# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/27/20

# The Method of Missions



Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations… —[Matthew 28:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+28%3A19)

Jesus Christ did not say, “Go and save souls” (the salvation of souls is the supernatural work of God), but He said, “Go…make disciples of all the nations….” Yet you cannot make disciples unless you are a disciple yourself. When the disciples returned from their first mission, they were filled with joy because even the demons were subject to them. But Jesus said, in effect, “Don’t rejoice in successful service— the great secret of joy is that you have the right relationship with Me” (see [Luke 10:17-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+10:17-20)). The missionary’s great essential is remaining true to the call of God, and realizing that his one and only purpose is to disciple men and women to Jesus. Remember that there is a passion for souls that does not come from God, but from our desire to make converts to our point of view.

The challenge to the missionary does not come from the fact that people are difficult to bring to salvation, that backsliders are difficult to reclaim, or that there is a barrier of callous indifference. No, the challenge comes from the perspective of the missionary’s own personal relationship with Jesus Christ— “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” ([Matthew 9:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+9:28)). Our Lord unwaveringly asks us that question, and it confronts us in every individual situation we encounter. The one great challenge to us is— do I know my risen Lord? Do I know the power of His indwelling Spirit? Am I wise enough in God’s sight, but foolish enough according to the wisdom of the world, to trust in what Jesus Christ has said? Or am I abandoning the great supernatural position of limitless confidence in Christ Jesus, which is really God’s only call for a missionary? If I follow any other method, I depart altogether from the methods prescribed by our Lord— “All authority has been given to Me….Go therefore…” ([Matthew 28:18-19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28:18-19)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The sympathy which is reverent with what it cannot understand is worth its weight in gold.  Baffled to Fight Better, 69 L

# CCEL – 10/27/20

**Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.**—[MATT. 8:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.8.html" \l "Matt.8.17)

Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.

Behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.—And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

[Lev. 14:4-7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.14.html" \l "Lev.14.4).[Luke 5:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.5.html" \l "Luke.5.12). -[Mark 1:41,42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.1.html" \l "Mark.1.41).

“It is a faithful saying.” [2 Timothy 2:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.11)

Paul has four of these “faithful sayings.” The first occurs in [1 Timothy 1:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.1.html" \l "iTim.1.15), “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” The next is in [1 Timothy 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.4.html" \l "iTim.4.6), “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.” The third is in [2 Timothy 2:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.12), “It is a faithful saying—If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him”; and the fourth is in [Titus 3:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.3.html" \l "Titus.3.3), “This is a faithful saying, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.” We may trace a connection between these faithful sayings. The first one lays the foundation of our eternal salvation in the free grace of God, as shown to us in the mission of the great Redeemer. The next affirms the double blessedness which we obtain through this salvation—the blessings of the upper and nether springs—of time and of eternity. The third shows one of the duties to which the chosen people are called; we are ordained to suffer for Christ with the promise that “if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” The last sets forth the active form of Christian service, bidding us diligently to maintain good works. Thus we have the root of salvation in free grace; next, the privileges of that salvation in the life which now is, and in that which is to come; and we have also the two great branches of suffering with Christ and serving with Christ, loaded with the fruits of the Spirit. Treasure up these faithful sayings. Let them be the guides of our life, our comfort, and our instruction. The apostle of the Gentiles proved them to be faithful, they are faithful still, not one word shall fall to the ground; they are worthy of all acceptation, let us accept them now, and prove their faithfulness. Let these four faithful sayings be written on the four corners of my house.

# Word Live – 10/27/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/27/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/27/20

# Save Me, God

### **Read:** [**Psalm 69**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+69) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+69#fen-NIV-14937a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. To the tune of “Lilies.” Of David.**

1Save me, O God,  
    for the waters have come up to my neck.  
2I sink in the miry depths,  
    where there is no foothold.  
I have come into the deep waters;  
    the floods engulf me.  
3I am worn out calling for help;  
    my throat is parched.  
My eyes fail,  
    looking for my God.  
4Those who hate me without reason  
    outnumber the hairs of my head;  
many are my enemies without cause,  
    those who seek to destroy me.  
I am forced to restore  
    what I did not steal.

5You, God, know my folly;  
    my guilt is not hidden from you.

6Lord, the Lord Almighty,  
    may those who hope in you  
    not be disgraced because of me;  
God of Israel,  
    may those who seek you  
    not be put to shame because of me.  
7For I endure scorn for your sake,  
    and shame covers my face.  
8I am a foreigner to my own family,  
    a stranger to my own mother’s children;  
9for zeal for your house consumes me,  
    and the insults of those who insult you fall on me.  
10When I weep and fast,  
    I must endure scorn;  
11when I put on sackcloth,  
    people make sport of me.  
12Those who sit at the gate mock me,  
    and I am the song of the drunkards.

13But I pray to you, Lord,  
    in the time of your favor;  
in your great love, O God,  
    answer me with your sure salvation.  
14Rescue me from the mire,  
    do not let me sink;  
deliver me from those who hate me,  
    from the deep waters.  
15Do not let the floodwaters engulf me  
    or the depths swallow me up  
    or the pit close its mouth over me.

16Answer me, Lord, out of the goodness of your love;  
    in your great mercy turn to me.  
17Do not hide your face from your servant;  
    answer me quickly, for I am in trouble.  
18Come near and rescue me;  
    deliver me because of my foes.

19You know how I am scorned, disgraced and shamed;  
    all my enemies are before you.  
20Scorn has broken my heart  
    and has left me helpless;  
I looked for sympathy, but there was none,  
    for comforters, but I found none.  
21They put gall in my food  
    and gave me vinegar for my thirst.

22May the table set before them become a snare;  
    may it become retribution and[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+69#fen-NIV-14958b)] a trap.  
23May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see,  
    and their backs be bent forever.  
24Pour out your wrath on them;  
    let your fierce anger overtake them.  
25May their place be deserted;  
    let there be no one to dwell in their tents.  
26For they persecute those you wound  
    and talk about the pain of those you hurt.  
27Charge them with crime upon crime;  
    do not let them share in your salvation.  
28May they be blotted out of the book of life  
    and not be listed with the righteous.

29But as for me, afflicted and in pain—  
    may your salvation, God, protect me.

30I will praise God’s name in song  
    and glorify him with thanksgiving.  
31This will please the Lord more than an ox,  
    more than a bull with its horns and hooves.  
32The poor will see and be glad—  
    you who seek God, may your hearts live!  
33The Lord hears the needy  
    and does not despise his captive people.

34Let heaven and earth praise him,  
    the seas and all that move in them,  
35for God will save Zion  
    and rebuild the cities of Judah.  
Then people will settle there and possess it;  
36    the children of his servants will inherit it,  
    and those who love his name will dwell there.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 69:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+69#en-NIV-14937) In Hebrew texts 69:1-36 is numbered 69:2-37.
2. [Psalm 69:22](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+69#en-NIV-14958) Or snare / and their fellowship become

In Buffalo, New York, a young woman drove her car into a flooded viaduct not realizing the depth of the water. As water rushed into her vehicle, she escaped out of the window and climbed onto the roof. News cameras captured the dramatic scene as emergency crews used a rescue boat to reach the stranded woman, safely rescuing her from atop the submerging vehicle.

Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. Psalm 69:1

Sometimes life feels like that news story. When things go wrong or people attack us, we may feel like we are sinking under the pressure. David gets right to the point in his lament. He describes himself as being engulfed by deep waters, his throat is hoarse from crying out to God, and his eyes are tired from looking for God’s answer (vv. 1–3). There are many reasons why he was suffering. He was threatened by enemies (v. 4), slandered and disgraced (vv. 4, 7), and scorned even by his family (v. 8).

In the depth of his suffering, David lashes out and prays that his enemies will be paid back for what they had done (vv. 22–28). This may sound harsh to our modern ears. But, as one commentator said, “We live in a culture that seeks to deny pain and death. The Psalms...saw that the way to hope is through fear; the way to real joy is through depression; the way to loving one’s enemies is through hostility. Not around these realities but through them.” God does not want us to pretend like everything is okay when it is not. This psalm models a way to give our anger and desire for vengeance over to Him.

**Apply the Word**

Do you feel up to your neck with difficult situations? If so, this psalm provides language we can use to talk to God. The Psalmist also describes the suffering of Jesus. It’s because of His victory over sin and death that we can have hope, even in dark times.

### **Pray with Us**

Our Scripture reading today predicted Jesus’ suffering. Reflect on the psalms we’ve read so far and thank God for revealing to the Psalmists the coming Messiah of Israel and Savior of the world—Jesus Christ.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/27/20

# Choosing Hope

 **Read:** [**Micah 7:2–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%207.2%E2%80%937)

2The faithful have been swept from the land;  
    not one upright person remains.  
Everyone lies in wait to shed blood;  
    they hunt each other with nets.  
3Both hands are skilled in doing evil;  
    the ruler demands gifts,  
the judge accepts bribes,  
    the powerful dictate what they desire—  
    they all conspire together.  
4The best of them is like a brier,  
    the most upright worse than a thorn hedge.  
The day God visits you has come,  
    the day your watchmen sound the alarm.  
    Now is the time of your confusion.  
5Do not trust a neighbor;  
    put no confidence in a friend.  
Even with the woman who lies in your embrace  
    guard the words of your lips.  
6For a son dishonors his father,  
    a daughter rises up against her mother,  
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—  
    a man’s enemies are the members of his own household.

7But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord,  
    I wait for God my Savior;  
    my God will hear me.

But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord. [Micah 7:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%207.7)

I am one of millions of people worldwide who suffer from SAD (seasonal affective disorder), a type of depression common in places with limited sunlight due to short winter days. When I begin to fear winter’s frozen curse will never end, I’m eager for any evidence that longer days and warmer temperatures are coming.

The first signs of spring—flowers successfully braving their way through the lingering snow—also powerfully remind me of the way God’s hope can break through even our darkest seasons. The prophet Micah confessed this even while enduring a heart-rending “winter” as the Israelites turned away from God. As Micah assessed the bleak situation, he lamented that “not one upright person” seemed to remain ([Micah 7:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%207.2)).

Yet, even though the situation appeared dire, the prophet refused to give up hope. He trusted that God was at work (v. 7)—even if, amid the devastation, he couldn’t yet see the evidence.

In our dark and sometimes seemingly endless “winters,” when spring doesn’t appear to be breaking through, we face the same struggle as Micah. Will we give into despair? Or will we “watch in hope for the Lord”? (v. 7).

Our hope in God is never wasted ([Romans 5:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%205.5)). He’s bringing a time with no more “winter”: a time with no more mourning or pain ([Revelation 21:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2021.4)). Until then, may we rest in Him, confessing, “My hope is in you” ([Psalm 39:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2039.7)).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Where do you find hope in dark times? In what “winter” season has God given you the hope you needed?

Heavenly Father, during difficult seasons of life, it’s easy for me to be discouraged; in those hard times, help me place my hope in You. And in every season of my life, help me share with others the peace found in life with You.

#### **Insight**

Micah, the author of the prophetic book of Micah, had a fairly common name in ancient Israel. He was one of at least nine persons named Micah or Micaiah in the Old Testament. Micah means “who is like Yahweh.” Commentator Ralph Smith says this name is fitting for the book “because Yahweh is exalted in it. From the opening lines which announce Yahweh’s coming, to the closing assertions about God’s faithfulness . . . Yahweh is recognized as sovereign.” The prophet Micah is from the coastal town of Moresheth in the fertile plain of the Shephelah, about twenty-one miles southwest of Jerusalem. God calls him to leave this peaceful setting to confront the kings, priests, and peoples of Israel for their perversion of worship practices and injustice toward others. Micah preached God’s message in the eighth century bc during the reigns of three kings of Judah: Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

# God Calling – 10/27/20

# Days of Conquest

I see the loving, striving, not the defects. I see the conquest of your particular battle. I count it victory, a glad victory.

I do not compare it with the strenuous campaigns of My great Saints.

For you it is victory, and the angels rejoice, and your dear ones rejoice, as much as at any conquest noted, and rejoiced over, by Heaven.

My children, count the days of conquest as very blessed days.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.  1 Corinthians 15:57

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/28/20

# Justification by Faith



If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. —[Romans 5:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+5%3A10)

I am not saved by believing— I simply realize I am saved by believing. And it is not repentance that saves me— repentance is only the sign that I realize what God has done through Christ Jesus. The danger here is putting the emphasis on the effect, instead of on the cause. Is it my obedience, consecration, and dedication that make me right with God? It is never that! I am made right with God because, prior to all of that, Christ died. When I turn to God and by belief accept what God reveals, the miraculous atonement by the Cross of Christ instantly places me into a right relationship with God. And as a result of the supernatural miracle of God’s grace I stand justified, not because I am sorry for my sin, or because I have repented, but because of what Jesus has done. The Spirit of God brings justification with a shattering, radiant light, and I know that I am saved, even though I don’t know how it was accomplished.

The salvation that comes from God is not based on human logic, but on the sacrificial death of Jesus. We can be born again solely because of the atonement of our Lord. Sinful men and women can be changed into new creations, not through their repentance or their belief, but through the wonderful work of God in Christ Jesus which preceded all of our experience (see [2 Corinthians 5:17-19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:17-19)). The unconquerable safety of justification and sanctification is God Himself. We do not have to accomplish these things ourselves— they have been accomplished through the atonement of the Cross of Christ. The supernatural becomes natural to us through the miracle of God, and there is the realization of what Jesus Christ has already done— “It is finished!” ([John 19:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+19:30)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We are in danger of being stern where God is tender, and of being tender where God is stern.  The Love of God—The Message of Invincible Consolation, 673 L

# CCEL – 10/28/20

**He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him.**—[ISA. 59:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.59.html" \l "Isa.59.16)

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.—I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.

There is no God else beside me: a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.—There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

[Psa. 40:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.40.html" \l "Ps.40.6). -[John 10:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.17).[Isa. 45:21,22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.45.html" \l "Isa.45.21). -[Acts 4:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.4.html" \l "Acts.4.12).[II Cor. 8:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.8.html" \l "iiCor.8.9).

“I have chosen you out of the world.” [John 15:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.19)

Here is distinguishing grace and discriminating regard; for some are made the special objects of divine affection. Do not be afraid to dwell upon this high doctrine of election. When your mind is most heavy and depressed, you will find it to be a bottle of richest cordial. Those who doubt the doctrines of grace, or who cast them into the shade, miss the richest clusters of Eshcol; they lose the wines on the lees well refined, the fat things full of marrow. There is no balm in Gilead comparable to it. If the honey in Jonathan’s wood when but touched enlightened the eyes, this is honey which will enlighten your heart to love and learn the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Eat, and fear not a surfeit; live upon this choice dainty, and fear not that it will be too delicate a diet. Meat from the King’s table will hurt none of his courtiers. Desire to have your mind enlarged, that you may comprehend more and more the eternal, everlasting, discriminating love of God. When you have mounted as high as election, tarry on its sister mount, the covenant of grace. Covenant engagements are the munitions of stupendous rock behind which we lie entrenched; covenant engagements with the surety, Christ Jesus, are the quiet resting-places of trembling spirits.

“His oath, his covenant, his blood,

Support me in the raging flood;

When every earthly prop gives way,

This still is all my strength and stay.”

If Jesus undertook to bring me to glory, and if the Father promised that he would give me to the Son to be a part of the infinite reward of the travail of his soul; then, my soul, till God himself shall be unfaithful, till Jesus shall cease to be the truth, thou art safe. When David danced before the ark, he told Michal that election made him do so. Come, my soul, exult before the God of grace and leap for joy of heart.

# Word Live – 10/28/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/28/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/28/20

# Saving Help

### **Read:** [**Psalm 70**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+70) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+70#fen-NIV-14973a)**]**

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

1Hasten, O God, to save me;  
    come quickly, Lord, to help me.

2May those who want to take my life  
    be put to shame and confusion;  
may all who desire my ruin  
    be turned back in disgrace.  
3May those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!”  
    turn back because of their shame.  
4But may all who seek you  
    rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who long for your saving help always say,  
    “The Lord is great!”

5But as for me, I am poor and needy;  
    come quickly to me, O God.  
You are my help and my deliverer;  
    Lord, do not delay.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 70:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+70#en-NIV-14973) In Hebrew texts 70:1-5 is numbered 70:2-6.

Sometimes we have a hard time asking for help. On more than one occasion this has caused me to get into a difficulty that I could have easily avoided. One reason why many of us struggle with asking for help is that we like to think that we want to be thought of as self-sufficient.

May those who long for your saving help always say, “The LORD is great!” Psalm 70:4

In today’s reading, David recognized that he could not solve his problems by himself. He needed God’s help, and he needed it quickly! Notice the urgency in his language. He begins this short lament with the word “hasten” and ends it with the command “do not delay”! In between these two pleas he twice urges God to “come quickly” (vv. 1, 5).

David illustrates his plight by describing two groups of people. There are those who want to take his life, shame him, and discredit him (vv. 2–3). David prays that these people will be stopped in their tracks. Then there are people who rejoice in the Lord. These people never tire of declaring that “The LORD is great!” (v. 4). David prays that they will be supported and blessed. He places himself in this latter group and declares, “But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God” (v. 5).

This prayer teaches us that we should recognize and confess our need for God. We are not self-sufficient and there is no shame in begging God for help. It also teaches us that in the midst of a difficult situation, we can still proclaim that “The LORD is great!” (v. 4). When we do so we are joining with the faithful throughout the ages who have testified to its truth.

**Apply the Word**

In the gospels, a father asked Jesus to heal his son. Jesus said if he really believed He would help. The father replied, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). This father illustrates the sense of dependence on God displayed in today’s psalm.

### **Pray with Us**

Lord, show us how to recognize our need for you. Help us always to turn to you in our time of difficulty. Today’s psalm teaches us how to do this in a humble and honest way.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/28/20

# Who’s It For?

 **Read:** [**2 Samuel 23:13–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2023.13%E2%80%9317)

13During harvest time, three of the thirty chief warriors came down to David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14At that time David was in the stronghold, and the Philistine garrison was at Bethlehem. 15David longed for water and said, “Oh, that someone would get me a drink of water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem!” 16So the three mighty warriors broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem and carried it back to David. But he refused to drink it; instead, he poured it out before the Lord. 17“Far be it from me, Lord, to do this!” he said. “Is it not the blood of men who went at the risk of their lives?” And David would not drink it.

Such were the exploits of the three mighty warriors.

He poured it out before the Lord. [2 Samuel 23:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2023.16)

The picture made me laugh out loud. Crowds had lined a Mexican avenue, waving flags and throwing confetti as they waited for the pope. Down the middle of the street strolled a stray puppy, appearing to grin as if the cheering was entirely for him. Yes! Every dog should have its day, and it should look like this.

It’s cute when a puppy “steals the show,” but hijacking another’s praise can destroy us. David knew this, and he refused to drink the water his mighty warriors had risked their lives to get. He had wistfully said it would be great if someone would fetch a drink from the well in Bethlehem. Three of his soldiers took him literally. They broke through enemy lines, drew the water, and carried it back. David was overwhelmed by their devotion, and he had to pass it on. He refused to drink the water, but “poured it out before the Lord” as a drink offering ([2 Samuel 23:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2023.16)).

How we respond to praise and honor says a lot about us. When praise is directed toward others, especially God, stay out of the way. The parade isn’t for us. When the honor is directed toward us, thank the person and then amplify that praise by giving all the glory to Jesus. The “water” isn’t for us either. Give thanks, then pour it out before God.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What praise for yourself or others did you hear today? How did your heart respond?

God, may words of praise to You be continually on my lips. You alone deserve the praise!

#### **Insight**

[Second Samuel 21–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2021%E2%80%9324) can be seen as an epilogue to both books of Samuel. The epilogue is framed by stories of how both Saul and David failed as kings in ways that harmed others. Saul harmed the Gibeonites (21:1), and David’s failure caused harm to the Israelites (24:17). In between these failures, the epilogue recounts David’s vulnerability and dependence on his mighty warriors.

Two poems are at the center of the epilogue, in which David reflects back on his life, recounting God’s faithfulness as well as His promise to raise up a messianic, better king. The poems reinforce the central themes of the books of Samuel: that God exalts the humble and opposes the proud, and He’s faithful to His promises despite great human evil.

# God Calling – 10/28/20

# Glad Surprises

Our Lord, we know that all is well. We trust Thee for all. We love Thee increasingly. We bow to Thy Will.

Bow not as one who is resigned to some heavy blow about to fall or to the acceptance of some inevitable decision.

Bow as a child bows, in anticipation of a glad surprise being prepared for it by one who loves it.

Bow in such a way, just waiting to hear the loving word to raise your head, and see the glory and Joy and wonder of your surprise.

Do all things without murmurings and disputings.  Philippians 2:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/29/20

# Substitution



He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. —[2 Corinthians 5:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+5%3A21)

The modern view of the death of Jesus is that He died for our sins out of sympathy for us. Yet the New Testament view is that He took our sin on Himself not because of sympathy, but because of His identification with us. He was “made…to be sin….” Our sins are removed because of the death of Jesus, and the only explanation for His death is His obedience to His Father, not His sympathy for us. We are acceptable to God not because we have obeyed, nor because we have promised to give up things, but because of the death of Christ, and for no other reason. We say that Jesus Christ came to reveal the fatherhood and the lovingkindness of God, but the New Testament says that He came to take “away the sin of the world!” ([John 1:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1:29)). And the revealing of the fatherhood of God is only to those to whom Jesus has been introduced as Savior. In speaking to the world, Jesus Christ never referred to Himself as One who revealed the Father, but He spoke instead of being a stumbling block (see [John 15:22-24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:22-24)). [John 14:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:9), where Jesus said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father,” was spoken to His disciples.

That Christ died for me, and therefore I am completely free from penalty, is never taught in the New Testament. What is taught in the New Testament is that “He died for all” ([2 Corinthians 5:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:15))— not, “He died my death”— and that through identification with His death I can be freed from sin, and have His very righteousness imparted as a gift to me. The substitution which is taught in the New Testament is twofold— “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” The teaching is not Christ for me unless I am determined to have Christ formed in me (see [Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Always keep in contact with those books and those people that enlarge your horizon and make it possible for you to stretch yourself mentally. The Moral Foundations of Life, 721 R

# CCEL – 10/29/20

**He is altogether lovely.**—[SONG 5:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.16)

My meditation of him shall be sweet.—My beloved is . . . the chiefest among ten thousand.—A chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.—Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips.—God . . . hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.—It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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

[Psa. 104:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.104.html" \l "Ps.104.34). -[Song 5:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.10). -[I Pet. 2:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.6). -[Psa. 45:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.45.html" \l "Ps.45.2). -[Phi. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.9). -[Col. 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.19).[I Pet. 1:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.8).[Phi. 3:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.8).

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, etc.” [Matthew 6:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.9)

This prayer begins where all true prayer must commence, with the spirit of adoption, “Our Father.” There is no acceptable prayer until we can say, “I will arise, and go unto my Father.” This child-like spirit soon perceives the grandeur of the Father “in heaven,” and ascends to devout adoration, “Hallowed be thy name.” The child lisping, “Abba, Father,” grows into the cherub crying, “Holy, Holy, Holy.” There is but a step from rapturous worship to the glowing missionary spirit, which is a sure outgrowth of filial love and reverent adoration—“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Next follows the heartfelt expression of dependence upon God—“Give us this day our daily bread.” Being further illuminated by the Spirit, he discovers that he is not only dependent, but sinful, hence he entreats for mercy, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors:” and being pardoned, having the righteousness of Christ imputed, and knowing his acceptance with God, he humbly supplicates for holy perseverance, “Lead us not into temptation.” The man who is really forgiven, is anxious not to offend again; the possession of justification leads to an anxious desire for sanctification. “Forgive us our debts,” that is justification; “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” that is sanctification in its negative and positive forms. As the result of all this, there follows a triumphant ascription of praise, “Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever, Amen.” We rejoice that our King reigns in providence and shall reign in grace, from the river even to the ends of the earth, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Thus from a sense of adoption, up to fellowship with our reigning Lord, this short model of prayer conducts the soul. Lord, teach us thus to pray.

# Word Live – 10/29/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/29/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/29/20

# I Will Praise You

**Read:** [**Psalm 71**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+71)

1In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;  
    let me never be put to shame.  
2In your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me;  
    turn your ear to me and save me.  
3Be my rock of refuge,  
    to which I can always go;  
give the command to save me,  
    for you are my rock and my fortress.  
4Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
    from the grasp of those who are evil and cruel.

5For you have been my hope, Sovereign Lord,  
    my confidence since my youth.  
6From birth I have relied on you;  
    you brought me forth from my mother’s womb.  
    I will ever praise you.  
7I have become a sign to many;  
    you are my strong refuge.  
8My mouth is filled with your praise,  
    declaring your splendor all day long.

9Do not cast me away when I am old;  
    do not forsake me when my strength is gone.  
10For my enemies speak against me;  
    those who wait to kill me conspire together.  
11They say, “God has forsaken him;  
    pursue him and seize him,  
    for no one will rescue him.”  
12Do not be far from me, my God;  
    come quickly, God, to help me.  
13May my accusers perish in shame;  
    may those who want to harm me  
    be covered with scorn and disgrace.

14As for me, I will always have hope;  
    I will praise you more and more.

15My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds,  
    of your saving acts all day long—  
    though I know not how to relate them all.  
16I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, Sovereign Lord;  
    I will proclaim your righteous deeds, yours alone.  
17Since my youth, God, you have taught me,  
    and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.  
18Even when I am old and gray,  
    do not forsake me, my God,  
till I declare your power to the next generation,  
    your mighty acts to all who are to come.

19Your righteousness, God, reaches to the heavens,  
    you who have done great things.  
    Who is like you, God?  
20Though you have made me see troubles,  
    many and bitter,  
    you will restore my life again;  
from the depths of the earth  
    you will again bring me up.  
21You will increase my honor  
    and comfort me once more.

22I will praise you with the harp  
    for your faithfulness, my God;  
I will sing praise to you with the lyre,  
    Holy One of Israel.  
23My lips will shout for joy  
    when I sing praise to you—  
    I whom you have delivered.  
24My tongue will tell of your righteous acts  
    all day long,  
for those who wanted to harm me  
    have been put to shame and confusion.

Western society often idolizes youth and marginalizes the elderly. In 2019, people in the United States spent over 53 billion dollars on anti-aging products. This reflects widespread anxiety about growing older. We fear the loss of significant work, the deterioration of our health, and the ability to be heard and valued.

Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone. Psalm 71:9

While we do not know who wrote Psalm 71, it was someone advanced in years (vv. 9, 18). He fears being disrespected and shamed by others (vv. 1, 4, 10–11). He recognizes the loss of physical strength (v. 9) and feels vulnerable and dependent upon others (vv. 4, 11, 18). Yet this is someone who has walked with God. “For you have been my hope, Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth” (v. 5). In the midst of lamenting his situation, the Psalmist models several ways to process these fears and anxieties.

First, he looks back over his life and recognizes that God has been faithful in the past and can be trusted with the future (vv. 6, 14, 15, 17). Long experience has taught him of God’s faithfulness. He can take comfort in God’s continued care.

Second, he knows he has an important purpose in life. He has a responsibility to relay what God has done to the next generation. He asks God not to forsake him, “till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come” (v. 18). He can testify to God’s might and power in a unique way, given the perspective long years of walking with God have given him. By the end of the psalm, he has worked through his lament and turned instead to joyful praise (vv. 22–24).

**Apply the Word**

Today’s reading has encouragement for both the young and old. The young should learn from the experience and wisdom of older saints. Those who are more advanced in years should communicate God’s goodness and grace to the next generation.

### **Pray with Us**

Thank God that followers of Jesus of any age can serve Him and bless others. May Psalm 71 encourage you, whether you are young or old. Ask for the Holy Spirit’s power to use your age and to surrender your whole life to God’s will.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/29/20

# A Truck Driver’s Hands

 **Read:** [**Romans 12:3–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.3%E2%80%938)

### **Humble Service in the Body of Christ**

3For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A3%E2%80%938&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28252a)] faith; 7if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A3%E2%80%938&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28254b)] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Romans 12:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A3%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-28252) Or the
2. [Romans 12:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A3%E2%80%938&version=NIV#en-NIV-28254) Or to provide for others

We have different gifts, . . . if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. [Romans 12:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.6), [8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Romans%2012.8)

The news came as a shock. Having already survived prostate cancer, my father had now been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. To complicate matters, my father is my mother’s full-time caregiver, attending to her own chronic illnesses. With both parents needing care, there would be some difficult days ahead.

After flying home to be with them, I visited my parents’ church one Sunday. There, a man named Helmut approached me, saying he’d like to help. Two days later, Helmut visited our home with a checklist. “You’ll need some meals when the chemotherapy starts,” he said. “I’ll arrange a cooking roster. What about the mowing? I can do that. And what day is your rubbish collected?” Helmut was a retired truck driver, but to us he became an angel. We discovered he often helped others—single mothers, the homeless, the elderly.

While believers in Jesus are called to help others ([Luke 10:25–37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2010.25%E2%80%9337)), some have a special capacity to do so. The apostle Paul calls it the gift of mercy ([Romans 12:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.8)). People with this gift spot needs, rally practical assistance, and can serve over time without getting overwhelmed. Moved by the Holy Spirit, they’re the hands of the body of Christ, reaching out to touch our wounds (vv. 4–5).

Dad recently had his first day of chemotherapy. Helmut drove him to the hospital. That night my parents’ fridge was full of meals.

God’s mercy through a truck driver’s hands.

By:  [Sheridan Voysey](https://odb.org/author/svoysey/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What spiritual gifts do you have? (If unsure, check out [Romans 12:3–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.3%E2%80%938); [1 Corinthians 12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2012); and [Ephesians 4:7–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.7%E2%80%9313).) How are you using them to serve others?

Heavenly Father, help me to be filled with Your mercy, so that I might serve those in need powerfully and cheerfully, revealing who You are.

#### **Insight**

[Romans 12:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.2) instructs believers to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. It’s striking that the first thing Paul addresses regarding renewed minds is humility (v. 3). Humility is pleasing to God, but He hates pride ([Isaiah 2:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%202.11); [Daniel 4:37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%204.37); [Amos 6:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Amos%206.8)). It’s with such humility that we’re able to assess soberly what our gifts are (and what they aren’t) so that all may contribute to the body of Christ as needed ([Romans 12:6–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.6%E2%80%938)). Whatever our gifts may be, we’re to use them cheerfully in the spirit of love and humility.

# God Calling – 10/29/20

# Discount Money

Never count success by money gained. That is not the mind of My Kingdom. Your success is the measure of My Will and Mind that you have revealed to those around you.

Your success is the measure of My Will that those around you have seen worked out in your lives.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.  Philippians 2:5

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/30/20

# Faith



Without faith it is impossible to please Him… —[Hebrews 11:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Hebrews+11%3A6)

Faith in active opposition to common sense is mistaken enthusiasm and narrow-mindedness, and common sense in opposition to faith demonstrates a mistaken reliance on reason as the basis for truth. The life of faith brings the two of these into the proper relationship. Common sense and faith are as different from each other as the natural life is from the spiritual, and as impulsiveness is from inspiration. Nothing that Jesus Christ ever said is common sense, but is revelation sense, and is complete, whereas common sense falls short. Yet faith must be tested and tried before it becomes real in your life. “We know that all things work together for good…” ([Romans 8:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:28)) so that no matter what happens, the transforming power of God’s providence transforms perfect faith into reality. Faith always works in a personal way, because the purpose of God is to see that perfect faith is made real in His children.

For every detail of common sense in life, there is a truth God has revealed by which we can prove in our practical experience what we believe God to be. Faith is a tremendously active principle that always puts Jesus Christ first. The life of faith says, “Lord, You have said it, it appears to be irrational, but I’m going to step out boldly, trusting in Your Word” (for example, see [Matthew 6:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:33)). Turning intellectual faith into our personal possession is always a fight, not just sometimes. God brings us into particular circumstances to educate our faith, because the nature of faith is to make the object of our faith very real to us. Until we know Jesus, God is merely a concept, and we can’t have faith in Him. But once we hear Jesus say, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” ([John 14:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14:9)) we immediately have something that is real, and our faith is limitless. Faith is the entire person in the right relationship with God through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Defenders of the faith are inclined to be bitter until they learn to walk in the light of the Lord. When you have learned to walk in the light of the Lord, bitterness and contention are impossible.  
Biblical Psychology

# CCEL – 10/30/20

**It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.**—[LAM. 3:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.26)

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?—I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.—Wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.—Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord.

Let us not be weary in well doing: . . . in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.—Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

[Psa. 77:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.77.html" \l "Ps.77.9). –[Psa.31:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html" \l "Ps.31.22).[Luke 18:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.18.html" \l "Luke.18.7). -[Prov. 20:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.20.html" \l "Prov.20.22). -[Psa. 37:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.7).[II Chr. 20:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.20.html" \l "iiChr.20.17).[Gal. 6:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.6.html" \l "Gal.6.9). -[Jas. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.5.html" \l "Jas.5.7).

“I will praise thee, O Lord.” [Psalm 9:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.9.html" \l "Ps.9.1)

Praise should always follow answered prayer; as the mist of earth’s gratitude rises when the sun of heaven’s love warms the ground. Hath the Lord been gracious to thee, and inclined his ear to the voice of thy supplication? Then praise him as long as thou livest. Let the ripe fruit drop upon the fertile soil from which it drew its life. Deny not a song to him who hath answered thy prayer and given thee the desire of thy heart. To be silent over God’s mercies is to incur the guilt of ingratitude; it is to act as basely as the nine lepers, who after they had been cured of their leprosy, returned not to give thanks unto the healing Lord. To forget to praise God is to refuse to benefit ourselves; for praise, like prayer, is one great means of promoting the growth of the spiritual life. It helps to remove our burdens, to excite our hope, to increase our faith. It is a healthful and invigorating exercise which quickens the pulse of the believer, and nerves him for fresh enterprises in his Master’s service. To bless God for mercies received is also the way to benefit our fellow-men; “the humble shall hear thereof and be glad.” Others who have been in like circumstances shall take comfort if we can say, “Oh! magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together; this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him.” Weak hearts will be strengthened, and drooping saints will be revived as they listen to our “songs of deliverance.” Their doubts and fears will be rebuked, as we teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. They too shall “sing in the ways of the Lord,” when they hear us magnify his holy name. Praise is the most heavenly of Christian duties. The angels pray not, but they cease not to praise both day and night; and the redeemed, clothed in white robes, with palm-branches in their hands, are never weary of singing the new song, “Worthy is the Lamb.”

# Word Live – 10/30/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/30/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/30/20

# Your Kingdom Come

**Read:** [**Psalm 72**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72)

#### **Of Solomon.**

1Endow the king with your justice, O God,  
    the royal son with your righteousness.  
2May he judge your people in righteousness,  
    your afflicted ones with justice.

3May the mountains bring prosperity to the people,  
    the hills the fruit of righteousness.  
4May he defend the afflicted among the people  
    and save the children of the needy;  
    may he crush the oppressor.  
5May he endure[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#fen-NIV-15006a)] as long as the sun,  
    as long as the moon, through all generations.  
6May he be like rain falling on a mown field,  
    like showers watering the earth.  
7In his days may the righteous flourish  
    and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.

8May he rule from sea to sea  
    and from the River[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#fen-NIV-15009b)] to the ends of the earth.  
9May the desert tribes bow before him  
    and his enemies lick the dust.  
10May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores  
    bring tribute to him.  
May the kings of Sheba and Seba  
    present him gifts.  
11May all kings bow down to him  
    and all nations serve him.

12For he will deliver the needy who cry out,  
    the afflicted who have no one to help.  
13He will take pity on the weak and the needy  
    and save the needy from death.  
14He will rescue them from oppression and violence,  
    for precious is their blood in his sight.

15Long may he live!  
    May gold from Sheba be given him.  
May people ever pray for him  
    and bless him all day long.  
16May grain abound throughout the land;  
    on the tops of the hills may it sway.  
May the crops flourish like Lebanon  
    and thrive[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#fen-NIV-15017c)] like the grass of the field.  
17May his name endure forever;  
    may it continue as long as the sun.

Then all nations will be blessed through him,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#fen-NIV-15018d)]  
    and they will call him blessed.

18Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel,  
    who alone does marvelous deeds.  
19Praise be to his glorious name forever;  
    may the whole earth be filled with his glory.  
Amen and Amen.

20This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 72:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#en-NIV-15006) Septuagint; Hebrew You will be feared
2. [Psalm 72:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#en-NIV-15009) That is, the Euphrates
3. [Psalm 72:16](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#en-NIV-15017) Probable reading of the original Hebrew text; Masoretic Text Lebanon, / from the city
4. [Psalm 72:17](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+72#en-NIV-15018) Or will use his name in blessings (see Gen. 48:20)

Has there ever been a perfect king or president? While history books record the achievements and the failures of those in positions of power, I’m sure we’ll agree that it’s difficult to find any leader who is completely without fault. In today’s psalm, the prayers of those seeking justice are answered with the gift of an ideal king. This prayer provides us with a vision of what such an ideal king’s reign would look like.

May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him. Psalm 72:11

Here the Psalmist prays that the king will reflect the character of the Lord in administering justice (v. 1). The success of this king will not be measured by his wealth, but by how he treats the poor and the needy (vv. 2, 4). This king will rescue the vulnerable from the hand of oppressors (vv. 12–14). This king’s reign will be marked by prosperity for all, a long reign, and an enduring peace (vv. 3–7). His rule will extend from “sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth” (v. 8). Under his just and righteous rule, there will not be hunger or violence.

In Genesis 12:1–3, God promised Abram that through his offspring all the families of the earth would be blessed. That promise is fulfilled in the reign of this king. The Psalmist declares, “Then all the nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed” (v. 17). His praise turns to God “who alone does marvelous deeds” (v. 18). In case you haven’t figured it out already, this psalm finds its fulfillment in Jesus. He is the King who will bring true peace and justice. He alone will rule over the nations (Rev. 21:25–26).

**Apply the Word**

Today, make a list of leaders who need your prayer. They can be leaders in your church, your community, your workplace, and in our nation. We know that God is the King of kings, and all true power and justice come through Him alone.

### **Pray with Us**

Psalm 72 is a visionary prayer of Solomon for the future king. We pray today for leaders in our churches, communities, and in our nation. You can use Janet Parshall’s booklet, Prayer and Politics, this month’s featured resource.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/30/20

# Everyone Needs a Mentor

 **Read:** [**Titus 2:1–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Titus%202.1%E2%80%938)

### **Doing Good for the Sake of the Gospel**

2 You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. 2Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

3Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

6Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. 7In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness 8and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

To Titus, my true son in our common faith. [Titus 1:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Titus%201.4)

As I walked into my new supervisor’s office, I was feeling wary and emotionally raw. My old supervisor had run our department with harshness and condescension, often leaving me (and others) in tears. Now I wondered, What would my new boss be like? Soon after I stepped into my new boss’ office, I felt my fears dissipate as he welcomed me warmly and asked me to share about myself and my frustrations. He listened intently, and I knew by his kind expression and gentle words that he truly cared. A believer in Jesus, he became my work mentor, encourager, and friend.

The apostle Paul was a spiritual mentor to Titus, his “true son in our common faith” ([Titus 1:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Titus%201.4)). In his letter to Titus, Paul offered him helpful instructions and guidelines for his role in the church. He not only taught but modeled how to “teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine” (2:1), set “an example by doing what is good,” and “show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech” (vv. 7–8). As a result, Titus became his partner, brother, and coworker ([2 Corinthians 2:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%202.13); [8:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%208.23))—and a mentor of others.

Many of us have benefited from a mentor—a teacher, coach, grandparent, youth leader, or pastor—who guided us with their knowledge, wisdom, encouragement, and faith in God. Who could benefit from the spiritual lessons you’ve learned in your journey with Jesus?

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Who’s been a spiritual mentor to you? For whom have you been a mentor? And whom might you mentor?

Father, I’m thankful for all those who mentored me when I needed them most. Guide me to someone who might need my encouragement today.

#### **Insight**

The word self-controlled used in today’s passage ([Titus 2:1–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Titus%202.1%E2%80%938)) is a translation of the Greek word sṓphrōn, which means “to be sound in mind.” Self-mastery—mature judgment, proper restraint—is what’s in view. Paul uses a form of this word five times in Titus. Those charged with the spiritual oversight of God’s people were to be “self-controlled” (1:8). And in a culture where people were known to be “liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (v. 12), believing men and women (2:2, 5–6) were to be examples of those who by the grace of God were choosing “to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions” and to instead “live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives” (v. 12).

# God Calling – 10/30/20

# The Hardest Lesson

Wait and you shall realize the Joy of the one who can be calm and wait, knowing that all is well. The last, and hardest lesson, is that of waiting. So wait.

I would almost say tonight "Forgive Me, children, that I allow this extra burden to rest upon you even for so short a time."

I would have you know this, that from the moment you placed all in My Hands, and sought no other aid, from that moment I have taken the quickest way possible to work out your salvation, and to free you.

There is so much you have had to be taught -- to avoid future disaster. But the Friend with whom you stand by the grave of failure, of dead ambitions, of relinquished desires, that Friend is a Friend for all time.

Use this waiting time to cement the Friendship with Me, and to increase your Knowledge of Me.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.  Psalm 33:20

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/31/20

# The Trial of Faith



If you have faith as a mustard seed…nothing will be impossible for you. —[Matthew 17:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+17%3A20)

We have the idea that God rewards us for our faith, and it may be so in the initial stages. But we do not earn anything through faith— faith brings us into the right relationship with God and gives Him His opportunity to work. Yet God frequently has to knock the bottom out of your experience as His saint to get you in direct contact with Himself. God wants you to understand that it is a life of faith, not a life of emotional enjoyment of His blessings. The beginning of your life of faith was very narrow and intense, centered around a small amount of experience that had as much emotion as faith in it, and it was full of light and sweetness. Then God withdrew His conscious blessings to teach you to “walk by faith” ([2 Corinthians 5:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:7)). And you are worth much more to Him now than you were in your days of conscious delight with your thrilling testimony.

Faith by its very nature must be tested and tried. And the real trial of faith is not that we find it difficult to trust God, but that God’s character must be proven as trustworthy in our own minds. Faith being worked out into reality must experience times of unbroken isolation. Never confuse the trial of faith with the ordinary discipline of life, because a great deal of what we call the trial of faith is the inevitable result of being alive. Faith, as the Bible teaches it, is faith in God coming against everything that contradicts Him— a faith that says, “I will remain true to God’s character whatever He may do.” The highest and the greatest expression of faith in the whole Bible is— “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” ([Job 13:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+13:15)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Jesus Christ can afford to be misunderstood; we cannot. Our weakness lies in always wanting to vindicate ourselves.  The Place of Help, 1051 L

# CCEL – 10/31/20

**Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.**—[ZECH. 4:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.4.html" \l "Zech.4.6)

Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?

God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.—Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

My Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.—The battle is not yours, but God's.

The Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's.

[Isa. 40:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.40.html" \l "Isa.40.13).[I Cor. 1:27-29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.27).[John 3:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.8). -[John 1:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.13).[Hag. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hag.2.html" \l "Hag.2.5). -[II Chr. 20:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.20.html" \l "iiChr.20.15).[I Sam. 17:47](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.17.html" \l "iSam.17.47).

“Renew a right spirit within me.” [Psalm 51:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.10)

A backslider, if there be a spark of life left in him will groan after restoration. In this renewal the same exercise of grace is required as at our conversion. We needed repentance then; we certainly need it now. We wanted faith that we might come to Christ at first; only the like grace can bring us to Jesus now. We wanted a word from the Most High, a word from the lip of the loving One, to end our fears then; we shall soon discover, when under a sense of present sin, that we need it now. No man can be renewed without as real and true a manifestation of the Holy Spirit’s energy as he felt at first, because the work is as great, and flesh and blood are as much in the way now as ever they were. Let thy personal weakness, O Christian, be an argument to make thee pray earnestly to thy God for help. Remember, David when he felt himself to be powerless, did not fold his arms or close his lips, but he hastened to the mercy-seat with “renew a right spirit within me.” Let not the doctrine that you, unaided, can do nothing, make you sleep; but let it be a goad in your side to drive you with an awful earnestness to Israel’s strong Helper. O that you may have grace to plead with God, as though you pleaded for your very life—“Lord, renew a right spirit within me.” He who sincerely prays to God to do this, will prove his honesty by using the means through which God works. Be much in prayer; live much upon the Word of God; kill the lusts which have driven your Lord from you; be careful to watch over the future uprisings of sin. The Lord has his own appointed ways; sit by the wayside and you will be ready when he passes by. Continue in all those blessed ordinances which will foster and nourish your dying graces; and, knowing that all the power must proceed from him, cease not to cry, “Renew a right spirit within me.”

# Word Live – 10/31/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/31/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/31/20

# A Longing Satisfied

### **Read:** [**Psalm 42**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#fen-NIV-14557a)**][**[**b**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#fen-NIV-14557b)**]**

#### **For the director of music. A maskil[**[**c**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#fen-NIV-14557c)**] of the Sons of Korah.**

1As the deer pants for streams of water,  
    so my soul pants for you, my God.  
2My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
    When can I go and meet with God?  
3My tears have been my food  
    day and night,  
while people say to me all day long,  
    “Where is your God?”  
4These things I remember  
    as I pour out my soul:  
how I used to go to the house of God  
    under the protection of the Mighty One[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#fen-NIV-14560d)]  
with shouts of joy and praise  
    among the festive throng.

5Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
    Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
    for I will yet praise him,  
    my Savior and my God.

6My soul is downcast within me;  
    therefore I will remember you  
from the land of the Jordan,  
    the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.  
7Deep calls to deep  
    in the roar of your waterfalls;  
all your waves and breakers  
    have swept over me.

8By day the Lord directs his love,  
    at night his song is with me—  
    a prayer to the God of my life.

9I say to God my Rock,  
    “Why have you forgotten me?  
Why must I go about mourning,  
    oppressed by the enemy?”  
10My bones suffer mortal agony  
    as my foes taunt me,  
saying to me all day long,  
    “Where is your God?”

11Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
    Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
    for I will yet praise him,  
    my Savior and my God.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#en-NIV-14557) In many Hebrew manuscripts Psalms 42 and 43 constitute one psalm.
2. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#en-NIV-14557) In Hebrew texts 42:1-11 is numbered 42:2-12.
3. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#en-NIV-14557) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
4. [Psalm 42:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+42#en-NIV-14560) See Septuagint and Syriac; the meaning of the Hebrew for this line is uncertain.

It has always amazed me that you do not have to teach children how to talk. Language is incredibly complex—as anyone who has tried to learn a second language knows well. Yet, children learn to speak just by listening to those around them. Their mastery comes by seeing speech modeled for them day after day.

But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life. John 4:14

We conclude our study by returning to the place where we started, with Psalm 42. Here, the speaker expresses his longing for God’s presence. To him, God seems distant and remote. Twice the Psalmist rouses himself, saying, “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God” (vv. 5, 11).

He realizes the need to embrace God’s promised future. He knows that ultimately, God will work things out. The psalms in Book 2 model for us how to put our hope in God. Just as a child learns how to speak by listening to others, we can learn how to put our hope in God by praying through the psalms. In these powerful poems, the Psalmists engage with God during difficult and trying circumstances: pursued by enemies, when falsely accused, as their nation is defeated, when they see the wicked prosper when they are confronted by their own sin, when they are under God’s judgment, and when God answers their requests.

They are honest with God and with themselves, trusting in God’s plan and intentions, looking to Him instead of at others for their worth and value, and by trusting that God’s promised Messiah will come to redeem and rule.

**Apply the Word**

Biblical faith is characterized by hope. Just like the Psalmists looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, we long for His return. This gives us confidence to approach God’s throne boldly, praying that “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10).

### **Pray with Us**

We conclude this month the same way we started...with the hope we have in God! As we pray today, follow the Psalmist’s exhortation: “Put your hope in God” (Ps. 42:5, 11).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/31/20

# Sticks, Bricks, and God

 **Read:** [**Job 1:18–22**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.18%E2%80%9322)

18While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, “Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, 19when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

20At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship 21and said:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
    and naked I will depart.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+1%3A18%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-12891a)]  
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;  
    may the name of the Lord be praised.”

22In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Job 1:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+1%3A18%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-12891) Or will return there

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised. [Job 1:21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.21)

After praying about what God was calling them to do in the next phase of their lives, Mark and Nina determined that moving to the urban core of the city was what they needed to do. They purchased a vacant house and renovation was well underway—then came the storm. Mark wrote in a text message to me: “We had a surprise this morning. The tornado that came through Jefferson City, took out our renovation—down to sticks and bricks. God is up to something.”

Uncontrollable storms are not the only things that surprise us and create confusion in our lives. Not losing sight of God in the midst of misfortune, however, is one of the keys of survival.

The weather catastrophe in Job’s life that resulted in his loss of property and the death of his children ([Job 1:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.19)) was but one of the shocking surprises he faced. Prior to that, three messengers had come bearing bad news (vv. 13–17).

On any given day, we can go from feasting to mourning, from celebrating life to processing death, or some other life challenge. Our lives can swiftly be reduced to “sticks and bricks”—financially, relationally, physically, emotionally, spiritually. But God is mightier than any storm. Surviving life’s trials requires faith that’s focused on Him—faith that enables us to say with Job and others, “May the name of the Lord be praised” (v. 21).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What has helped to clear your vision when you’ve lost sight of God? What can you learn from Job that will help you when the storms of life come?

Father, forgive me for the times I lose sight of You in the midst of life’s difficulties. Help me to see You with fresh eyes.

#### **Insight**

When did the story of Job take place? Several factors point to a patriarchal era similar to Abraham’s (circa 2000 bc), which would make Job one of the oldest books of the Bible. We see a patriarchal family setting. Job’s wealth is measured in terms of livestock and slaves instead of gold and silver ([Job 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.3); [42:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%2042.12); [Genesis 12:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2012.16)). Reference is made to the nomadic Chaldeans ([Job 1:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.17)). And Job lives another 140 years after his restoration, which allowed him to see his progeny “to the fourth generation” (42:16).

Job is commended as one who is “blameless and upright; [who] feared God and shunned evil” (1:1). Thousands of years later, he’s commended as a model of righteousness ([Ezekiel 14:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2014.14), [20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezekiel%2014.20)) and an example of “perseverance” and unwavering faith in God ([James 5:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%205.11)).

# God Calling – 10/31/20

# The Voice Again

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light into my path. -- Psalm 119:105.

Yes! My Word, the Scriptures. Read them, study them; store them in your hearts, use them as you use a lamp to guide your footsteps.

But remember, My children, My Word is more even than that. It is the Voice that speaks to your hearts, that inner consciousness that tells of Me.

It is the Voice that speaks to you intimately, personally, in this sacred evening time. It is even more than that. It is I your Lord and Friend.

"And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Truly a lamp to your feet, and a light to your path.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.  Psalm 119:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/1/20

# “You Are Not Your Own”



Do you not know that…you are not your own? —[1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+6%3A19)

There is no such thing as a private life, or a place to hide in this world, for a man or woman who is intimately aware of and shares in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. God divides the private life of His saints and makes it a highway for the world on one hand and for Himself on the other. No human being can stand that unless he is identified with Jesus Christ. We are not sanctified for ourselves. We are called into intimacy with the gospel, and things happen that appear to have nothing to do with us. But God is getting us into fellowship with Himself. Let Him have His way. If you refuse, you will be of no value to God in His redemptive work in the world, but will be a hindrance and a stumbling block.

The first thing God does is get us grounded on strong reality and truth. He does this until our cares for ourselves individually have been brought into submission to His way for the purpose of His redemption. Why shouldn’t we experience heartbreak? Through those doorways God is opening up ways of fellowship with His Son. Most of us collapse at the first grip of pain. We sit down at the door of God’s purpose and enter a slow death through self-pity. And all the so-called Christian sympathy of others helps us to our deathbed. But God will not. He comes with the grip of the pierced hand of His Son, as if to say, “Enter into fellowship with Me; arise and shine.” If God can accomplish His purposes in this world through a broken heart, then why not thank Him for breaking yours?

**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 – 11/1/20

**Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.**—[PROV. 8:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.34)

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

A continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.—In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.—Pray without ceasing.

[Psa. 123:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.123.html" \l "Ps.123.2).[Exo. 29:42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.29.html" \l "Exod.29.42). -[Exo. 20:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.20.html" \l "Exod.20.24).[Matt. 18:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.18.html" \l "Matt.18.20).[John 4:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.4.html" \l "John.4.23).[Eph. 6:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html" \l "Eph.6.18). -[I Thes. 5:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.17).

“The church in thy house.” [Philemon 2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phlm.1.html" \l "Phlm.1.2)

Is there a Church in this house? Are parents, children, friends, servants, all members of it? or are some still unconverted? Let us pause here and let the question go round—Am I a member of the Church in this house? How would father’s heart leap for joy, and mother’s eyes fill with holy tears if from the eldest to the youngest all were saved! Let us pray for this great mercy until the Lord shall grant it to us. Probably it had been the dearest object of Philemon’s desires to have all his household saved; but it was not at first granted him in its fulness. He had a wicked servant, Onesimus, who, having wronged him, ran away from his service. His master’s prayers followed him, and at last, as God would have it, Onesimus was led to hear Paul preach; his heart was touched, and he returned to Philemon, not only to be a faithful servant, but a brother beloved, adding another member to the Church in Philemon’s house. Is there an unconverted servant or child absent this morning? Make special supplication that such may, on their return to their home, gladden all hearts with good news of what grace has done! Is there one present? Let him partake in the same earnest entreaty.

If there be such a Church in our house, let us order it well, and let all act as in the sight of God. Let us move in the common affairs of life with studied holiness, diligence, kindness, and integrity. More is expected of a Church than of an ordinary household; family worship must, in such a case, be more devout and hearty; internal love must be more warm and unbroken, and external conduct must be more sanctified and Christlike. We need not fear that the smallness of our number will put us out of the list of Churches, for the Holy Spirit has here enrolled a family-church in the inspired book of remembrance. As a Church let us now draw nigh to the great head of the one Church universal, and let us beseech him to give us grace to shine before men to the glory of his name.

# Word Live – 11/1/20

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

# Scripture Union – 11/1/20

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

# Today in the Word – 11/1/20

# https://www.todayintheword.org/siteassets/header-images/2020/november/titw_november_open-graph_1200x630.jpg Good News

**Read:** [**Acts 1:1–26**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3a1%e2%80%9326)

### **Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven**

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5For John baptized with[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26929a)] water, but in a few days you will be baptized with[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26929b)] the Holy Spirit.”

6Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

9After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

### **Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas**

12Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26936c)] from the city. 13When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

15In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16and said, “Brothers and sisters,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26940d)] the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. 17He was one of our number and shared in our ministry.”

18(With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20“For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms:

“‘May his place be deserted;  
    let there be no one to dwell in it,’[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26944e)]

and,

“‘May another take his place of leadership.’[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26944f)]

21Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, 22beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

23So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” 26Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Acts 1:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26929) Or in
2. [Acts 1:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26929) Or in
3. [Acts 1:12](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26936) That is, about 5/8 mile or about 1 kilometer
4. [Acts 1:16](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26940) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 6:3; 11:29; 12:17; 16:40; 18:18, 27; 21:7, 17; 28:14, 15.
5. [Acts 1:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26944) Psalm 69:25
6. [Acts 1:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A1%E2%80%9326+&version=NIV#en-NIV-26944) Psalm 109:8

Imagine that you are the very first person to hear incredible, life-changing, world-shaking good news. Who would you tell? Would you make a call, text a friend, or post to social media? Certainly, you wouldn’t be able to keep this news to yourself. You’d want to share it with as many people as possible. The word gospel is derived from a term meaning “good story” or “good news.” Today, we begin a study of the book of Acts, going back to the beginning of the church and the early spread of this good news.

Stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.Luke 24:49

The book of Acts is a close companion to the Gospel of Luke, which he calls “my former book” in Acts 1:1. Biblical scholars say the Gospel of Luke and Acts were probably one work made up of two scrolls. Luke’s second volume, the book of Acts, begins with Jesus’ final instructions to the disciples before His ascension. Jesus spent the forty days between His resurrection and ascension teaching about the kingdom of God. Before He departed, Jesus hits pause on the disciples’ mission. He tells them to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them. The Holy Spirit is considered so essential to the mission of the church that the first disciples needed to wait until they had been “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

During this waiting period, the apostles appointed a replacement for Judas, who had betrayed Christ and then committed suicide. Two candidates were nominated, and Matthias was chosen after prayer and casting lots (v. 24). This method was similar to the one used by the Jewish priests to discern God’s will. However, there is no mention of the apostles employing this method again after Pentecost.

**Apply the Word**

**Apply the Word**

As we begin our study of Acts, ask God to grant you insight through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit also empowers us to serve God well and to share the good news of the gospel. Give thanks today for the gospel!

### **Pray with Us**

Lord Jesus, may this study of the book of Acts increase our love for your Word, desire to serve you, and zeal to share the good news.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 11/1/20

# Even a Taco

**Read:** [**Matthew 10:37–42**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2010.37%E2%80%9342)

37“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

40“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. 42And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

If anyone gives even a cup of cold water . . . that person will certainly not lose their reward. [Matthew 10:42](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2010.42)

Ashton and Austin Samuelson graduated from a Christian college with a strong desire to serve Jesus. However, neither felt called to a traditional ministry in the church. But what about ministry in the world? Absolutely. They blended their burden to end childhood hunger with their God-given entrepreneurial skills, and in 2014 launched a restaurant that serves tacos. But this isn’t just any restaurant. The Samuelsons operate from a buy-one-give-one philosophy. For every meal bought, they donate money to provide a meal specifically designed to meet the nutritional needs of malnourished children. So far, they’ve made contributions in more than sixty countries. Their goal is to be a part of ending childhood hunger—one taco at a time.

Jesus’ words in [Matthew 10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2010) are not cryptic. They are astoundingly clear: devotion is evidenced by actions, not words (vv. 37–42). One of those actions is giving to the “little ones.” For the Samuelsons, that focus is giving to children. But take note, the “little ones” isn’t a phrase limited to chronological age. Christ is calling us to give to any who are of “little account” in the eyes of this world: the poor, the sick, the prisoner, the refugee, those disadvantaged in any way. And give what? Well, Jesus says “even a cup of cold water” (v. 42). If something as small and simple as a cup of cold water classifies, then a taco surely fits right in line too.

By:  [John Blase](https://odb.org/author/johnblase/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Who in your life are little in the eyes of the world? What’s something small you can do today to serve these “little ones”?

Jesus, give me eyes to see and ears to hear today, so that I can serve, even in a small way, the least of these who cross my path.

#### **Insight**

Each of the gospel writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, had a definite plan for how to tell the story of Jesus. Each had a different audience and wanted to reach that audience in the most accessible way. In writing to a primarily Jewish audience, Matthew builds his witness around five major teaching blocks, beginning with the Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5–7) and ending with the Olivet Discourse (chs. 24–25), with three others in between (chs. 10, 13, 18). Some scholars suggest this would have resonated with a Jewish audience because the five discourses of Jesus would parallel the five books of Moses (Torah) and the five sections into which the psalms are divided. Additionally, Matthew relies heavily on the Old Testament Scriptures, quoting them around fifty times and alluding to them another seventy-five times.

# God Calling – 11/1/20

# Prayer of Joy

Joy is the messenger, dear Lord, that bears our prayers to Thee

Prayer can be like incense, rising ever higher and higher, or it can be like a low earth-mist clinging to the ground, never once soaring.

The Eye that sees all, the Ear that hears all, knows every cry.

But the prayer of real faith is the prayer of Joy, that sees and knows the heart of Love it rises to greet, and that is so sure of a glad response.

And another angel came ... having a golden censer; ... and the smoke of the incense,   
which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before   
God out of the angel's hand.  Revelation 8:3,4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 11/2/20

# Obedience or Independence?



If you love Me, keep My commandments. —[John 14:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+14%3A15)

Our Lord never insists on obedience. He stresses very definitely what we ought to do, but He never forces us to do it. We have to obey Him out of a oneness of spirit with Him. That is why whenever our Lord talked about discipleship, He prefaced it with an “If,” meaning, “You do not need to do this unless you desire to do so.” “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself…” ([Luke 9:23](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9:23)). In other words, “To be My disciple, let him give up his right to himself to Me.” Our Lord is not talking about our eternal position, but about our being of value to Him in this life here and now. That is why He sounds so stern (see [Luke 14:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+14:26)). Never try to make sense from these words by separating them from the One who spoke them.

The Lord does not give me rules, but He makes His standard very clear. If my relationship to Him is that of love, I will do what He says without hesitation. If I hesitate, it is because I love someone I have placed in competition with Him, namely, myself. Jesus Christ will not force me to obey Him, but I must. And as soon as I obey Him, I fulfill my spiritual destiny. My personal life may be crowded with small, petty happenings, altogether insignificant. But if I obey Jesus Christ in the seemingly random circumstances of life, they become pinholes through which I see the face of God. Then, when I stand face to face with God, I will discover that through my obedience thousands were blessed. When God’s redemption brings a human soul to the point of obedience, it always produces. If I obey Jesus Christ, the redemption of God will flow through me to the lives of others, because behind the deed of obedience is the reality of Almighty God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 11/2/20

**Ever follow that which is good.**—[I THES. 5:15.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.15)

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; . . . but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.—Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

[I Pet. 2:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.21). -[Heb. 12:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.3).[Heb. 12:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.1).[Phi. 4:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.8).

“I am the Lord, I change not.” [Malachi 3:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.6)

It is well for us that, amidst all the variableness of life, there is One whom change cannot affect; One whose heart can never alter, and on whose brow mutability can make no furrows. All things else have changed—all things are changing. The sun itself grows dim with age; the world is waxing old; the folding up of the worn-out vesture has commenced; the heavens and earth must soon pass away; they shall perish, they shall wax old as doth a garment; but there is One who only hath immortality, of whose years there is no end, and in whose person there is no change. The delight which the mariner feels, when, after having been tossed about for many a day, he steps again upon the solid shore, is the satisfaction of a Christian when, amidst all the changes of this troublous life, he rests the foot of his faith upon this truth—“I am the Lord, I change not.”

The stability which the anchor gives the ship when it has at last obtained a hold-fast, is like that which the Christian’s hope affords him when it fixes itself upon this glorious truth. With God “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Whatever his attributes were of old, they are now; his power, his wisdom, his justice, his truth, are alike unchanged. He has ever been the refuge of his people, their stronghold in the day of trouble, and he is their sure Helper still. He is unchanged in his love. He has loved his people with “an everlasting love”; he loves them now as much as ever he did, and when all earthly things shall have melted in the last conflagration, his love will still wear the dew of its youth. Precious is the assurance that he changes not! The wheel of providence revolves, but its axle is eternal love.

“Death and change are busy ever,

Man decays, and ages move;

But his mercy waneth never;

God is wisdom, God is love.”

# Word Live – 11/2/20

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

# Scripture Union – 11/2/20

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

# Today in the Word – 11/2/20

# The Church's Birthday

**Read:** [**Acts 2:1–47**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347)

### **The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26954a)] as the Spirit enabled them.

5Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? 8Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26959b)] 10Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” 12Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

13Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

### Peter Addresses the Crowd

14Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! 16No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17“‘In the last days, God says,  
    I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
    your young men will see visions,  
    your old men will dream dreams.  
18Even on my servants, both men and women,  
    I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
    and they will prophesy.  
19I will show wonders in the heavens above  
    and signs on the earth below,  
    blood and fire and billows of smoke.  
20The sun will be turned to darkness  
    and the moon to blood  
    before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.  
21And everyone who calls  
    on the name of the Lord will be saved.’[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26971c)]

22“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26973d)] put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25David said about him:

“‘I saw the Lord always before me.  
    Because he is at my right hand,  
    I will not be shaken.  
26Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
    my body also will rest in hope,  
27because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,  
    you will not let your holy one see decay.  
28You have made known to me the paths of life;  
    you will fill me with joy in your presence.’[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26978e)]

29“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“‘The Lord said to my Lord:  
    “Sit at my right hand  
35until I make your enemies  
    a footstool for your feet.”’[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#fen-NIV-26985f)]

36“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

37When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

38Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

40With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

### **The Fellowship of the Believers**

42They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Acts 2:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26954) Or languages; also in verse 11
2. [Acts 2:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26959) That is, the Roman province by that name
3. [Acts 2:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26971) Joel 2:28-32
4. [Acts 2:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26973) Or of those not having the law (that is, Gentiles)
5. [Acts 2:28](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26978) Psalm 16:8-11 (see Septuagint)
6. [Acts 2:35](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3a1%e2%80%9347#en-NIV-26985) Psalm 110:1

When I was a boy, I would eagerly count off the days until my birthday. This wasn’t because I was in a hurry to be one year older; it was because I wanted presents. It is customary for people to receive gifts on their birthday, and the church was no different. The day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the church, the day Jesus fulfilled His promise to send the one He called the “Advocate” (sometimes translated counselor or comforter) and “the Spirit of truth” (John 15:26).

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:47

People witnessed the descent of the Spirit upon the assembled church through audible and visible signs. There was a sound like that of a violent wind and what looked like tongues of flame that separated and rested upon each of the disciples. They began to speak about God in foreign languages (vv. 1–4). The sound attracted the attention of those who were visiting Jerusalem “from every nation under heaven” (v. 5). They were amazed to hear the disciples speaking their native languages (vv. 6–12).

Jesus promised that the coming of the Spirit would empower the disciples to tell others about Him (Acts 1:8). The effect upon Peter was evident as he stood boldly and explained that what these visitors were seeing had been predicted by the prophet Joel (vv. 14–16). Peter preached the gospel, emphasized the resurrection, and called them to turn to Christ. “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins” (v. 38). He promised that all who did so would also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Apply the Word**

The first church exhibited outward signs of their inner transformation as believers. Describe the characteristics of the early church included in the closing verses of this chapter, verses 42–47. Do you think today’s church reflects the passion and dedication of those early believers?

### **Pray with Us**

As we read the second chapter of Acts, we marvel at the passion for God shown by these early Christians and the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Lord, may we obey your Spirit and live according to Your Word.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 11/2/20

# God Hears Everything

**Read:** [**1 Kings 18:25–27**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2018.25%E2%80%9327)

25Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.” 26So they took the bull given them and prepared it.

Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

27At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

**Read:** [**1 Kings 18:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2018.25%E2%80%9327)[**30-38**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2018.30-38)

30Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. 31Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.” 32With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A25%E2%80%9327+%2C+30-38&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9374a)] of seed. 33He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.”

34“Do it again,” he said, and they did it again.

“Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time. 35The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

36At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. 37Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

38Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [1 Kings 18:32](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A25%E2%80%9327+%2C+30-38&version=NIV#en-NIV-9374) That is, probably about 24 pounds or about 11 kilograms

Let it be known today that you are God. [1 Kings 18:36](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2018.36)

One of the longest-recorded postal delays in history lasted eighty-nine years. In 2008 a homeowner in the UK received an invitation to a party originally mailed in 1919 to a former resident of her address. The note was placed in her mailbox via the Royal Mail, but the reason behind its long delay remains a mystery.

Even the best human efforts at communication sometimes let us down, but Scripture makes clear that God never fails to hear His faithful people. In [1 Kings 18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%2018), Elijah demonstrated the striking contrast between the pagan god Baal and Jehovah God. In a showdown to demonstrate who the true God was, after Baal’s prophets had prayed for hours, Elijah taunted them: “Shout louder! . . . Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened” (v. 27). Then Elijah prayed for Jehovah to answer so that His people might return to faith, and God’s power was clearly displayed.

While our prayers may not always be answered as immediately as Elijah’s was, we can be assured that God hears them ([Psalm 34:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2034.17)). The Bible reminds us that He treasures our prayers so much that He keeps them before Him in “golden bowls,” like precious incense ([Revelation 5:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%205.8)). God will answer every prayer in His own perfect wisdom and way. There are no lost letters in heaven.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What does it mean to you that God cares enough to listen to your prayers? How will you thank Him for His faithfulness to hear you today?

Father, how amazing You are to always hear my prayers! I praise You because my prayers are precious to You.

#### **Insight**

Ancient Near Eastern culture was predominantly polytheistic, with many gods or deities believed to coexist in a hierarchy, each with different powers. Baal was seen as a god of fertility and storms and was depicted as a warrior carrying a thunderbolt. The gods were also viewed as having human characteristics, such as needing sleep or going on journeys, which could make it difficult to get their attention. Elijah, therefore, taunts the prophets of Baal with their own beliefs—mocking their seeming inability to get their god's attention—before demonstrating Yahweh’s supreme power in realms they’d claimed were Baal’s (fire, lightning, and storms).

# God Calling – 11/2/20

# Spend

Give, give, give.  Keep ever an empty vessel for Me to fill.

In future use all for Me, and give all you cannot use.

How poor die those who leave wealth!  Wealth is to use, to spend, for Me.

Use as you go. Delight to use.

For the love of money is the root of all evil.  1 Timothy 6:10