# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/26/19

# The Focal Point of Spiritual Power



…except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ… —[Galatians 6:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Galatians+6%3A14)

If you want to know the power of God (that is, the resurrection life of Jesus) in your human flesh, you must dwell on the tragedy of God. Break away from your personal concern over your own spiritual condition, and with a completely open spirit consider the tragedy of God. Instantly the power of God will be in you. “Look to Me…” ([Isaiah 45:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+45:22)). Pay attention to the external Source and the internal power will be there. We lose power because we don’t focus on the right thing. The effect of the Cross is salvation, sanctification, healing, etc., but we are not to preach any of these. We are to preach “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” ([1 Corinthians 2:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+2:2)). The proclaiming of Jesus will do its own work. Concentrate on God’s focal point in your preaching, and even if your listeners seem to pay it no attention, they will never be the same again. If I share my own words, they are of no more importance than your words are to me. But if we share the truth of God with one another, we will encounter it again and again. We have to focus on the great point of spiritual power— the Cross. If we stay in contact with that center of power, its energy is released in our lives. In holiness movements and spiritual experience meetings, the focus tends to be put not on the Cross of Christ but on the effects of the Cross.

The feebleness of the church is being criticized today, and the criticism is justified. One reason for the feebleness is that there has not been this focus on the true center of spiritual power. We have not dwelt enough on the tragedy of Calvary or on the meaning of redemption.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

It is not what a man does that is of final importance, but what he is in what he does. The atmosphere produced by a man, much more than his activities, has the lasting influence.  Baffled to Fight Better, 51 L

# CCEL – 11/26/19

The Lord delighteth in thee.—[ISA. 62:4.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.62.html" \l "Isa.62.4)

Thus saith the Lord that created thee, . . . Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.—Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of mine hands: thy walls are continually before me.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.—My delights were with the sons of men.—The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.—They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight.

[Isa. 43:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.1). -[Isa. 49:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.15).[Psa. 37:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.23). -[Prov. 8:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.31). -[Psa. 147:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.147.html" \l "Ps.147.11). -[Mal. 3:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.17).[Col. 1:21,22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.21).

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” [Ecclesiastes 9:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eccl.9.html" \l "Eccl.9.10)

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,” refers to works that are possible. There are many things which our heart findeth to do which we never shall do. It is well it is in our heart; but if we would be eminently useful, we must not be content with forming schemes in our heart, and talking of them; we must practically carry out “whatsoever our hand findeth to do.” One good deed is more worth than a thousand brilliant theories. Let us not wait for large opportunities, or for a different kind of work, but do just the things we “find to do” day by day. We have no other time in which to live. The past is gone; the future has not arrived; we never shall have any time but time present. Then do not wait until your experience has ripened into maturity before you attempt to serve God. Endeavour now to bring forth fruit. Serve God now, but be careful as to the way in which you perform what you find to do—“do it with thy might.” Do it promptly; do not fritter away your life in thinking of what you intend to do to-morrow as if that could recompense for the idleness of today. No man ever served God by doing things to-morrow. If we honour Christ and are blessed, it is by the things which we do today. Whatever you do for Christ throw your whole soul into it. Do not give Christ a little slurred labour, done as a matter of course now and then; but when you do serve him, do it with heart, and soul, and strength.

But where is the might of a Christian? It is not in himself, for he is perfect weakness. His might lieth in the Lord of Hosts. Then let us seek his help; let us proceed with prayer and faith, and when we have done what our “hand findeth to do,” let us wait upon the Lord for his blessing. What we do thus will be well done, and will not fail in its effect.

# Word Live – 11/26/19

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# Today in the Word – 11/26/19

# Praise God with Thankfulness

[**Read: Luke 17:11–19**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+17%3a11%e2%80%9319)

### **Jesus Heals Ten Men With Leprosy**

11Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+17%3a11%e2%80%9319#fen-NIV-25664a)] met him. They stood at a distance 13and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

14When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

15One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

17Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Luke 17:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+17%3a11%e2%80%9319#en-NIV-25664) The Greek word traditionally translated leprosy was used for various diseases affecting the skin.

In our culture, an entire market is dedicated to expressing gratitude. Businesses like Hallmark and 1-800-FLOWERS have made it easier than ever to say thank you to special people in our lives. However, we can still forget to express appreciation to our family, coworkers, neighbors, and friends. This isn’t a problem only for us today, it has been an issue for generations.

I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. Psalm 9:1

In our reading today, we find ten people with a horrible skin disease (v. 11). Not only were they in tremendous physical pain, but they also suffered emotional and spiritual hardship. If you were diagnosed with this particular disease in those days, you were as good as dead. By law you were forced to leave your family, friends, job, and live with others who had a similar affliction. You were not allowed to worship in the temple. But one day, all of that changed: Jesus showed up, and they were made clean.

Imagine the ecstasy they felt as they started to look down at their hands, then their arms, and then their legs and feet. They realized they were not just healed but “cleansed” (v. 14). Then something even more incredible happened. One of the ten, identified here as a Samaritan (v. 16), paused and returned to Jesus to give thanks. He stopped, did an aboutface, and made a beeline for Jesus.

This time, instead of having to yell, “Unclean, unclean,” he could go directly through the crowd praising God with a loud voice. He fell at the feet of Jesus and gave thanks. Jesus responded, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?” (v. 17). All those healed that day were grateful, but only one turned around and turned his gratitude into thankfulness and praise.

### **Apply the Word**

What are you grateful for today? Like the man who returned to say “thanks,” will you turn your gratitude into action? Even in the midst of your busy schedule, pause and turn your grateful into thankful. Let others know by writing a thank-you note. It is one thing to be grateful, but thankfulness puts praise into action.

### **Pray with Us**

As vice president and associate provost, Dr. Bryan O’Neal implements the long-term vision of the Moody education and also focuses on many immediate practical details. Today, lift to God in prayer all the responsibilities of his leadership role.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 11/26/19

# He’s Got This

 **Read: 2 Peter 3:14–18**

14So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 15Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

17Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. 18But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

Pastor Watson Jones remembers learning to ride a bike. His father was walking alongside when little Watson saw some girls sitting on a porch. “Daddy, I got this!” he said. He didn’t. He realized too late he hadn’t learned to balance without his father’s steadying grip. He wasn’t as grown up as he thought.

Our heavenly Father longs for us to grow up and “become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). But spiritual maturity is different from natural maturity. Parents raise their children to become independent, to no longer need them. Our divine Father raises us to daily depend on Him more.

Peter begins his letter by promising “grace and peace . . . through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,” and he ends by urging us to “grow in” that same “grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:2; 3:18). Mature Christians never outgrow their need for Jesus.

Watson warns, “Some of us are busy slapping Jesus’s hands off the handlebars of our life.” As if we didn’t need His strong hands to hold us, to pick us up, and to hug us when we wobble and flop. We can’t grow beyond our dependence on Christ. We only grow by sinking our roots deeper in the grace and knowledge of Him.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

**Where do you feel your dependence on Jesus? How is that a sign of maturity?**

Jesus, thank You for walking alongside me as I grow in my relationship with You.

#### **Insight**

Peter wrote both of his letters (see 1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 3:1) to Christians in “the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia” (roughly modern Turkey). In his second letter, he warns the believers to be on guard against false teachers (3:17). To ensure they’re not easily persuaded, they must “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (v. 18). To know Jesus intimately is the clarion call of true discipleship and the end goal of every believer (John 17:3; Ephesians 1:17; Colossians 2:2). Peter says we’ve received “everything we need for living a godly life . . . by coming to know him” (2 Peter 1:3 nlt).

# God Calling – 11/26/19

# My Beauty

The prophet realized the Truth of My later saying "He that hath ears to hear let him hear" which might be rendered "he that hath eyes to see let him see."

The God who was to be born upon earth was not to be housed in a body so beautiful that men would follow and adore for the beauty of His Countenance.

No! He was to be as one whom the world would despise, but to the seeing eye, the Spirit that dwelt in that body should be so beautiful as to lack nothing. "Yet when we shall see Him, there is no Beauty that we should desire Him."

Pray for the seeing eye, to see the Beauty of My Character, of My Spirit. Nay, more, as faith saw the Beauty of the Godhead in One who had no form or comeliness, so pray to have that faith to see the Beauty of My Love in My dealings with you, in My actions.  Till, in what the world will distort into cruelty and harshness, you, with the eyes of faith, will see all that you could desire.

Know Me. Talk to Me. Let Me talk to you, so that I may make clear to your loving hearts what seems mysterious now and purposeless ("having no form nor comeliness.")

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ... and when we shall see him, there is no  beauty that we should desire him.  Isaiah 53:

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/27/19

# The Consecration of Spiritual Power



…by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. —[Galatians 6:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Galatians+6%3A14)

If I dwell on the Cross of Christ, I do not simply become inwardly devout and solely interested in my own holiness— I become strongly focused on Jesus Christ’s interests. Our Lord was not a recluse nor a fanatical holy man practicing self-denial. He did not physically cut Himself off from society, but He was inwardly disconnected all the time. He was not aloof, but He lived in another world. In fact, He was so much in the common everyday world that the religious people of His day accused Him of being a glutton and a drunkard. Yet our Lord never allowed anything to interfere with His consecration of spiritual power.

It is not genuine consecration to think that we can refuse to be used of God now in order to store up our spiritual power for later use. That is a hopeless mistake. The Spirit of God has set a great many people free from their sin, yet they are experiencing no fullness in their lives— no true sense of freedom. The kind of religious life we see around the world today is entirely different from the vigorous holiness of the life of Jesus Christ. “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one” ([John 17:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:15)). We are to be in the world but not of it— to be separated internally, not externally (see [John 17:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:16)).

We must never allow anything to interfere with the consecration of our spiritual power. Consecration (being dedicated to God’s service) is our part; sanctification (being set apart from sin and being made holy) is God’s part. We must make a deliberate determination to be interested only in what God is interested. The way to make that determination, when faced with a perplexing problem, is to ask yourself, “Is this the kind of thing in which Jesus Christ is interested, or is it something in which the spirit that is diametrically opposed to Jesus is interested?”

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The attitude of a Christian towards the providential order in which he is placed is to recognize that God is behind it for purposes of His own.  Biblical Ethics, 99 R

# CCEL – 11/27/19

The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.—[JOHN 17:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.22)

I saw . . . the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.—These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.—Upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness . . . of a man above upon it. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of theLord.

I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.—No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.—God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[Isa. 6:1-3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.6.html" \l "Isa.6.1). -[John 12:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.12.html" \l "John.12.41). -[Ezek. 1:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.1.html" \l "Ezek.1.26),[28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.1.html" \l "Ezek.1.28).[Exo. 33:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.18),[20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.20). -[John 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.18). -[II Cor. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html" \l "iiCor.4.6).

“Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord.” [Zechariah 3:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.3.html" \l "Zech.3.1)

In Joshua the high priest we see a picture of each and every child of God, who has been made nigh by the blood of Christ, and has been taught to minister in holy things, and enter into that which is within the veil. Jesus has made us priests and kings unto God, and even here upon earth we exercise the priesthood of consecrated living and hallowed service. But this high priest is said to be “standing before the angel of the Lord,” that is, standing to minister. This should be the perpetual position of every true believer. Every place is now God’s temple, and his people can as truly serve him in their daily employments as in his house. They are to be always “ministering,” offering the spiritual sacrifice of prayer and praise, and presenting themselves a “living sacrifice.” But notice where it is that Joshua stands to minister, it is before the angel of Jehovah. It is only through a mediator that we poor defiled ones can ever become priests unto God. I present what I have before the messenger, the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus; and through him my prayers find acceptance wrapped up in his prayers; my praises become sweet as they are bound up with bundles of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia from Christ’s own garden. If I can bring him nothing but my tears, he will put them with his own tears in his own bottle for he once wept; if I can bring him nothing but my groans and sighs, he will accept these as an acceptable sacrifice, for he once was broken in heart, and sighed heavily in spirit. I myself, standing in him, am accepted in the Beloved; and all my polluted works, though in themselves only objects of divine abhorrence, are so received, that God smelleth a sweet savour. He is content and I am blessed. See, then, the position of the Christian—“a priest—standing—before the angel of the Lord.”

# Word Live – 11/27/19

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# Today in the Word – 11/27/19

# Greetings with Thanks and Praise

**Read:** [**Matthew 21:1–11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311)

### **Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King**

21 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

4This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

5“Say to Daughter Zion,  
    ‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
    and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-23832a)]

6The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. 8A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-23836b)] to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-23836c)]

“Hosanna[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-23836d)] in the highest heaven!”

10When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

11The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Matthew 21:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-23832) Zech. 9:9
2. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-23836) A Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15
3. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-23836) Psalm 118:25,26
4. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3a1%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-23836) A Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15

According to AAA, the day before Thanksgiving in the United States is one of the busiest travel days of the year. People travel by car or airplane, some going long distances, to celebrate the holiday with family and friends. For Jesus and His disciples, one of the busiest travel days of the year was when the Jewish people would flood into Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you. Psalm 118:26

Our passage today highlights Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem days before Passover. Instead of arriving in an intimidating motorcade displaying His power and might, Jesus traveled on the back of a humble donkey, thus fulfilling the prophecy from Zechariah 9:9. The crowds took notice of Jesus’ arrival and welcomed Him with praise. Some went ahead and others followed, but they all shouted, “Hosanna!” which is a Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” (Matt. 21:8–9). Hosanna is also an exclamation of praise.

Their praise of Jesus caused the entire city to sit up, pay attention, and wonder who was coming (v. 10). The crowds’ response gives us a glimpse into the reason they would later turn on Jesus and approve His crucifixion. They believed He was a prophet from Nazareth (v. 11). The crowds showed their thanks and praise of someone they thought was a prophet. They completely missed who Jesus really was—the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

As you gather with your loved ones this holiday, will your thanksgiving and praise of the Lord cause others to ask, “Who is this Jesus?” If they do, I hope you are able to give them an answer. Jesus is not just someone to be appreciated because of the things He has done, He is to receive thanks and praise because of who He is, the Savior of the world.

### **Apply the Word**

If you are welcoming people into your home this Thanksgiving, treat them as if you were welcoming Jesus. You don’t need to treat them as “Savior,” but perhaps you could go above and beyond to make them feel loved. If you are traveling, perhaps arrive with a humble attitude and spirit, looking to serve and not to be served.

### **Pray with Us**

In preparation for tomorrow’s Thanksgiving holiday, let’s thank our Father for His Holy Spirit, His amazing presence in our lives, His mercy, and His overwhelming love. Imitating Christ, let’s serve others with humility.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 11/27/19

# Greedy Grasping



**Read: Ecclesiastes 4:4–8**

4And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person’s envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

5Fools fold their hands  
    and ruin themselves.  
6Better one handful with tranquillity  
    than two handfuls with toil  
    and chasing after the wind.

7Again I saw something meaningless under the sun:

8There was a man all alone;  
    he had neither son nor brother.  
There was no end to his toil,  
    yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.  
“For whom am I toiling,” he asked,  
    “and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?”  
This too is meaningless—  
    a miserable business!

Better one handful with tranquillity than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. Ecclesiastes 4:6

In the ancient fable The Boy and the Filberts (Nuts), a boy sticks his hand into a jar of nuts and grabs a great fistful. But his hand is so full that it gets stuck in the jar. Unwilling to lose even a little of his bounty, the boy begins to weep. Eventually, he’s counseled to let go of some of the nuts so the jar will let go of his hand. Greed can be a hard boss.

The wise teacher of Ecclesiastes illustrates this moral with a lesson on hands and what they say about us. He compared and contrasted the lazy with the greedy when he wrote: “Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves. Better one handful with tranquillity than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind” (4:5–6). While the lazy procrastinate until they’re ruined, those who pursue wealth come to realize their efforts are “meaningless—a miserable business!” (v. 8).

According to the teacher, the desired state is to relax from the toil of greedy grasping in order to find contentment in what truly belongs to us. For that which is ours will always remain. As Jesus said, “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul” (Mark 8:36).

By:[**Remi Oyedele**](https://odb.org/author/remioyedele/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

**What are you driven to pursue and grasp? How can you apply the wise words of Ecclesiastes in order to find tranquility?**

God, thank You for Your provision and faithful presence in my life. Help me to live in a contented way, exhibiting true gratefulness to You.

#### **Insight**

The book of Ecclesiastes is properly placed amid the Wisdom books of the Old Testament (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs). This obscure book highlights the concerns of mankind from the beginning, with questions about God, earthly living and eternity, joy and sorrow, good and evil, death and dying, wisdom and folly. Ecclesiastes is like a twelve-chapter journal where the author records his musings and perspective on how life works. The writer is a realist (he doesn’t ignore the many complexities of life) and uses phrases that represent the author’s varied frustrations. The word meaningless is repeated thirty-five times, and the phrase chasing after the wind occurs nine times. But the writer is also a theist—he believes in God. He urges his readers to acknowledge and reverence their Maker. Why? “God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (12:14).

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

# God Calling – 11/27/19

# Not Thwarted

Not our wills but Thine, O Lord.

Man has so misunderstood Me in this.  I want no will laid grudgingly upon My Altar.  I want you to desire and love My Will, because therein lies your happiness and Spirit-rest.

Whenever you feel that you cannot leave the choice to Me, then pray, not to be able to accept My Will, but to know and love Me more.  With that knowledge, and the Love, will come the certainty that I know best, and that I want only the best for you and yours.

How little those know Me who think I wish to thwart them. How often I am answering their own prayers in the best and quickest way.

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.  Luke 22:42

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/28/19

# The Riches of the Destitute



…being justified freely by His grace… —[Romans 3:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+3%3A24)

The gospel of the grace of God awakens an intense longing in human souls and an equally intense resentment, because the truth that it reveals is not palatable or easy to swallow. There is a certain pride in people that causes them to give and give, but to come and accept a gift is another thing. I will give my life to martyrdom; I will dedicate my life to service— I will do anything. But do not humiliate me to the level of the most hell-deserving sinner and tell me that all I have to do is accept the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

We have to realize that we cannot earn or win anything from God through our own efforts. We must either receive it as a gift or do without it. The greatest spiritual blessing we receive is when we come to the knowledge that we are destitute. Until we get there, our Lord is powerless. He can do nothing for us as long as we think we are sufficient in and of ourselves. We must enter into His kingdom through the door of destitution. As long as we are “rich,” particularly in the area of pride or independence, God can do nothing for us. It is only when we get hungry spiritually that we receive the Holy Spirit. The gift of the essential nature of God is placed and made effective in us by the Holy Spirit. He imparts to us the quickening life of Jesus, making us truly alive. He takes that which was “beyond” us and places it “within” us. And immediately, once “the beyond” has come “within,” it rises up to “the above,” and we are lifted into the kingdom where Jesus lives and reigns (see [John 3:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:5)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We are not fundamentally free; external circumstances are not in our hands, they are in God’s hands, the one thing in which we are free is in our personal relationship to God. We are not responsible for the circumstances we are in, but we are responsible for the way we allow those circumstances to affect us; we can either allow them to get on top of us, or we can allow them to transform us into what God wants us to be.  Conformed to His Image, 354 L

# CCEL – 11/28/19

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.—[JAS. 2:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html" \l "Jas.2.26)

Not every one that saith, . . . Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.—Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.—Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.

[Matt. 7:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.7.html#Matt.7.21). -[Heb. 12:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.14). –[II Pet. 1:5-10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.1.html" \l "iiPet.1.5).[Eph. 2:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.8).

“For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.” [3 John 3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiiJohn.1.html" \l "iiiJohn.1.3)

The truth was in Gaius, and Gaius walked in the truth. If the first had not been the case, the second could never have occurred; and if the second could not be said of him the first would have been a mere pretence. Truth must enter into the soul, penetrate and saturate it, or else it is of no value. Doctrines held as a matter of creed are like bread in the hand, which ministers no nourishment to the frame; but doctrine accepted by the heart, is as food digested, which, by assimilation, sustains and builds up the body. In us truth must be a living force, an active energy, an indwelling reality, a part of the woof and warp of our being. If it be in us, we cannot henceforth part with it. A man may lose his garments or his limbs, but his inward parts are vital, and cannot be torn away without absolute loss of life. A Christian can die, but he cannot deny the truth. Now it is a rule of nature that the inward affects the outward, as light shines from the centre of the lantern through the glass: when, therefore, the truth is kindled within, its brightness soon beams forth in the outward life and conversation. It is said that the food of certain worms colours the cocoons of silk which they spin: and just so the nutriment upon which a man’s inward nature lives gives a tinge to every word and deed proceeding from him. To walk in the truth, imports a life of integrity, holiness, faithfulness, and simplicity—the natural product of those principles of truth which the gospel teaches, and which the Spirit of God enables us to receive. We may judge of the secrets of the soul by their manifestation in the man’s conversation. Be it ours today, O gracious Spirit, to be ruled and governed by thy divine authority, so that nothing false or sinful may reign in our hearts, lest it extend its malignant influence to our daily walk among men.

# Word Live – 11/28/19

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

# Scripture Union – 11/28/19

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# Today in the Word – 11/28/19

# Every Day Is Thanks Giving

**Read:** [**Revelation 21:1–5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+21%3a1%e2%80%935)

### **A New Heaven and a New Earth**

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+21%3a1%e2%80%935" \l "fen-NIV-31055a" \o "See footnote a)] for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+21%3a1%e2%80%935" \l "fen-NIV-31058b" \o "See footnote b)] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

5He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Revelation 21:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+21%3a1%e2%80%935#en-NIV-31055) Isaiah 65:17
2. [Revelation 21:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+21%3a1%e2%80%935#en-NIV-31058) Isaiah 25:8

Sometimes I get so full at Thanksgiving dinner I skip dessert. This is unfortunate because the end of the meal with its pumpkin pie and whipped cream is one of the best parts.

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Revelation 19:7

The vision John describes at the end of the book of Revelation is definitely one that sparks thanksgiving. He begins by seeing the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, looking as beautiful as a bride on her wedding day (vv. 1–2). Can anything be better than this sight? The answer is yes, because what he hears next gives clarity to what he witnessed. Not only does John note that it was a loud voice but he identifies where the voice was coming from—a throne. This is significant because it indicates that the following words come from a place of triumph and authority.

The voice John hears proclaims: “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them” (v. 3). The last time God dwelt with mankind was the incarnation of Christ when “the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us” (John 1:14). Before the incarnation, God walked with humanity in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2). John is witnessing Eden being restored and followers of Christ reunited with the resurrected Christ. This will be the time when all pain, mourning, and death will finally be exterminated (v. 4), and everything will be made new (v. 5).

Just ponder that for a moment. The God of the universe could dwell anywhere, and yet, He has chosen to be with sinners like you and me. As a result of Him allowing us to be in His presence, there will be no more suffering, only love, joy, and peace. You have a lot to be thankful for today, but John’s revelation gives us a lot to be thankful for every day.

### **Apply the Word**

As you celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends, take time to thank God for who He is and for what He has done. And, consider the feast we will one day have with the King of kings when we are reunited with Him. We will dwell with Him forever. Today, tell Him how thankful you are for your bright tomorrow.

### **Pray with Us**

We pray this month’s study in Today in the Word will enrich your Thanksgiving celebration. As you gather around the table with family and friends, or even if you prefer to be alone, take time to remember the One who is worthy of all thanksgiving and praise.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 11/28/19

# A Sincere Thank You

### **Today's Devotional** **Read: Psalm 9:1–2 [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+9%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+7%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14023a)**][[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+9%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+7%E2%80%9310&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-14023b" \o "See footnote b)]**

#### For the director of music. To the tune of “The Death of the Son.” A psalm of David.

1I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart;  
    I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.  
2I will be glad and rejoice in you;  
    I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 9:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+9%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+7%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-14023) Psalms 9 and 10 may originally have been a single acrostic poem in which alternating lines began with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In the Septuagint they constitute one psalm.
2. [Psalm 9:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+9%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+7%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-14023) In Hebrew texts 9:1-20 is numbered 9:2-21.

**Read: Psalm 9:7–10**

7The Lord reigns forever;  
    he has established his throne for judgment.  
8He rules the world in righteousness  
    and judges the peoples with equity.  
9The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,  
    a stronghold in times of trouble.  
10Those who know your name trust in you,  
    for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.

I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. Psalm 9:1

In preparation for Xavier’s first job interview, my husband, Alan, handed our son a pack of thank-you cards for him to send out after he met with prospective employers. He then pretended to be a hiring interviewer, using his decades of experience as a manager to ask Xavier questions. After the role-playing, our son tucked several copies of his resume into a folder. He smiled when Alan reminded him about the cards. “I know,” he said. “A sincere thank-you note will set me apart from all the other applicants.”

When the manager called to hire Xavier, he expressed gratitude for the first hand-written thank-you card he’d received in years.

Saying thanks makes a lasting impact. The psalmists’ heartfelt prayers and grateful worship were preserved in the book of Psalms. Though there are one hundred and fifty psalms, these two verses reflect a message of thankfulness: “I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High” (Psalm 9:1–2).

We will never be able to finish expressing our gratitude for all God’s wonderful deeds. But we can start with a sincere thank you through our prayers. We can nurture a lifestyle of grateful worship, praising God and acknowledging all He’s done and all He promises He’ll do.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What would you like to thank God for on this day He’s made? How can writing down prayers of thanks help us cultivate a spirit of gratitude in all circumstances?

Generous and loving God, please help us acknowledge the countless and wonderful ways You work.

#### **Insight**

Psalms 9 and 10 may have originally been a single acrostic poem in Hebrew in which alternating lines begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Unlike other laments (a prayer or poem of deep sorrow for the hardships and difficulties of life), these psalms begin with deep confidence and praise to God. Even in the midst of the trials, the author recognizes that God has done wonderful things and the proper response is to give thanks, spread the news of those deeds, and rejoice and sing praises to His name (9:1–2).

We see in Psalm 9 a lesson in perspective. Not only has God performed grand things like delivering His people from Egypt, sustaining them in the wilderness, and giving them the Promised Land, but His deeds are personal as well. God shows His goodness and unfolds His plan in both grand and personal ways.

# God Calling – 11/28/19

# The Way of The Spirit

Jesus, we come to Thee with Joy.

The Joy of meeting Me should more and more fill your lives.  It will. Your lives must first of all be narrowed down, more and more, into an inner circle of life with Me (the three of us), and then, as that friendship becomes more and more engrossing, more and more binding, then gradually, the circle of your interests will widen.

For the present do not think of it as a narrow life.  I have My Purpose, My Loving Purpose, in cutting you away from other work and interests, for the time.

To work from large interests and a desire for great activities and world movements, to the inner circle life with Me, is really the wrong way.  That is why so often, when, through all these activities and interests, a soul finds Me, I have to begin our Friendship by cutting away the ties that bind it to the outer and wider circle.  When it has gained strength and learned its lesson in the inner circle, it can then widen its life, working this time from within out, taking then to each contact, each friendship, the inner circle influence.

And this is to be your way of life.

This is the way of the Spirit. Man so often misunderstands this.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/29/19

# The Supremacy of Jesus Christ



He will glorify Me… —[John 16:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+16%3A14)

The holiness movements of today have none of the rugged reality of the New Testament about them. There is nothing about them that needs the death of Jesus Christ. All that is required is a pious atmosphere, prayer, and devotion. This type of experience is not supernatural nor miraculous. It did not cost the sufferings of God, nor is it stained with “the blood of the Lamb” ([Revelation 12:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+12:11)). It is not marked or sealed by the Holy Spirit as being genuine, and it has no visual sign that causes people to exclaim with awe and wonder, “That is the work of God Almighty!” Yet the New Testament is about the work of God and nothing else.

The New Testament example of the Christian experience is that of a personal, passionate devotion to the Person of Jesus Christ. Every other kind of so-called Christian experience is detached from the Person of Jesus. There is no regeneration— no being born again into the kingdom in which Christ lives and reigns supreme. There is only the idea that He is our pattern. In the New Testament Jesus Christ is the Savior long before He is the pattern. Today He is being portrayed as the figurehead of a religion— a mere example. He is that, but He is infinitely more. He is salvation itself; He is the gospel of God!

Jesus said, “…when He, the Spirit of truth, has come,…He will glorify Me…” ([John 16:13-14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:13-14)). When I commit myself to the revealed truth of the New Testament, I receive from God the gift of the Holy Spirit, who then begins interpreting to me what Jesus did. The Spirit of God does in me internally all that Jesus Christ did for me externally.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We are only what we are in the dark; all the rest is reputation. What God looks at is what we are in the dark—the imaginations of our minds; the thoughts of our heart; the habits of our bodies; these are the things that mark us in God’s sight.  The Love of God—The Ministry of the Unnoticed, 669 L

# CCEL – 11/29/19

**We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house.**—[PSA. 65:4.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.65.html" \l "Ps.65.4)

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.—I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

[Psa. 27:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.4).[Matt. 5:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.6). -[Luke 1:53](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.1.html" \l "Luke.1.53).[Psa. 107:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.107.html" \l "Ps.107.9). -[John 6:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.6.html" \l "John.6.35).[Psa. 36:7-9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.36.html" \l "Ps.36.7).

“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people ... Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.” **[Leviticus 19:16, 17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.19.html" \l "Lev.19.16)**

Tale-bearing emits a threefold poison; for it injures the teller, the hearer, and the person concerning whom the tale is told. Whether the report be true or false, we are by this precept of God’s Word forbidden to spread it. The reputations of the Lord’s people should be very precious in our sight, and we should count it shame to help the devil to dishonour the Church and the name of the Lord. Some tongues need a bridle rather than a spur. Many glory in pulling down their brethren, as if thereby they raised themselves. Noah’s wise sons cast a mantle over their father, and he who exposed him earned a fearful curse. We may ourselves one of these dark days need forbearance and silence from our brethren, let us render it cheerfully to those who require it now. Be this our family rule, and our personal bond—Speak evil of no man.

The Holy Spirit, however, permits us to censure sin, and prescribes the way in which we are to do it. It must be done by rebuking our brother to his face, not by railing behind his back. This course is manly, brotherly, Christlike, and under God’s blessing will be useful. Does the flesh shrink from it? Then we must lay the greater stress upon our conscience, and keep ourselves to the work, lest by suffering sin upon our friend we become ourselves partakers of it. Hundreds have been saved from gross sins by the timely, wise, affectionate warnings of faithful ministers and brethren. Our Lord Jesus has set us a gracious example of how to deal with erring friends in his warning given to Peter, the prayer with which he preceded it, and the gentle way in which he bore with Peter’s boastful denial that he needed such a caution.

# Word Live – 11/29/19

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# Scripture Union – 11/29/19

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# Today in the Word – 11/29/19

# A Proper Perspective Produces Praise

**Read:** [**1 Chronicles 29:1–20**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320)

### **Gifts for Building the Temple**

29 Then King David said to the whole assembly: “My son Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for man but for the Lord God. 2With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron and wood for the wood, as well as onyx for the settings, turquoise,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320" \l "fen-NIV-11167a" \o "See footnote a)] stones of various colors, and all kinds of fine stone and marble—all of these in large quantities. 3Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple: 4three thousand talents[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11169b)] of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11169c)] of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, 5for the gold work and the silver work, and for all the work to be done by the craftsmen. Now, who is willing to consecrate themselves to the Lord today?”

6Then the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of the king’s work gave willingly. 7They gave toward the work on the temple of God five thousand talents[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11172d)] and ten thousand darics[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11172e)] of gold, ten thousand talents[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11172f)] of silver, eighteen thousand talents[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11172g)] of bronze and a hundred thousand talents[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#fen-NIV-11172h)] of iron. 8Anyone who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the temple of the Lord in the custody of Jehiel the Gershonite. 9The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

### **David’s Prayer**

10David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly, saying,

“Praise be to you, Lord,  
    the God of our father Israel,  
    from everlasting to everlasting.  
11Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power  
    and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,  
    for everything in heaven and earth is yours.  
Yours, Lord, is the kingdom;  
    you are exalted as head over all.  
12Wealth and honor come from you;  
    you are the ruler of all things.  
In your hands are strength and power  
    to exalt and give strength to all.  
13Now, our God, we give you thanks,  
    and praise your glorious name.

14“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. 15We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. 16Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. 17I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you. 18Lord, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep these desires and thoughts in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you. 19And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, statutes and decrees and to do everything to build the palatial structure for which I have provided.”

20Then David said to the whole assembly, “Praise the Lord your God.” So they all praised the Lord, the God of their fathers; they bowed down, prostrating themselves before the Lord and the king.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [1 Chronicles 29:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11167) The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.
2. [1 Chronicles 29:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11169) That is, about 110 tons or about 100 metric tons
3. [1 Chronicles 29:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11169) That is, about 260 tons or about 235 metric tons
4. [1 Chronicles 29:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11172) That is, about 190 tons or about 170 metric tons
5. [1 Chronicles 29:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11172) That is, about 185 pounds or about 84 kilograms
6. [1 Chronicles 29:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11172) That is, about 380 tons or about 340 metric tons
7. [1 Chronicles 29:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11172) That is, about 675 tons or about 610 metric tons
8. [1 Chronicles 29:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+29%3a1%e2%80%9320#en-NIV-11172) That is, about 3,800 tons or about 3,400 metric tons

People have been lining up, even before this day began, to get bargains from their favorite stores. There is no doubt they are committed to getting the best deals. Nothing is wrong with shopping, but a day like Black Friday is a good time to pause and consider our perspective on earthly possessions.

For everything in heaven and earth is yours. 1 Chronicles 29:11

In our reading, David’s boyish good looks are a thing of his past. His ruddy red hair has now turned gray, and he has more wrinkles than he can count. Running for miles was never a problem, but David finds himself winded from walking up a flight of stairs. One last thing the Lord wanted him to do before his last breath on earth was to build a place of worship where the Ark of the Covenant could rest.

Therefore, David drew plans, rolled them up, and handed them to his son Solomon to finish the job. However, before he was completely done, he taught his son and the Lord’s people that when it comes to wealth, a proper perspective produces praise. King David led the people in generous giving (vv. 1–9) and followed by leading them in an abundance of praise (vv. 10–20).

He begins by praising God because He is an eternal God (v. 10) who has all the power, glory, majesty, and splendor (v. 11). In His hands are wealth, honor, strength, and power (v. 12). David praises the Lord because he acknowledges that everything he and the Israelites have comes from the Lord. This truth is even more evident in verses 14 and 16. David’s perspective on the possessions God has given him allows him to lead the Lord’s people during this time of thanks and praise.

### **Apply the Word**

If you are a leader in your church, work, or home, people are watching your example just like the Israelites under King David. Hunting for the best deals and purchasing holiday gifts is not wrong, but when you do, make sure you do it with the proper perspective on money and stewardship. Remember, a proper perspective produces praise.

### **Pray with Us**

Coming to the end of our study, reflect on this month’s theme and ask God for deeper understanding of gratitude and praise. May we have the heart of the psalmist who said, “Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Ps. 103:2).

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 11/29/19

# Hazardous Materials

 **Read: Isaiah 6:1–10**

### **Isaiah’s Commission**

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;  
    the whole earth is full of his glory.”

4At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

5“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”

6Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

8Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

9He said, “Go and tell this people:

“‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding;  
    be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’  
10Make the heart of this people calloused;  
    make their ears dull  
    and close their eyes.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17780a)]  
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,  
    hear with their ears,  
    understand with their hearts,  
and turn and be healed.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Isaiah 6:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6%3A1%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-17780) Hebrew; Septuagint ‘You will be ever hearing, but never understanding; / you will be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ / 10This people’s heart has become calloused; / they hardly hear with their ears, / and they have closed their eyes

See, this [live coal] has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for. Isaiah 6:7

The sound of a siren increased to an ear-piercing level as an emergency vehicle sped by my car. Its flashing lights glared through my windshield, illuminating the words “hazardous materials” printed on the side of the truck. Later, I learned it had been racing to a science laboratory where a 400-gallon container of sulfuric acid had begun to leak. Emergency workers had to contain the substance immediately because of its ability to damage whatever it came in contact with.

As I thought about this news story, I wondered what would happen if sirens blared every time a harsh or critical word “leaked” out of my mouth? Sadly, it might become rather noisy around our house.

The prophet Isaiah shared this sense of awareness about his sin. When he saw God’s glory in a vision, he was overcome by his unworthiness. He recognized that he was “a man of unclean lips” living with people who shared the same problem (Isaiah 6:5). What happened next gives me hope. An angel touched his lips with a red-hot coal, explaining, “your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for” (v. 7).

We have moment-by-moment choices to make with our words—both written and spoken. Will they be “hazardous” material, or will we allow God’s glory to convict us and His grace to heal us so we can honor Him with everything we express?

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Why do our words have such a powerful effect on others? How might God want to change your speech?

Dear God, help me to see how my words affect other people. Show me how to encourage them.

#### **Insight**

The book of Isaiah was written by the prophet whose name means “Yahweh is salvation” during a time of almost constant clash with the kingdom of Assyria. Isaiah was the son of Amoz and was married to a woman called “the prophetess” (8:3). They had two sons—Shear-Jashub and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (7:3; 8:3). From the very first verse we know that Isaiah prophesied “during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah,” a period of possibly fifty years.

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

# God Calling – 11/29/19

# When Two Agree

**If two of you shall agree.**

I am the Truth. Every word of Mine is true. Every promise of Mine shall be fulfilled.

First, "gathered together in My Name," bound by a common loyalty to Me, desires only of doing My Will.

Then, when this is so, I am present too, a self-invited guest, and when I am there and one with you, voicing the same petition, making your demands Mine, then it follows the request is granted.

But what man has failed perhaps to realize is all that lies behind the words.  For two to agree about the wisdom of a request, to be certain it should be granted, and will be granted (if it should be), is not the same as two agreeing to pray that request.

Nor forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.  Hebrews 10:25

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/30/19

# “By the Grace of God I Am What I Am”



By the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain… —[1 Corinthians 15:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+15%3A10)

The way we continually talk about our own inabilities is an insult to our Creator. To complain over our incompetence is to accuse God falsely of having overlooked us. Get into the habit of examining from God’s perspective those things that sound so humble to men. You will be amazed at how unbelievably inappropriate and disrespectful they are to Him. We say things such as, “Oh, I shouldn’t claim to be sanctified; I’m not a saint.” But to say that before God means, “No, Lord, it is impossible for You to save and sanctify me; there are opportunities I have not had and so many imperfections in my brain and body; no, Lord, it isn’t possible.” That may sound wonderfully humble to others, but before God it is an attitude of defiance.

Conversely, the things that sound humble before God may sound exactly the opposite to people. To say, “Thank God, I know I am saved and sanctified,” is in God’s eyes the purest expression of humility. It means you have so completely surrendered yourself to God that you know He is true. Never worry about whether what you say sounds humble before others or not. But always be humble before God, and allow Him to be your all in all.

There is only one relationship that really matters, and that is your personal relationship to your personal Redeemer and Lord. If you maintain that at all costs, letting everything else go, God will fulfill His purpose through your life. One individual life may be of priceless value to God’s purposes, and yours may be that life.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We are not to preach the doing of good things; good deeds are not to be preached, they are to be performed.  
[So Send I You](http://www.dhp.org/Products/So-Send-I-You-emandem-Workmen-of-God__9741.aspx)

# CCEL – 11/30/19

**The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.**—[II THES. 3:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiThess.3.html" \l "iiThess.3.16)

Peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come.—The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.—Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The Comforter . . . even the Spirit of truth.—The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.—The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us?

[Rev. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.1.html" \l "Rev.1.4). -[Phi. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.7).[Luke 24:36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.36). -[John 14:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.27).[John 15:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.26). -[Gal. 5:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.22). -[Rom. 8:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.16).[Exo. 33:14-16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.14).

“And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.” **[2 Chronicles 25:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.25.html" \l "iiChr.25.9)**

A very important question this seemed to be to the king of Judah, and possibly it is of even more weight with the tried and tempted O Christian. To lose money is at no times pleasant, and when principle involves it, the flesh is not always ready to make the sacrifice. “Why lose that which may be so usefully employed? May not the truth itself be bought too dear? What shall we do without it? Remember the children, and our small income!” All these things and a thousand more would tempt the Christian to put forth his hand to unrighteous gain, or stay himself from carrying out his conscientious convictions, when they involve serious loss. All men cannot view these matters in the light of faith; and even with the followers of Jesus, the doctrine of “we must live” has quite sufficient weight.

The Lord is able to give thee much more than this is a very satisfactory answer to the anxious question. Our Father holds the purse-strings, and what we lose for his sake he can repay a thousand-fold. It is ours to obey his will, and we may rest assured that he will provide for us. The Lord will be no man’s debtor at the last. Saints know that a grain of heart's-ease is of more value than a ton of gold. He who wraps a threadbare coat about a good conscience has gained a spiritual wealth far more desirable than any he has lost. God’s smile and a dungeon are enough for a true heart; his frown and a palace would be hell to a gracious spirit. Let the worst come to the worst, let all the talents go, we have not lost our treasure, for that is above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Meanwhile, even now, the Lord maketh the meek to inherit the earth, and no good thing doth he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

# Word Live – 11/30/19

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

# Scripture Union – 11/30/19

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

# Today in the Word – 11/30/19

# Showing Thanks in Small Ways

**Read:** [**2 Corinthians 9:6–11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9%3a6%e2%80%9311)

### **Generosity Encouraged**

6Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9As it is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;  
    their righteousness endures forever.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9%3a6%e2%80%9311#fen-NIV-28966a)]

10Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [2 Corinthians 9:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9%3a6%e2%80%9311#en-NIV-28966) Psalm 112:9

Small Business Saturday began in America in 2010 and in the United Kingdom in 2013. City officials noticed consumers were overlooking smaller shops and local businesses. On this day, customers are encouraged to purchase items from small local businesses instead of choosing the big box retailers or e-commerce stores. In order to have a growing and fair economy these small businesses are vital.

Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. Romans 15:2

Our passage today does not speak about the value of small businesses, but it does speak about the importance of being known as generous people. While many use these verses to promote the “prosperity gospel,” Paul’s main idea here is for believers to sow generously with good intentions, despite one’s wealth. A person ought to give to the work of the Lord out of a cheerful heart (v. 7). Perhaps Paul realizes that some people give to get something in return: assets, possessions, or acclamation.

Paul acknowledges that what we give or “sow” returns to us in abundance. He is not saying that we will necessarily profit monetarily. Rather, Paul is saying that our generosity will “enlarge the harvest of your righteousness” (v. 10), giving this passage a decidedly eternal perspective.

In verse 11, Paul claims that the generosity the Corinthians showed him and his companions directly caused thanksgiving to God. He does not tell us specifically who is giving thanks to God, whether it is him, his companions, or the ones who are able to hear the message of the gospel because of Paul’s missionary work. God receives thanksgiving because of the Corinthians’ generosity. When you give with a cheerful heart, it opens the opportunity for others to thank God. Don’t miss an opportunity to sow a seed of generosity.

### **Apply the Word**

As we conclude this study, think of a way you can give and spur on thankfulness to God. Is there a small business in your community that is trying to shine God’s light in the marketplace? Is there an organization that is sharing the gospel with others? Perhaps you can generously bless them today, and others will thank God because of you!

### **Pray with Us**

In conclusion of this month’s Bible study, praise the Lord for His truth that truly sets us free. It’s a joy and a privilege to study the Scripture and pray together with the Moody community. Thank you for your prayers and financial support of this ministry!

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 11/30/19

# Carefully Crafted



**Read: Ephesians 4:11–14**

11So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people. Ephesians 4:11–12

In a YouTube video, Alan Glustoff, a cheese farmer in Goshen, New York, described his process for aging cheese, a process that adds to a cheese’s flavor and texture. Before it can be sent out to a market, each block of cheese remains on a shelf in an underground cave for six to twelve months. In this humid environment the cheese is carefully tended. “We do our best to give it the right environment to thrive . . . [and] to develop to its truest potential,” Glustoff explained.

Glustoff’s passion for developing the potential of the cheese he produces reminded me of God’s passion for developing the “truest potential” of His children so they will become fruitful and mature. In Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul describes the people involved in this process: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (v. 11). People with these gifts help to stimulate the growth of each believer as well as to encourage acts of service (the “works” mentioned in verse 12). The goal is that we “become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (v. 13).

Spiritual growth comes about through the power of the Holy Spirit as we submit to His maturing process. As we follow the guidance of the people He places in our lives, we become more effective as He sends us out to serve.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Who has been most influential to your spiritual growth? In what ways have you been challenged to grow? How can you encourage the growth of someone else?

Loving God, I’m grateful for the tender way You help me to grow.

#### **Insight**

The New Testament contains three main listings of spiritual gifts—Romans 12:6–8, 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, and 1 Corinthians 12:28–30. In addition, Ephesians 4:11 lists offices carried out by those with specific gifts, and 1 Peter 4:10–11 classifies the gifts into speaking and serving. That no two lists are identical suggests they’re not exhaustive. In each, the emphasis isn’t on the quantity of gifts but on their diversity and purpose. They’re to be used in a loving way to promote unity in the church (1 Corinthians 12:12–27; 13:1–13), build up the spiritual maturity of the believers (Ephesians 4:12–16), and bring glory to God (1 Peter 4:10–11). In Ephesians 4, interposed between the unity (vv. 1–6) and maturity (vv. 14–16) of the church, Paul highlights the teaching gifts that help grow, build up, stabilize, unite, equip, and mature the church (vv. 11–13).

# God Calling – 11/30/19

# From Self to God

**The eternal God is thy refuge.  Deuteronomy 33:27**

A place to flee to, a sanctuary.  An escape from misunderstanding, from yourself.  You can get away from others into the quiet of your own being, but from yourself, from the sense of your failure, your weakness, your sins and shortcomings, whither can you flee?

To the Eternal God your refuge.  Till in His Immensity you forget your smallness, meanness, limitations.

Till the relief of safety merges into Joy of appreciation of your refuge, and you absorb the Divine, and absorbing, gain strength to conquer.

The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee: Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion. Psalm 20:1,2

# My Utmost for His Highest – 12/1/19

# The Law and the Gospel



Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. —[James 2:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=James+2%3A10)

The moral law does not consider our weaknesses as human beings; in fact, it does not take into account our heredity or infirmities. It simply demands that we be absolutely moral. The moral law never changes, either for the highest of society or for the weakest in the world. It is enduring and eternally the same. The moral law, ordained by God, does not make itself weak to the weak by excusing our shortcomings. It remains absolute for all time and eternity. If we are not aware of this, it is because we are less than alive. Once we do realize it, our life immediately becomes a fatal tragedy. “I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died” ([Romans 7:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7:9)). The moment we realize this, the Spirit of God convicts us of sin. Until a person gets there and sees that there is no hope, the Cross of Christ remains absurd to him. Conviction of sin always brings a fearful, confining sense of the law. It makes a person hopeless— “…sold under sin” ([Romans 7:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+7:14)). I, a guilty sinner, can never work to get right with God— it is impossible. There is only one way by which I can get right with God, and that is through the death of Jesus Christ. I must get rid of the underlying idea that I can ever be right with God because of my obedience. Who of us could ever obey God to absolute perfection!

We only begin to realize the power of the moral law once we see that it comes with a condition and a promise. But God never coerces us. Sometimes we wish He would make us be obedient, and at other times we wish He would leave us alone. Whenever God’s will is in complete control, He removes all pressure. And when we deliberately choose to obey Him, He will reach to the remotest star and to the ends of the earth to assist us with all of His almighty power.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To those who have had no agony Jesus says, “I have nothing for you; stand on your own feet, square your own shoulders. I have come for the man who knows he has a bigger handful than he can cope with, who knows there are forces he cannot touch; I will do everything for him if he will let Me. Only let a man grant he needs it, and I will do it for him.”  
The Shadow of an Agony

# CCEL – 12/1/19

**A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.**—[ISA. 32:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.32.html" \l "Isa.32.2)

Forasmuch . . . as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.—The man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.—I and my Father are one.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.—There shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.—The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.—Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble.—Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

[Heb. 2:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.14). -[Zech. 13:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.13.html" \l "Zech.13.7). -[John 10:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.30).[Psa. 91:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.91.html" \l "Ps.91.1). -[Isa. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.4.html" \l "Isa.4.6). -[Psa. 121:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.121.html" \l "Ps.121.5).[Psa. 61:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.61.html" \l "Ps.61.2). -[Psa. 32:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.32.html" \l "Ps.32.7). -[Isa. 25:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.4).

“Thou hast made summer and winter.” [Psalm 74:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.74.html" \l "Ps.74.17)

My soul begin this wintry month with thy God. The cold snows and the piercing winds all remind thee that he keeps his covenant with day and night, and tend to assure thee that he will also keep that glorious covenant which he has made with thee in the person of Christ Jesus. He who is true to his Word in the revolutions of the seasons of this poor sin-polluted world, will not prove unfaithful in his dealings with his own well-beloved Son.

Winter in the soul is by no means a comfortable season, and if it be upon thee just now it will be very painful to thee: but there is this comfort, namely, that the Lord makes it. He sends the sharp blasts of adversity to nip the buds of expectation: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes over the once verdant meadows of our joy: he casteth forth his ice like morsels freezing the streams of our delight. He does it all, he is the great Winter King, and rules in the realms of frost, and therefore thou canst not murmur. Losses, crosses, heaviness, sickness, poverty, and a thousand other ills, are of the Lord’s sending, and come to us with wise design. Frosts kill noxious insects, and put a bound to raging diseases; they break up the clods, and sweeten the soil. O that such good results would always follow our winters of affliction!

How we prize the fire just now! how pleasant is its cheerful glow! Let us in the same manner prize our Lord, who is the constant source of warmth and comfort in every time of trouble. Let us draw nigh to him, and in him find joy and peace in believing. Let us wrap ourselves in the warm garments of his promises, and go forth to labours which befit the season, for it were ill to be as the sluggard who will not plough by reason of the cold; for he shall beg in summer and have nothing.

# Word Live – 12/1/19

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

# Scripture Union – 12/1/19

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

# Today in the Word – 12/1/19

# The Beginning and the End

**Read:** [**Revelation 1:9–18**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1%3a9%e2%80%9318)

### **John’s Vision of Christ**

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

12I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1%3a9%e2%80%9318" \l "fen-NIV-30711a" \o "See footnote a)] dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. 14The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

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

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Revelation 1:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1%3a9%e2%80%9318#en-NIV-30711) See Daniel 7:13.

Do you know who Jesus is? A recent survey revealed poor understanding of key doctrines, including those about Jesus and salvation, even among evangelical Christians. For example, 52 percent of evangelicals believe people are basically good. An astonishing 78 percent think Jesus is a created being (a heresy known as Arianism). And more than half of evangelical Christians, as well as two-thirds of Americans in general, agree that “God accepts the worship of all religions.”

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

This is one reason we’re devoting the entire month to a study of Christology (the theology of the person, nature, and role of Jesus Christ). We’ll look at important Scripture passages that help us understand more fully who Jesus is. And we will examine the names of Christ. By asking “Who is this Jesus?” we hope you will come to know Him better and rejoice even more during this Christmas season.

First, we will focus on Christ’s divinity. Jesus told the apostle John in the awe-inspiring vision that opens the book of Revelation: “I am the First and the Last” (v. 17). He said it again at the end of the book: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (22:13). This figure of speech, repeated three times for emphasis is called a “merism,” and it conveys the idea that Christ is the beginning, the end, and everything in between.

He’s the center and in Him we find the meaning of history, redemption, and everything else. Nothing exists apart from Him (Col. 1:15–17). This expression also indicates that He is incomparably above all other gods (Isa. 44:6–8), and He is the Creator of all (Isa. 48:12–13). Only an eternal God could make such a claim!

### **Apply the Word**

This month, it’s all about Jesus! “Keep a running record of your daily answers to this question in a notebook or journal. The titles given to Jesus will tell you much about our Lord.

### **Pray with Us**

As we start our Bible and prayer journey this month, let’s thank the Lord for the Advent season that starts today. What a joy and a privilege it is to prepare for Christ’s birth with Bible reading, reflection, and prayer!

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 12/1/19

# Is There Hope?



**Read: Romans 8:31–39**

### **More Than Conquerors**

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

“For your sake we face death all day long;  
    we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3A31%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28153a)]

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3A31%E2%80%9339&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-28155b" \o "See footnote b)] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 8:36](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3A31%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#en-NIV-28153) Psalm 44:22
2. [Romans 8:38](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3A31%E2%80%9339&version=NIV#en-NIV-28155) Or nor heavenly rulers

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

Edward Payson (1783–1827) led an extremely difficult life. The death of his younger brother shook him to the core. He struggled with bipolar disorder, and he was affected by extreme migraine headaches for days. If this wasn’t enough, a fall from a horse led to paralysis of his arm, and he almost died from tuberculosis! Surprisingly, his response wasn’t one of despair and hopelessness. His friends said that before Edward passed away, his joy was intense. How could that be?

In his letter to the believers in Rome, the apostle Paul expressed his complete confidence in the reality of God’s love regardless of circumstances. He asked with boldness, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). If God gave His very own Son, Jesus, to save us, then He will provide everything we need to finish this life well. Paul listed seven seemingly unbearable situations that he himself faced: trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and the sword (v. 35). He didn’t imply that Christ’s love would stop bad things from happening. But Paul said that “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (v. 37).

Through the uncertainty of this world, God can be trusted completely, knowing that nothing, absolutely nothing, “will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (v. 39).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When you face seemingly hopeless situations, how do you typically respond? What promise of God can you cling to, knowing He is faithful?

Faithful Father, thank You for Your Son’s sacrifice so that I can have eternal life. Thank You that, no matter how gray life may seem, I can trust in Your promises.

To learn more about living with the difficulties, visit [bit.ly/2wXd3Jj.](https://bit.ly/2wXd3Jj.)

#### **Insight**

In Romans 8, three things jump from the page to fill God’s child with assurance and hope. Verses 1–4 remind us that “there is now no condemnation” for believers in Christ. This affirmation gives us confidence that in Jesus we’re brought into right relationship with God and are safe from judgment for our sins. The bulk of the chapter (vv. 5–27) confirms the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering us in living out our faith. The final segment (vv. 28–39) assures us that God’s love for us will never die or diminish. After seven chapters that speak to our failings and our need of a Savior, chapter 8 builds a case for spiritual confidence in Christ. His protection, Spirit, and love have come to us through the cross, reminding us that we’re loved and cared for by the Father.

By: [**Bill Crowder**](https://odb.org/author/billcrowder/)

# God Calling – 12/1/19

# Responsibility

I am beside you. A very human Jesus, who understands all your weaknesses, and sees too your struggles and conquests.

Remember, I was the Companion of the Weak. Ready to supply their hunger. Teaching My followers their responsibility towards all, not only those near and dear to them, but to the multitude.

"Lord, send them away that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals," said My disciples, with no sympathy for the fainting, exhausted men, women, and children.

But I taught that Divine Sympathy includes responsibility. "Give ye them to eat," was My reply.  I taught that pity, without a remedy for the evil, or the need, is worthless.

"Give ye them to eat." Wherever your sympathy goes, you must go too, if possible. Remember that in thinking of your own needs. Claim from Me the same attitude now.

The servant is not above his Master, certainly not in Spiritual attainments, and what I taught My disciples, I do.

So fainting and needy, by the lakeside of life, know that I will supply your need, not grudgingly, but in full measure.

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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 12/2/19

# Christian Perfection



Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect… —[Philippians 3:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Philippians+3%3A12)

It is a trap to presume that God wants to make us perfect specimens of what He can do— God’s purpose is to make us one with Himself. The emphasis of holiness movements tends to be that God is producing specimens of holiness to put in His museum. If you accept this concept of personal holiness, your life’s determined purpose will not be for God, but for what you call the evidence of God in your life. How can we say, “It could never be God’s will for me to be sick”? If it was God’s will to bruise His own Son ([Isaiah 53:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+53:10)), why shouldn’t He bruise you? What shines forth and reveals God in your life is not your relative consistency to an idea of what a saint should be, but your genuine, living relationship with Jesus Christ, and your unrestrained devotion to Him whether you are well or sick.

Christian perfection is not, and never can be, human perfection. Christian perfection is the perfection of a relationship with God that shows itself to be true even amid the seemingly unimportant aspects of human life. When you obey the call of Jesus Christ, the first thing that hits you is the pointlessness of the things you have to do. The next thought that strikes you is that other people seem to be living perfectly consistent lives. Such lives may leave you with the idea that God is unnecessary— that through your own human effort and devotion you can attain God’s standard for your life. In a fallen world this can never be done. I am called to live in such a perfect relationship with God that my life produces a yearning for God in the lives of others, not admiration for myself. Thoughts about myself hinder my usefulness to God. God’s purpose is not to perfect me to make me a trophy in His showcase; He is getting me to the place where He can use me. Let Him do what He wants.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The life of Abraham is an illustration of two things: of unreserved surrender to God, and of God’s complete possession of a child of His for His own highest end. Not Knowing Whither, 901 R

# CCEL – 12/2/19

**Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.**—[I JOHN 2:20.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.20)

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.—It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.—Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Thou anointest my head with oil.—The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

[Acts 10:38](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.10.html" \l "Acts.10.38). -[Col. 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.19). -[John 1:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.16).[Psa. 23:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.23.html" \l "Ps.23.5). -[I John 2:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.27).[John 14:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.26).[Rom. 8:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.26).

“Thou art all fair, my love.” [Song of Solomon 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.4.html" \l "Song.4.7)

The Lord’s admiration of his Church is very wonderful, and his description of her beauty is very glowing. She is not merely fair, but “all fair.” He views her in himself, washed in his sin-atoning blood and clothed in his meritorious righteousness, and he considers her to be full of comeliness and beauty. No wonder that such is the case, since it is but his own perfect excellency that he admires; for the holiness, glory, and perfection of his Church are his own glorious garments on the back of his own well-beloved spouse. She is not simply pure, or well-proportioned; she is positively lovely and fair! She has actual merit! Her deformities of sin are removed; but more, she has through her Lord obtained a meritorious righteousness by which an actual beauty is conferred upon her. Believers have a positive righteousness given to them when they become “accepted in the beloved” ([Eph. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.6)). Nor is the Church barely lovely, she is superlatively so. Her Lord styles her “Thou fairest among women.” She has a real worth and excellence which cannot be rivalled by all the nobility and royalty of the world. If Jesus could exchange his elect bride for all the queens and empresses of earth, or even for the angels in heaven, he would not, for he puts her first and foremost—“fairest among women.” Like the moon she far outshines the stars. Nor is this an opinion which he is ashamed of, for he invites all men to hear it. He sets a “behold” before it, a special note of exclamation, inviting and arresting attention. “Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair” ([Song of Sol. 4:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.4.html" \l "Song.4.1)). His opinion he publishes abroad even now, and one day from the throne of his glory he will avow the truth of it before the assembled universe. “Come, ye blessed of my Father” ([Matt. 25:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.25.html" \l "Matt.25.34)), will be his solemn affirmation of the loveliness of his elect.

# Word Live – 12/2/19

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

# Scripture Union – 12/2/19

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

# Today in the Word – 12/2/19

# God’s Final Revelation

**Read:** [**Hebrews 1:1–4**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+1%3a1%e2%80%934)

### **God’s Final Word: His Son**

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. 4So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

In his worship song “Knowing You, Jesus,” Graham Kendrick proclaims:

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being. Hebrews 1:3

“Oh, to know the power of your risen life  
And to know you in your sufferings  
To become like you in your death, my Lord  
So with you to live and never die.”

When we know Jesus, we know God the Father as well, for the Son is the Father’s final, complete, and perfect revelation of Himself (John 14:7–10). In this first chapter of the book of Hebrews, we are told that “in the past God spoke” through prophets (v. 1), “but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (v. 2).

The Son is called the “heir of all things”—King of the kingdom of God—and the universe was made through Him (v. 2). Only God Himself matches this description. According to verse 3, the Son is the “radiance of God’s glory.” This is a relationship of identity. Just as light and its source cannot be separated, only God can shine forth God’s glory. That means the Son must be God as well.

Here we read that Jesus is “the exact representation of his being” (v. 3). Again, this indicates identity. While the Son and the Father are not the same Person, they are both God. Furthermore, the Son sustains “all things by his powerful word” (v. 3). Only God can do that, so once again, the Son is God. If He is who God is and He does what God does, then He must be God Himself!

In God’s plan of redemption, the Son “provided purification for sins,” then “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven” (v. 3). No man could have done either of those, nor could any angel (v. 4). Only the Lord Himself qualifies. Therefore, Jesus is God!

### **Apply the Word**

December is all about Christmas, but often our culture forgets to honor the reason for this holiday, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Begin today to keep Jesus the center of your Christmas celebration. Ask God to help you focus your heart and mind on Him, even when the days get busy and the to-do list gets long.

### **Pray with Us**

Please join us in prayer that this Christmas season we’ll look at Christ and remember the Cross. May Jesus be the center of our celebration. May we be renewed in our love and affection for Him every day!

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 12/2/19

# The Flip Side of Love

**** **Read: 2 John 1:1–11**

1The elder,

To the lady chosen by God and to her children, whom I love in the truth—and not I only, but also all who know the truth— 2because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever:

3Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, will be with us in truth and love.

4It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us. 5And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. 6And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.

7I say this because many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8Watch out that you do not lose what we[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+john+1%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30654a)] have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them. 11Anyone who welcomes them shares in their wicked work.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [2 John 1:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+john+1%3A1-11&version=NIV#en-NIV-30654) Some manuscripts you

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3

The Roman inns during the time of Christ had a reputation so bad that rabbis wouldn’t even permit cattle to be left at them. Faced with such bad conditions, traveling Christians usually sought out other believers for hospitality.

Among those early travelers were false teachers who denied that Jesus was the Messiah. This is why the letter of 2 John tells its readers there is a time to refuse to extend hospitality. John had said in a previous letter that these false teachers were “antichrist—denying the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22). In 2 John he elaborated on this, telling his readers that whoever believes Jesus is the Messiah “has both the Father and the Son” (v. 9).

Then he warned, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them” (v. 10). To extend hospitality to someone preaching a false gospel would actually help keep people separated from God.

John’s second letter shows us a “flip side” of God’s love. We serve a God who welcomes everyone with open arms. But genuine love won’t enable those who deceitfully harm themselves and others. God wraps His arms around those who come to Him in repentance, but He never embraces a lie.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How can you reflect God’s love in your relationships today? What issues might you need to confront in your own life or in the lives of others?

Father, You love us in Your truth. Help us extend that love to others with the unwavering grace that comes only from Your Spirit.

#### **Insight**

The author of 1, 2, and 3 John isn’t explicitly identified. First John has no author identification at all, and 2 and 3 John simply refer to the author as “the elder” (2 John 1:1; 3 John 1:1). However, there’s much evidence to link these three letters to John the disciple. For example, the gospel of John (which is attributed to John the disciple) and the epistles of John all share similar themes. In today’s reading from 2 John, three key ideas echo themes in John’s gospel: truth (John 14:6), love (John 3:16), and love leading to obedience (John 15:9–17).

# God Calling – 12/2/19

# The Ideal Man

Draw nigh, shoes off thy feet, in silent awe and adoration. Draw nigh, as Moses drew nigh to the burning bush.

I give you the loving intimacy of a friend, but I am God too, and the wonder of our intercourse, the miracle of your intimacy with Me, will mean the more to you, if sometimes you see the Majestic Figure of the Son of God.

Draw nigh in the utter confidence that is the sublimest prayer. Draw nigh. No far-off pleading, even to a God clothed with majesty of fire. Draw nigh. Draw nigh, not as a suppliant, but as a listener. I am this Suppliant, as I make known to you My wishes. For this Majestic God is Brother too, longing so intensely that you should serve your brother-man, and longing, even more intensely, that you should be true to that Vision He has of you.

You speak of your fellow man as disappointing you, as falling short of the ideal you had of him. But what of Me? For every man there is the ideal man I see in him. The man he could be, the man I would have him be.

Judge of My Heart when he fails to fulfill that promise. The disappointments of man may be great and many, but they are nothing as compared with My disappointments. Remember this, and strive to be the friend I see in my vision of you.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." James 4:8