to perfect that which concerneth me—my faith is so steady that it will not stagger—my love is so warm that it will never grow cold—my resolution is so firm that nothing can move it”; no, his dependence was on the Lord alone. If we indulge in any confidence which is not grounded on the Rock of Ages, our confidence is worse than a dream, it will fall upon us, and cover us with its ruins, to our sorrow and confusion. All that Nature spins time will unravel, to the eternal confusion of all who are clothed therein. The Psalmist was wise, he rested upon nothing short of the Lord's work. It is the Lord who has begun the good work within us; it is he who has carried it on; and if he does not finish it, it never will be complete. If there be one stitch in the celestial garment of our righteousness which we are to insert ourselves, then we are lost; but this is our confidence, the Lord who began will perfect. He has done it all, must do it all, and will do it all. Our confidence must not be in what we have done, nor in what we have resolved to do, but entirely in what the Lord will do. Unbelief insinuates—“You will never be able to stand. Look at the evil of your heart, you can never conquer sin; remember the sinful pleasures and temptations of the world that beset you, you will be certainly allured by them and led astray.” Ah! yes, we should indeed perish if left to our own strength. If we had alone to navigate our frail vessels over so rough a sea, we might well give up the voyage in despair; but, thanks be to God, he will perfect that which concerneth us, and bring us to the desired haven. We can never be too confident when we confide in him alone, and never too much concerned to have such a trust.

# Word Live – 5/23/22

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

# Scripture Union – 5/23/22

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

# Today in the Word – 5/23/22

# God With Us

**Read: Psalm 139**

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

**1**You have searched me, Lord,  
    and you know me.  
**2**You know when I sit and when I rise;  
    you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
**3**You discern my going out and my lying down;  
    you are familiar with all my ways.  
**4**Before a word is on my tongue  
    you, Lord, know it completely.  
**5**You hem me in behind and before,  
    and you lay your hand upon me.  
**6**Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
    too lofty for me to attain.

**7**Where can I go from your Spirit?  
    Where can I flee from your presence?  
**8**If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
    if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
**9**If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
    if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
**10**even there your hand will guide me,  
    your right hand will hold me fast.  
**11**If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me  
    and the light become night around me,”  
**12**even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
    the night will shine like the day,  
    for darkness is as light to you.

**13**For you created my inmost being;  
    you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
**14**I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
    your works are wonderful,  
    I know that full well.  
**15**My frame was not hidden from you  
    when I was made in the secret place,  
    when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
**16**Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
    all the days ordained for me were written in your book  
    before one of them came to be.  
**17**How precious to me are your thoughts,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+139&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16257a)] God!  
    How vast is the sum of them!  
**18**Were I to count them,  
    they would outnumber the grains of sand—  
    when I awake, I am still with you.

**19**If only you, God, would slay the wicked!  
    Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!  
**20**They speak of you with evil intent;  
    your adversaries misuse your name.  
**21**Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord,  
    and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?  
**22**I have nothing but hatred for them;  
    I count them my enemies.  
**23**Search me, God, and know my heart;  
    test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
**24**See if there is any offensive way in me,  
    and lead me in the way everlasting.

#### Footnotes

1. [Psalm 139:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+139&version=NIV#en-NIV-16257) Or How amazing are your thoughts concerning me

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? Psalm 139:7

This past summer my family and I had the opportunity to visit the famous prison island, Alcatraz. The most severe punishment an inmate could experience there was to be placed in

solitary confinement. There is almost nothing worse than to feel completely alone and abandoned.

In today's reading, David was threatened by enemies all around (vv. 19-24). In that situation it would be easy to believe that God had abandoned him. To counter this idea, David reminds himself of important truths about God. First, we are fully known by God. God knows what we are doing and thinking. He declares, “before a word is on my tongue, you, LORD, know it completely" (v. 4).

Second, God is present everywhere. We are never alone. Even if we journey to the furthest corner of the earth or to the deepest part of the sea, “even there your hand will guide

me, your right hand will hold me fast" (v. 10). Even in the midst of threatening enemies, God is right there with us.

Third, God cares about us. Before David was born, God is the one who "knit me together in my mother's womb" (v. 13). David's life (and ours!) is under the sovereign care of God (v. 16).

All three of these ideas were counter-cultural in David's world. Most people believed that the gods were confined to particular places. The gods also did not know everything or care deeply about their worshipers. Some people even thought the gods required child sacrifice. David knew that God is different. He values human life even in the womb (vv. 13-14).

>>As God's child, you are never alone. During political turmoil, a pandemic, sickness, or loss God has not abandoned us. Sometimes we need to be reminded that one of the final promises that Jesus made to us was: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"

(Matt. 28:20).

**Pray with Us**

Your omnipresence is a comfort to us, lord-to know that our decisions can never take us outside of Your presence; that our sin can never banish You from our lives; that our mistakes can never remove us from Your reach.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 5/23/22

# In the End

**Read: 2 Timothy 4:6–8**

**6**For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. **7**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8**Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. [2 Timothy 4:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.7)

I’m often given the privilege of leading spiritual retreats. Getting away for a few days to pray and reflect can be deeply enriching, and during the program I sometimes ask participants to do an exercise: “Imagine your life is over and your obituary is published in the paper. What would you like it to say?” Some attendees change their life’s priorities as a result, aiming to finish their lives well.

[Second Timothy 4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204) contains the last known written words of the apostle Paul. Though probably only in his sixties, and though having faced death before, he senses his life is nearly over ([2 Timothy 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.6)). There will be no more mission trips now or writing letters to his churches. He looks back over his life and says, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (v. 7). While he hasn’t been perfect ([1 Timothy 1:15–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.15%E2%80%9316)), Paul assesses his life on how true he’s stayed to God and the gospel. Tradition suggests he was martyred soon after.

Contemplating our final days has a way of clarifying what matters now. Paul’s words can be a good model to follow. Fight the good fight. Finish the race. Keep the faith. Because in the end what will matter is that we’ve stayed true to God and His ways as He provides what we need to live, fight life’s spiritual battles, and finish well.

#### Reflect & Pray

Imagine your life is over and your obituary is published. What would you like it to say? What changes might you make now to “finish the race” well?

Father God, strengthen me to live faithfully for You, right to the end.

#### Insight

Paul used several word pictures in [2 Timothy 4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204) to describe his life. He noted that he was “being poured out like a drink offering” (v. 6). This is likely a reference to the sacrificial ceremony instituted by God in [Numbers 15:1–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Num%2015.1%E2%80%9310), in which wine was poured out (see [Hosea 9:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Hos%209.4)). However, well before the time of Moses, Jacob “poured out a drink offering” to God at Bethel ([Genesis 35:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2035.14)).

Paul also employed two metaphors from athletic competition, including fighting “the good fight” and completing “the race” ([2 Timothy 4:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.7)), references to Olympic sports of the day. And he spoke of “the time for my departure” (v. 6), an image evocative of a voyage. Paul, who’d traveled much during his lifetime to share the good news of Jesus, was now constrained by chains. Yet one final trip awaited him. His cold, damp prison cell served as a port of departure for heaven.

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

# God Calling – 5/23/22

# Little Frets

Your lack of control is not due to the big burdens, but to your permitting the little frets and cares and burdens to accumulate.

If anything vex you deal with that and get that righted with Me before you allow yourself to speak to, or meet anybody, or to undertake any new duty.

Look upon yourself more as performing My errands and coming back quickly to Me to tell Me that message is delivered, that task done.

Then with no feeling of responsibility as to result (your only responsibility was to see the duty done) go out again, rejoicing at still more to do for My Sake.

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes. Song of Solomon 2:15