# My Utmost for His Highest – 8/31/21

# “My Joy…Your Joy”



These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. —[John 15:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+15%3A11)

What was the joy that Jesus had? Joy should not be confused with happiness. In fact, it is an insult to Jesus Christ to use the word happiness in connection with Him. The joy of Jesus was His absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice to His Father— the joy of doing that which the Father sent Him to do— “…who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross…” ([Hebrews 12:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:2)). “I delight to do Your will, O my God…” ([Psalm 40:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+40:8)). Jesus prayed that our joy might continue fulfilling itself until it becomes the same joy as His. Have I allowed Jesus Christ to introduce His joy to me?

Living a full and overflowing life does not rest in bodily health, in circumstances, nor even in seeing God’s work succeed, but in the perfect understanding of God, and in the same fellowship and oneness with Him that Jesus Himself enjoyed. But the first thing that will hinder this joy is the subtle irritability caused by giving too much thought to our circumstances. Jesus said, “…the cares of this world,…choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful” ([Mark 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+4:19)). And before we even realize what has happened, we are caught up in our cares. All that God has done for us is merely the threshold— He wants us to come to the place where we will be His witnesses and proclaim who Jesus is.

Have the right relationship with God, finding your joy there, and out of you “will flow rivers of living water” ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). Be a fountain through which Jesus can pour His “living water.” Stop being hypocritical and proud, aware only of yourself, and live “your life…hidden with Christ in God” ([Colossians 3:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3:3)). A person who has the right relationship with God lives a life as natural as breathing wherever he goes. The lives that have been the greatest blessing to you are the lives of those people who themselves were unaware of having been a blessing.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 8/31/21

**The free gift is of many offences unto justification.**—[ROM. 5:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.16)

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.—I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.—I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—Not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.—And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

[Isa. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.1.html" \l "Isa.1.18). -[Isa. 43:25,26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.25). -[Isa. 44:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.44.html" \l "Isa.44.22).[John 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.16). -[Rom. 5:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.15). -[I Cor. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.11).

“On mine arm shall they trust.” [Isaiah 51:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.51.html" \l "Isa.51.5)

In seasons of severe trial, the Christian has nothing on earth that he can trust to, and is therefore compelled to cast himself on his God alone. When his vessel is on its beam-ends, and no human deliverance can avail, he must simply and entirely trust himself to the providence and care of God. Happy storm that wrecks a man on such a rock as this! O blessed hurricane that drives the soul to God and God alone! There is no getting at our God sometimes because of the multitude of our friends; but when a man is so poor, so friendless, so helpless that he has nowhere else to turn, he flies into his Father’s arms, and is blessedly clasped therein! When he is burdened with troubles so pressing and so peculiar, that he cannot tell them to any but his God, he may be thankful for them; for he will learn more of his Lord then than at any other time. Oh, tempest-tossed believer, it is a happy trouble that drives thee to thy Father! Now that thou hast only thy God to trust to, see that thou puttest thy full confidence in him. Dishonour not thy Lord and Master by unworthy doubts and fears; but be strong in faith, giving glory to God. Show the world that thy God is worth ten thousand worlds to thee. Show rich men how rich thou art in thy poverty when the Lord God is thy helper. Show the strong man how strong thou art in thy weakness when underneath thee are the everlasting arms. Now is the time for feats of faith and valiant exploits. Be strong and very courageous, and the Lord thy God shall certainly, as surely as he built the heavens and the earth, glorify himself in thy weakness, and magnify his might in the midst of thy distress. The grandeur of the arch of heaven would be spoiled if the sky were supported by a single visible column, and your faith would lose its glory if it rested on anything discernible by the carnal eye. May the Holy Spirit give you to rest in Jesus this closing day of the month.

# Word Live – 8/31/21

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

# Scripture Union – 8/31/21

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

# Today in the Word – 8/31/21

# Return to the Lord

**Read:** [**Hosea 14:1–9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+14%3a1%e2%80%939)

### Repentance to Bring Blessing

14 [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22284a)]Return, Israel, to the Lord your God.  
    Your sins have been your downfall!  
2Take words with you  
    and return to the Lord.  
Say to him:  
    “Forgive all our sins  
and receive us graciously,  
    that we may offer the fruit of our lips.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22285b)]  
3Assyria cannot save us;  
    we will not mount warhorses.  
We will never again say ‘Our gods’  
    to what our own hands have made,  
    for in you the fatherless find compassion.”

4“I will heal their waywardness  
    and love them freely,  
    for my anger has turned away from them.  
5I will be like the dew to Israel;  
    he will blossom like a lily.  
Like a cedar of Lebanon  
    he will send down his roots;  
6    his young shoots will grow.  
His splendor will be like an olive tree,  
    his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.  
7People will dwell again in his shade;  
    they will flourish like the grain,  
they will blossom like the vine—  
    Israel’s fame will be like the wine of Lebanon.  
8Ephraim, what more have I[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22291c)] to do with idols?  
    I will answer him and care for him.  
I am like a flourishing juniper;  
    your fruitfulness comes from me.”

9Who is wise? Let them realize these things.  
    Who is discerning? Let them understand.  
The ways of the Lord are right;  
    the righteous walk in them,  
    but the rebellious stumble in them.

#### Footnotes

1. [Hosea 14:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-22284) In Hebrew texts 14:1-9 is numbered 14:2-10.
2. [Hosea 14:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-22285) Or offer our lips as sacrifices of bulls
3. [Hosea 14:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Hosea+14%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-22291) Or Hebrew; Septuagint What more has Ephraim

My husband Peter agreed to hold down the fort for a few days, allowing me to retreat to a little cabin to finish this Today in the Word study. When he sent me a text message to check-in, I responded, “Hosea is hard.” This prophetic book can be difficult to interpret and a painful message to process. If you’ve hung in there this month, well done!

I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them. Hosea 14:4

Today’s passage is a bit of a “payoff” as it summarizes our month with the prophet. What can we take away from this book? First of all, Hosea forces us to face our sin— personal, corporate, and national. Chapter 14 starts with a final call to repentance (vv. 1–3). God still longed to give His people life, but for this to be possible, they needed to repent. Hosea instructed them to ask humbly for forgiveness and express their need for God’s grace (v. 2). Then Israel was to repent specifically of their sins—depending on other nations and worshiping other gods (v. 3). The prayer finishes with praise for the compassionate nature of the one true God.

Hosea also demonstrates the relentless grace of God. Verse 4 declares His response to repentant prayer: “[He] will heal their waywardness and love them freely.” Then he gives a final string of metaphors that paint a powerful picture of God’s healing love. It is life-giving, like the dew that brings the lily to full bloom. It is grounding, like roots that strengthen the enduring cedars of Lebanon. It is splendid, like the luxurious olive trees and the flourishing grain. Hosea finishes with an exhortation to all of us. Will we respond with wisdom and understanding? Will we walk in the ways of the Lord—or won’t we?

**Apply the Word**

Don’t leave this study without spending time in repentance. Use Hosea’s prayer as a model. Pray for your family, your church, your nation. And know that God always responds to true repentance with life-giving love.

### Pray with Us

“Who is wise? Let them realize these things. Who is discerning? Let them understand. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them” (Hos. 14:9). Lead us in righteousness, Lord.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 8/31/21

# Sharing Jesus

### Today's Devotional Read: [Isaiah 12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2012)

### Songs of Praise

12 In that day you will say:

“I will praise you, Lord.  
    Although you were angry with me,  
your anger has turned away  
    and you have comforted me.  
2Surely God is my salvation;  
    I will trust and not be afraid.  
The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17903a)];  
    he has become my salvation.”  
3With joy you will draw water  
    from the wells of salvation.

4In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;  
    make known among the nations what he has done,  
    and proclaim that his name is exalted.  
5Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;  
    let this be known to all the world.  
6Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,  
    for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

#### Footnotes

1. [Isaiah 12:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+12&version=NIV#en-NIV-17903) Or song

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. [Isaiah 12:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2012.4)

Shortly after Dwight Moody (1837–99) came to faith in Christ, the evangelist resolved not to let a day pass without sharing God’s good news with at least one person. On busy days, he’d sometimes forget his resolution until late. One night, he was in bed before he remembered. As he stepped outside, he thought, No one will be out in this pouring rain. Just then he saw a man walking down the street. Moody rushed over and asked to stand under his umbrella to avoid the rain. When granted permission, he asked, “Have you any shelter in the time of storm? Could I tell you about Jesus?”

Moody embodied a readiness to share how God saves us from the consequences of our sins. He obeyed God’s instructions to the Israelites to proclaim His name and “make known among the nations what he has done” ([Isaiah 12:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2012.4)). Not only were God’s people called to “proclaim that his name is exalted” (v. 4), but they were also to share how He had “become [their] salvation” (v. 2). Centuries later, our call remains to tell the wonders of Jesus becoming a man, dying on the cross, and rising again.

Perhaps we heard about God’s love when, as Moody did, someone left their comfort zone to talk with us about Jesus. And we too, each in our own way, can let someone know about the One who saves.

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

Sign in to track your progress!

#### Reflect & Pray

What has God done in your life that you can share with another? How has He equipped you to present the good news?

Jesus, thank You for setting me free from my sins. Help me to be ready to tell others of Your good news.

Read Evangelism: Reaching out through Relationships at [DiscoverySeries.org/Q0913](https://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0913).

#### Insight

[Isaiah 11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2011) speaks of the Messiah who will deliver and save His people. With this deliverance and salvation in view, [Isaiah 12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2012) gives us two songs of praise that celebrate God’s grace and mercy (vv. 1–3) and proclaim the greatness and majesty of our Savior (vv. 4–6). Our salvation demands a response of personal praise and proclamation. We thank God for who He is and for what He’s done. And we’re instructed that the story of salvation must be told to the nations (v. 4). We’re called to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” ([Mark 16:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2016.15)). And as we go, we echo the words of hymn writer Ernest Nichol, “We’ve a story to tell to the nations, that shall turn their hearts to the right, a story of truth and mercy, a story of peace and light.”

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

# God Calling – 8/31/21

# Pray and Deny

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. -- Matthew 17: 21.

You must live a life of communion and prayer if you are to save others.

Take My words as a command to you. "By prayer and fasting."

Pray and deny yourself, and you will be used marvelously to save and help others.

And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.  Luke 5:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/1/21

# Destined To Be Holy



…it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." —[1 Peter 1:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Peter+1%3A16)

We must continually remind ourselves of the purpose of life. We are not destined to happiness, nor to health, but to holiness. Today we have far too many desires and interests, and our lives are being consumed and wasted by them. Many of them may be right, noble, and good, and may later be fulfilled, but in the meantime God must cause their importance to us to decrease. The only thing that truly matters is whether a person will accept the God who will make him holy. At all costs, a person must have the right relationship with God.

Do I believe I need to be holy? Do I believe that God can come into me and make me holy? If through your preaching you convince me that I am unholy, I then resent your preaching. The preaching of the gospel awakens an intense resentment because it is designed to reveal my unholiness, but it also awakens an intense yearning and desire within me. God has only one intended destiny for mankind— holiness. His only goal is to produce saints. God is not some eternal blessing-machine for people to use, and He did not come to save us out of pity— He came to save us because He created us to be holy. Atonement through the Cross of Christ means that God can put me back into perfect oneness with Himself through the death of Jesus Christ, without a trace of anything coming between us any longer.

Never tolerate, because of sympathy for yourself or for others, any practice that is not in keeping with a holy God. Holiness means absolute purity of your walk before God, the words coming from your mouth, and every thought in your mind— placing every detail of your life under the scrutiny of God Himself. Holiness is not simply what God gives me, but what God has given me that is being exhibited in my life.

**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

# CCEL – 9/1/21

**The fruit of the spirit is meekness.**—[GAL. 5:22,23.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.22)

The meek . . . shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.—Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.—The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, . . . is in the sight of God of great price.—Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

Follow after meekness.—Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.—He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he openeth not his mouth.—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.

[Isa. 29:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.29.html" \l "Isa.29.19). -[Matt. 18:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.18.html" \l "Matt.18.3). -[I Pet. 3:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.3.html" \l "iPet.3.4). -[I Cor. 13:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.13.html" \l "iCor.13.4).[I Tim. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html" \l "iTim.6.11). -[Matt. 11:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.11.html" \l "Matt.11.29). -[Isa. 53:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.7). -[I Pet. 2:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.21).

“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” **[Psalm 73:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.73.html" \l "Ps.73.24)**

The Psalmist felt his need of divine guidance. He had just been discovering the foolishness of his own heart, and lest he should be constantly led astray by it, he resolved that God’s counsel should henceforth guide him. A sense of our own folly is a great step towards being wise, when it leads us to rely on the wisdom of the Lord. The blind man leans on his friend’s arm and reaches home in safety, and so would we give ourselves up implicitly to divine guidance, nothing doubting; assured that though we cannot see, it is always safe to trust the all-seeing God. “Thou shalt,” is a blessed expression of confidence. He was sure that the Lord would not decline the condescending task. There is a word for thee, O believer; rest thou in it. Be assured that thy God will be thy counsellor and friend; he shall guide thee; he will direct all thy ways. In his written Word thou hast this assurance in part fulfilled, for holy Scripture is his counsel to thee. Happy are we to have God’s Word always to guide us! What were the mariner without his compass? And what were the Christian without the Bible? This is the unerring chart, the map in which every shoal is described, and all the channels from the quicksands of destruction to the haven of salvation mapped and marked by one who knows all the way. Blessed be thou, O God, that we may trust thee to guide us now, and guide us even to the end! After this guidance through life, the Psalmist anticipates a divine reception at last—“and afterward receive me to glory.” What a thought for thee, believer! God himself will receive thee to glory—thee! Wandering, erring, straying, yet he will bring thee safe at last to glory! This is thy portion; live on it this day, and if perplexities should surround thee, go in the strength of this text straight to the throne.

# Word Live – 9/1/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/1/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/1/21

# Map Description automatically generated A House Divided

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

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

2To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

3Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Thanksgiving

4I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. 5For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge— 6God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. 7Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. 8He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

### A Church Divided Over Leaders

10I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28374a)] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. 11My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28376b)]”; still another, “I follow Christ.”

13Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. 16(Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don’t remember if I baptized anyone else.) 17For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

### Christ Crucified Is God’s Power and Wisdom

18For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
    the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28383c)]

20Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

26Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29so that no one may boast before him. 30It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28395d)]

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 1:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#en-NIV-28374) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in verses 11 and 26; and in 2:1; 3:1; 4:6; 6:8; 7:24, 29; 10:1; 11:33; 12:1; 14:6, 20, 26, 39; 15:1, 6, 50, 58; 16:15, 20.
2. [1 Corinthians 1:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#en-NIV-28376) That is, Peter
3. [1 Corinthians 1:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#en-NIV-28383) Isaiah 29:14
4. [1 Corinthians 1:31](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+1+Corinthians+1&version=NIV#en-NIV-28395) Jer. 9:24

According to the Pew Research Center, about half of U.S. adults say that they have looked for a new church at some time in their lives. Most people choose a church based on the quality of the preaching, feeling welcomed by the church’s leaders, and the style of the service. If you go by these criteria, for those living in New Testament times, the church of Corinth should have been a top choice.

He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:8

According to the apostle Paul, this church had been “enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge” (v. 5). It boasted some of the New Testament era’s leading teachers, such as Peter, Apollos, and Paul (v. 12). The city in which it met was both cosmopolitan and wealthy, making it one of the most prominent of its time.

Yet despite these advantages, the church in Corinth was also deeply troubled. Members were divided into factions identifying with their favorite teachers (vv. 10–17). Some were living immoral lives, and others were confused about how to live as Christians in a pagan culture (1 Cor. 6–9). Other people misunderstood core doctrines of the faith (1 Cor. 15). Some of the church’s worship practices were disruptive (1 Cor. 13–14). As if these issues weren’t enough, Paul faced opposition from some in the church who questioned his apostolic credentials (2 Cor. 2–7). These things prompted Paul to write the two letters we will be studying this month. We often romanticize the New Testament church. The study of 1 and 2 Corinthians should encourage us to discover that the church then was not that different from our own. We too have been gifted by God. We also have problems. Yet, despite their flaws, Paul thanked God for the Corinthian church (v. 4).

**Apply the Word**

Our churches today struggle with many of the same problems as the Corinthians. We also have access to the same spiritual power. As we begin this study, pray for a better understanding of the church in Corinth and of your own church.

### Pray with Us

Thank You, God, for the Body of Christ. As we study Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, grant us understanding of Paul’s teachings and of Your love and purpose for the church today.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/1/21

# Fix Up Time

 **Read:** [**Ephesians 4:20–32**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.20%E2%80%9332)

20That, however, is not the way of life you learned 21when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

25Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26“In your anger do not sin”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A20%E2%80%9332&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29299a)]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27and do not give the devil a foothold. 28Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

29Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

#### Footnotes

1. [Ephesians 4:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A20%E2%80%9332&version=NIV#en-NIV-29299) Psalm 4:4 (see Septuagint)

Be made new in the attitude of your minds. [Ephesians 4:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.23)

It was time to give the inside of our home a fresh, new look. But just as I’d begun prepping a room for painting, our state government announced it would be halting the sale of many home improvement items due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As soon as I heard the announcement, I rushed to the store and purchased the essential materials. You simply can’t remodel without the proper supplies.

Paul had a bit of a remodeling project in mind when he wrote [Ephesians 4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204). But the changes he was talking about went far beyond superficial alterations. Even though trusting Jesus as Savior makes us a new creation, there’s still some ongoing work the Spirit needs to do. And it takes time and work for Him to accomplish “true righteousness and holiness” ([Ephesians 4:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.24)).

The presence of the Spirit makes needed changes on the inside that can help us reflect Jesus in our words and actions. He helps us replace lying with speaking “truthfully” (v. 25). He guides us to avoid sin in regard to anger (v. 26). And He directs us to speak words that are “helpful for building others up” (v. 29). These Spirit-controlled actions are part of the internal change that’s manifested in things like kindness, compassion, and forgiveness (v. 32). The Spirit works in us to enable us to imitate Jesus Himself and reflect the heart of our heavenly Father (v. 24; 5:1).

By:  [Dave Branon](https://odb.org/author/davebranon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

In what areas do you need the Holy Spirit to make real, heart-based improvement in you through His leading and strength? How will you get started?

Loving God, thank You for making me a new creation in Christ. Help my actions, through Your guidance, to reflect the change You’ve made in me.

Learn more about the [Trinity](https://DiscoverySeries.org/HP101).

#### Insight

[Ephesians 4:32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.32) describes some of the evidence of a changed life: “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Interestingly, these words were written to a culture very much like the world in which we live today. It was one in which the claims of Christ were disregarded, corruption was widespread throughout its institutions, and people were prone to use others to advance themselves. Yet, in the face of these problems the apostle Paul issued the challenge to believers in Christ for our heart-response to be in contrast to that culture. Kindness, compassion, and forgiveness express the countercultural life of Jesus Himself and remind us that our great goal and need is to be like Him.

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

# God Calling – 9/1/21

# How Rich You Are

**I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.  -Hebrews 13:5**

My children, that word is unfailingly true.  Down the centuries thousands have proved My constancy, My untiringness, My unfailing Love.  "Never leave."  "Never forsake." Not just a Presence is meant by this, but ...

My Love will never leave you, My Understanding will never leave you, My Strength will never leave you.  Think of all that I am:

Love - then forever you are sure of Love.

Strength - then forever, in every difficulty and danger, you are sure of strength.

Patience - then always there is One who can never tire.

Understanding - then always you will be understood.

Can you fear the future when it holds so much for you?  Beloved, "set your affections on things above" (the higher, spiritual things), "and not on things on the earth" (the lower, temporal things), and you will see how rich you are.

Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. - Isaiah 48:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/2/21

# Life of Pure and Holy Sacrifice



He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow… —[John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+7%3A38)

Jesus did not say, “He who believes in Me will realize all the blessings of the fullness of God,” but, in essence, “He who believes in Me will have everything he receives escape out of him.” Our Lord’s teaching was always anti-self-realization. His purpose is not the development of a person— His purpose is to make a person exactly like Himself, and the Son of God is characterized by self-expenditure. If we believe in Jesus, it is not what we gain but what He pours through us that really counts. God’s purpose is not simply to make us beautiful, plump grapes, but to make us grapes so that He may squeeze the sweetness out of us. Our spiritual life cannot be measured by success as the world measures it, but only by what God pours through us— and we cannot measure that at all.

When Mary of Bethany “broke the flask…of very costly oil…and poured it on [Jesus’] head,” it was an act for which no one else saw any special occasion; in fact, “…there were some who…said, ‘Why was this fragrant oil wasted?’ ” ([Mark 14:3-4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14:3-4)). But Jesus commended Mary for her extravagant act of devotion, and said, “…wherever this gospel is preached…what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her” ([Mark 14:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14:9)). Our Lord is filled with overflowing joy whenever He sees any of us doing what Mary did— not being bound by a particular set of rules, but being totally surrendered to Him. God poured out the life of His Son “that the world through Him might be saved” ([John 3:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:17)). Are we prepared to pour out our lives for Him?

“He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”— and hundreds of other lives will be continually refreshed. Now is the time for us to break “the flask” of our lives, to stop seeking our own satisfaction, and to pour out our lives before Him. Our Lord is asking who of us will do it for Him?

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The Bible does not thrill; the Bible nourishes. Give time to the reading of the Bible and the recreating effect is as real as that of fresh air physically.  Disciples Indeed, 387 R

# CCEL – 9/2/21

**Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.**—[PSA. 27:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.14)

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.—Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.—Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

The trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.—Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

[Isa. 40:28,29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.40.html" \l "Isa.40.28). -[Isa. 41:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.41.html" \l "Isa.41.10). -[Isa. 25:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html" \l "Isa.25.4).[Jas. 1:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.3). -[Heb. 10:35,36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.35).

“But Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.” **[Mark 1:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.1.html" \l "Mark.1.30)**

Very interesting is this little peep into the house of the Apostolic Fisherman. We see at once that household joys and cares are no hindrance to the full exercise of ministry, nay, that since they furnish an opportunity for personally witnessing the Lord’s gracious work upon one’s own flesh and blood, they may even instruct the teacher better than any other earthly discipline. Papists and other sectaries may decry marriage, but true Christianity and household life agree well together. Peter’s house was probably a poor fisherman’s hut, but the Lord of Glory entered it, lodged in it, and wrought a miracle in it. Should our little book be read this morning in some very humble cottage, let this fact encourage the inmates to seek the company of King Jesus. God is oftener in little huts than in rich palaces. Jesus is looking round your room now, and is waiting to be gracious to you. Into Simon’s house sickness had entered, fever in a deadly form had prostrated his mother-in-law, and as soon as Jesus came they told him of the sad affliction, and he hastened to the patient’s bed. Have you any sickness in the house this morning? You will find Jesus by far the best physician, go to him at once and tell him all about the matter. Immediately lay the case before him. It concerns one of his people, and therefore will not be trivial to him. Observe, that at once the Saviour restored the sick woman; none can heal as he does. We may not make sure that the Lord will at once remove all disease from those we love, but we may know that believing prayer for the sick is far more likely to be followed by restoration than anything else in the world; and where this avails not, we must meekly bow to his will by whom life and death are determined. The tender heart of Jesus waits to hear our griefs, let us pour them into his patient ear.

# Word Live – 9/2/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/2/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/2/21

# God's Wisdom

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 2**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+2)

2 And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28396a)] 2For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. 4My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, 5so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.

### God’s Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit

6We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7No, we declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,  
    what no ear has heard,  
and what no human mind has conceived”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28404b)]—  
    the things God has prepared for those who love him—

10these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28408c)] 14The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16for,

“Who has known the mind of the Lord  
    so as to instruct him?”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28411d)]

But we have the mind of Christ.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 2:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#en-NIV-28396) Some manuscripts proclaimed to you God’s mystery
2. [1 Corinthians 2:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#en-NIV-28404) Isaiah 64:4
3. [1 Corinthians 2:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#en-NIV-28408) Or Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual
4. [1 Corinthians 2:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202&version=NIV#en-NIV-28411) Isaiah 40:13

The Greek philosopher Socrates once observed, “The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.” While Corinth had a rich philosophical heritage and a long tradition of public speaking, this legacy had become a liability. Too many in the church were more impressed with style and personality than truth.

But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16

Aware of this weakness, the apostle refused to rely upon eloquence or human wisdom when proclaiming truth to the Corinthians (vv. 1–2). He did not preach the kind of message they were used to hearing, nor did he cater to their demand for a Corinthianized style. Instead, Paul relied on the Holy Spirit to empower his preaching (v. 4).

It would be wrong to think that Paul had no interest in wisdom. Just the opposite. He had high regard for God’s wisdom, which is not the result of philosophical speculation but a matter of revelation. When Paul describes this wisdom as “mystery” in v. 7, he is not talking about something that is hard to fathom but about a previously hidden truth that God had now revealed. Because this truth has its origin in God’s Spirit, only those who possess the Spirit can accept it. There is more to grasping Christian truth than merely knowing information. Christian doctrine requires spiritual as well as cognitive understanding. Good teaching, then, is not primarily a matter of style but the proclamation of revealed truth.

Paul was not trying to impress the Corinthians with his speaking ability or his advanced learning. He was not trying to become a Christian celebrity with a large following. His only ambition was to be a faithful messenger of God.

There is more to faith than content. God’s Spirit must open up our heart as well as our mind before we can accept His truth. How do you know if you are understanding by the power of the Spirit? Romans 8:9 says everyone who belongs to Christ has the Spirit!

### Pray with Us

We praise You, Lord, for the gift of Your Holy Spirit who opens our minds and hearts to receive the truth. Heighten our sensitivity to Your prompting so that we not only acknowledge but also live by Your truth.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/2/21

# The Big Story of the Bible

 **Read:** [**Genesis 11:26–32**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2011.26%E2%80%9332)

26After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

### Abram’s Family

27This is the account of Terah’s family line.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. 28While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. 29Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milkah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iskah. 30Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive.

31Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, they settled there.

32Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. [2 Timothy 3:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.16)

When Colin opened the box of stained-glass pieces he’d purchased, instead of finding the fragments he’d ordered for a project, he discovered intact, whole windows. He sleuthed out the windows’ origin and learned they’d been removed from a church to protect them from World War II bombings. Colin marveled at the quality of work and how the “fragments” formed a beautiful picture.

If I’m honest, there are times when I open particular passages of the Bible—such as chapters containing lists of genealogies—and I don’t immediately see how they fit within the bigger picture of Scripture. Such is the case with [Genesis 11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2011)—a chapter that contains a repetitive cadence of unfamiliar names and their families, such as Shem, Shelah, Eber, Nahor, and Terah (vv. 10–32). I’m often tempted to gloss over these sections and skip to a part that contains something that feels familiar and fits more easily into my “window” of understanding of the Bible’s narrative.

Since “all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful” ([2 Timothy 3:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%203.16)), the Holy Spirit can help us better understand how a fragment fits into the whole, opening our eyes to see, for example, how Shelah is related to Abram ([Genesis 11:12–26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2011.12%E2%80%9326)), the ancestor of David and—more importantly—Jesus ([Matthew 1:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%201.2), [6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matthew%201.6), [16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matthew%201.16)). He delights in surprising us with the treasure of a perfectly intact window where even the smaller parts reveal the story of God’s mission throughout the Bible.

By:  [Kirsten Holmberg](https://odb.org/author/kirstenholmberg/)

#### Reflect & Pray

Why is it important to recognize each portion of Scripture as a fragment of God's bigger story?

Father, please help me to see You and Your work more clearly.

[Grow deeper](https://ChristianUniversity.org/SF106) in your understanding of the Bible.

#### Insight

In the ancient world, genealogies weren’t always simply a straightforward record of “who begat whom.” Instead, they were sometimes used to show legitimacy of relation or position. This is particularly true when it came to tracing the lineage of royalty. Ancestry (often traced back to a deity) was intended to show that the person with whom the lineage ended was the rightful and true heir. For example, the genealogy of Jesus in the book of Luke traces Jesus’ human lineage back to God Himself ([Luke 3:23–38](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%203.23%E2%80%9338)).

Ancestry records often provided key information as well, as we see in today’s text. In [Genesis 11:26–32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2011.26%E2%80%9332), Sarai’s childlessness is one of the striking features (v. 30) and becomes one of the important elements of the story later on (18:10–14).

# God Calling – 9/2/21

# I Must Provide

I am your Lord. Enough. Then I can command your obedient service, your loyalty. But I am bound by My Lordship to give you protection.

I am bound to fight for you, to plan for you, to secure you a sufficiency of all within My Power to provide. Think how vast that provision can be. Never doubt.  Such marvels are unfolding. Wonders beyond your dreams. They only need the watering of a grateful spirit and a loving heart to yield abundantly.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.  John 20:28

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/3/21

# Pouring Out the Water of Satisfaction



He would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. —[2 Samuel 23:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Samuel+23%3A16)

What has been like “water from the well of Bethlehem” to you recently— love, friendship, or maybe some spiritual blessing ([2 Samuel 23:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+23:16))? Have you taken whatever it may be, even at the risk of damaging your own soul, simply to satisfy yourself? If you have, then you cannot pour it out “to the Lord.” You can never set apart for God something that you desire for yourself to achieve your own satisfaction. If you try to satisfy yourself with a blessing from God, it will corrupt you. You must sacrifice it, pouring it out to God— something that your common sense says is an absurd waste.

How can I pour out “to the Lord” natural love and spiritual blessings? There is only one way— I must make a determination in my mind to do so. There are certain things other people do that could never be received by someone who does not know God, because it is humanly impossible to repay them. As soon as I realize that something is too wonderful for me, that I am not worthy to receive it, and that it is not meant for a human being at all, I must pour it out “to the Lord.” Then these very things that have come to me will be poured out as “rivers of living water” all around me ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). And until I pour these things out to God, they actually endanger those I love, as well as myself, because they will be turned into lust. Yes, we can be lustful in things that are not sordid and vile. Even love must be transformed by being poured out “to the Lord.”

If you have become bitter and sour, it is because when God gave you a blessing you hoarded it. Yet if you had poured it out to Him, you would have been the sweetest person on earth. If you are always keeping blessings to yourself and never learning to pour out anything “to the Lord,” other people will never have their vision of God expanded through you.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The place for the comforter is not that of one who preaches, but of the comrade who says nothing, but prays to God about the matter. The biggest thing you can do for those who are suffering is not to talk platitudes, not to ask questions, but to get into contact with God, and the “greater works” will be done by prayer (see John 14:12–13). Baffled to Fight Better, 56 R

# CCEL – 9/3/21

**Neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.**—[EXO. 13:7.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.13.html" \l "Exod.13.7)

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.—Abhor that which is evil.—Abstain from all appearance of evil.—Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.—Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.—Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.—In him is no sin.

[Prov. 8:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.13). -[Rom. 12:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.9). -[I Thes. 5:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.22). -[Heb. 12:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.15).[Psa. 66:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.66.html" \l "Ps.66.18).[I Cor. 5:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.5.html" \l "iCor.5.6). -[I Cor. 11:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.11.html" \l "iCor.11.28).[II Tim. 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.19). -[Heb. 7:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.26). -[I John 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.5).

“Thou whom my soul loveth.” **[Song of Solomon 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.7)**

It is well to be able, without any “if” or “but,” to say of the Lord Jesus—“Thou whom my soul loveth.” Many can only say of Jesus that they hope they love him; they trust they love him; but only a poor and shallow experience will be content to stay here. No one ought to give any rest to his spirit till he feels quite sure about a matter of such vital importance. We ought not to be satisfied with a superficial hope that Jesus loves us, and with a bare trust that we love him. The old saints did not generally speak with “buts,” and “ifs,” and “hopes,” and “trusts,” but they spoke positively and plainly. “I know whom I have believed,” saith Paul. “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” saith Job. Get positive knowledge of your love of Jesus, and be not satisfied till you can speak of your interest in him as a reality, which you have made sure by having received the witness of the Holy Spirit, and his seal upon your soul by faith.

True love to Christ is in every case the Holy Spirit’s work, and must be wrought in the heart by him. He is the efficient cause of it; but the logical reason why we love Jesus lies in himself. Why do we love Jesus? Because he first loved us. Why do we love Jesus? Because he “gave himself for us.” We have life through his death; we have peace through his blood. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor. Why do we love Jesus? Because of the excellency of his person. We are filled with a sense of his beauty! an admiration of his charms! a consciousness of his infinite perfection! His greatness, goodness, and loveliness, in one resplendent ray, combine to enchant the soul till it is so ravished that it exclaims, “Yea, he is altogether lovely.” Blessed love this—a love which binds the heart with chains more soft than silk, and yet more firm than adamant!

# Word Live – 9/3/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/3/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/3/21

# God's Temple

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+3)

### The Church and Its Leaders

3 Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. 2I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 3You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? 4For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings?

5What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. 9For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.

10By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. 11For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. 14If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

16Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? 17If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; for God’s temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

18Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise. 19For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28430a)]; 20and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28431b)] 21So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things are yours, 22whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28433c)] or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, 23and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 3:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#en-NIV-28430) Job 5:13
2. [1 Corinthians 3:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#en-NIV-28431) Psalm 94:11
3. [1 Corinthians 3:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#en-NIV-28433) That is, Peter

The disciples of Jesus marveled when they saw Herod’s temple in Jerusalem. Once, as they were leaving the temple precincts, one of Jesus’ disciples said: “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down” (Mark 13:1–2).

Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? 1 Corinthians 3:16

Paul probably wrote 1 Corinthians around 55 A.D., fifteen years before Jesus’ prediction would come to pass. But it was already clear that a fundamental change had taken place. Christ’s death on the cross had fulfilled the Old Testament law and made all its sacrifices redundant (Heb. 10:1–18). In today’s passage, Paul is speaking of a new temple, which is the church. God is its ultimate builder, and He works through chosen servants (1 Cor. 3:10–15).

Paul mixes metaphors in this passage and describes the church as a field where one plants and another reaps. His twofold point is simple. He warns all who work on God’s behalf to do their work carefully. Likewise, he cautions those who benefit from these workers to understand that they are merely servants “as the Lord has assigned to each his task” (v. 5).

Paul’s warning is especially relevant in today’s celebrity-worshiping culture. In the last few years, we have seen the tragic fall of several notable leaders whose celebrity status made them vulnerable. Because of their status, they came to see themselves as special cases. The church was complicit in this by failing to hold such leaders accountable and explaining away their behavior. It hurts the church when its members are critical and fail to hold their leaders in high regard. It is just as damaging when believers forget that their leaders are merely servants and treat them in an idealistic way.

**Apply the Word**

Pray for your church’s leaders today. Ask God to encourage them in their ministry and keep them faithful. Consider sending your pastor or another church leader an email or a note of appreciation for all they do.

### Pray with Us

Today we pray for our church leaders—the high-profile and the unknown—and ask You to strengthen them in truth and righteousness. Surround them with believers who will encourage them and hold them accountable.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/3/21

# Empty Hands

 **Read:** [**Luke 15:17–24**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.17%E2%80%9324)

17“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

His father saw him and was filled with compassion for him. [Luke 15:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.20)

Robert was embarrassed when he showed up for a breakfast meeting and realized he’d forgotten his wallet. It bothered him to the point that he pondered whether he should eat at all or simply get something to drink. After some convincing from his friend, he relaxed his resistance. He and his friend enjoyed their entrees, and his friend gladly paid the bill.

Perhaps you can identify with this dilemma or some other situation that puts you on the receiving end. Wanting to pay our own way is normal, but there are occasions when we must humbly receive what’s graciously being given.

Some kind of payback may have been what the younger son had in mind in [Luke 15:17–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.17%E2%80%9324) as he contemplated what he would say to his father. “I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants” (v. 19). Hired servant? His father would have no such thing! In his father’s eyes, he was a much-loved son who’d come home. As such he was met with a father’s embrace and an affectionate kiss (v. 20). What a grand gospel picture! It reminds us that by Jesus’ death He revealed a loving Father who welcomes empty-handed children with open arms. One hymn writer expressed it like this: “Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.”

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How does it make you feel that because Jesus has paid your sin debt, you can receive forgiveness for all your sins? If you’ve never received this forgiveness, what’s keeping you from accepting this gift through Jesus?

God of heaven, help me to receive and enjoy the forgiveness You’ve provided through Your Son, Jesus.

#### Insight

The word compassion in [Luke 15:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.20) comes from the Greek verb splanchnízomai. The noun form of this word refers to “bowels or intestines.” Generally speaking, it refers to the internal organs, such as the heart, lungs, and liver. It’s the word used in [Acts 1:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%201.18) to speak of Judas’ demise: “all his intestines spilled out.”

While ancient Greek poets saw the “bowels” as the seat of more violent emotions, the Hebrews saw them as the place for affections such as kindness and compassion. When the verb is used in the New Testament, it refers to internal feelings of pity that result in external acts of benevolence. In the Gospels, the compassion of Jesus compelled Him to heal the sick ([Matthew 14:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.14)) and feed the multitude (15:32). In [Luke 15:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.20), compassion motivated the father to welcome his son: “[He] was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

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

# God Calling – 9/3/21

# Live in the Unseen

**Our Lord, the God of the troubled and the weary, come and save us.**

I am your Savior. Not only from the weight of sin, but from the weight of care, from misery, and depression, from want and woe, from faintness and heartache. Your Savior.

Remember that you are living really in the Unseen - that is the Real Life.

Lift up your heads from earth's troubles, and view the glories of the Kingdom. Higher and higher each day see more of Heaven. Speak to Me. Long for Me. Rest in Me. Abide in Me. No restless bringing Me your burdens, and then feverishly lifting them again and bearing them away.

No! Abide in Me. Not for one moment losing the consciousness of My Strength and Protection.

As a child in its mother's arms, stay sheltered and at rest.

The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.  Proverbs 20:27

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/4/21

# His!



They were Yours, You gave them to Me… —[John 17:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+17%3A6)

A missionary is someone in whom the Holy Spirit has brought about this realization: “You are not your own” ([1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19)). To say, “I am not my own,” is to have reached a high point in my spiritual stature. The true nature of that life in actual everyday confusion is evidenced by the deliberate giving up of myself to another Person through a sovereign decision, and that Person is Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit interprets and explains the nature of Jesus to me to make me one with my Lord, not that I might simply become a trophy for His showcase. Our Lord never sent any of His disciples out on the basis of what He had done for them. It was not until after the resurrection, when the disciples had perceived through the power of the Holy Spirit who Jesus really was, that He said, “Go” (Matthew 28:19; also see [Luke 24:49](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24:49) and [Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)).

“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” ([Luke 14:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+14:26)). He was not saying that this person cannot be good and upright, but that he cannot be someone over whom Jesus can write the word Mine. Any one of the relationships our Lord mentions in this verse can compete with our relationship with Him. I may prefer to belong to my mother, or to my wife, or to myself, but if that is the case, then, Jesus said, “[You] cannot be My disciple.” This does not mean that I will not be saved, but it does mean that I cannot be entirely His.

Our Lord makes His disciple His very own possession, becoming responsible for him. “…you shall be witnesses to Me…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)). The desire that comes into a disciple is not one of doing anything for Jesus, but of being a perfect delight to Him. The missionary’s secret is truly being able to say, “I am His, and He is accomplishing His work and His purposes through me.”

Be entirely His!

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 9/4/21

**Sit still, my daughter.**—[RUTH 3:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ruth.3.html" \l "Ruth.3.18)

Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted.—Be still, and know that I am God.—Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?—The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Mary . . . sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.—Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.—In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.—Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

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.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established.

He that believeth shall not make haste.

[Isa. 7:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.7.html" \l "Isa.7.4). -[Psa. 46:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.46.html" \l "Ps.46.10). -[John 11:40](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.11.html" \l "John.11.40). -[Isa. 2:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.2.html" \l "Isa.2.17).[Luke 10:39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html" \l "Luke.10.39). -[Luke 10:42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html" \l "Luke.10.42). -[Isa. 30:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.30.html" \l "Isa.30.15). -[Psa. 4:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.4).[Psa. 37:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.7).[Psa. 112:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.112.html" \l "Ps.112.7).[Isa. 28:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.28.html" \l "Isa.28.16).

“I will; be thou clean.” **[Mark 1:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.1.html" \l "Mark.1.41)**

Primeval darkness heard the Almighty fiat, “light be,” and straightway light was, and the word of the Lord Jesus is equal in majesty to that ancient word of power. Redemption like Creation has its word of might. Jesus speaks and it is done. Leprosy yielded to no human remedies, but it fled at once at the Lord’s “I will.” The disease exhibited no hopeful signs or tokens of recovery, nature contributed nothing to its own healing, but the unaided word effected the entire work on the spot and forever. The sinner is in a plight more miserable than the leper; let him imitate his example and go to Jesus, “beseeching him and kneeling down to him.” Let him exercise what little faith he has, even though it should go no further than “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;” and there need be no doubt as to the result of the application. Jesus heals all who come, and casts out none. In reading the narrative in which our morning’s text occurs, it is worthy of devout notice that Jesus touched the leper. This unclean person had broken through the regulations of the ceremonial law and pressed into the house, but Jesus so far from chiding him broke through the law himself in order to meet him. He made an interchange with the leper, for while he cleansed him, he contracted by that touch a Levitical defilement. Even so Jesus Christ was made sin for us, although in himself he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. O that poor sinners would go to Jesus, believing in the power of his blessed substitutionary work, and they would soon learn the power of his gracious touch. That hand which multiplied the loaves, which saved sinking Peter, which upholds afflicted saints, which crowns believers, that same hand will touch every seeking sinner, and in a moment make him clean. The love of Jesus is the source of salvation. He loves, he looks, he touches us, we live.

# Word Live – 9/4/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/4/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/4/21

# Judging Our Leaders

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 4**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+4)

### The Nature of True Apostleship

4 This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. 2Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. 3I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. 4My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. 5Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

6Now, brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not be puffed up in being a follower of one of us over against the other. 7For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

8Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have begun to reign—and that without us! How I wish that you really had begun to reign so that we also might reign with you! 9For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like those condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to human beings. 10We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! 11To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. 12We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; 13when we are slandered, we answer kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the garbage of the world—right up to this moment.

### Paul’s Appeal and Warning

14I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. 15Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16Therefore I urge you to imitate me. 17For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

18Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. 19But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. 20For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. 21What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?

In the early days of my pastoral ministry, I became discouraged. Someone in the congregation disagreed with the direction the church was taking and criticized me personally. I grumbled to a friend about it. “You know, John,” he observed, “worse things have been said about better men.”

Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:2

Criticism is an occupational hazard of leadership. It is never comfortable, but it is also not unusual. Church leaders sometimes have difficulty finding a middle ground between dwelling too much on criticism or ignoring it altogether.

Paul was not discouraged by complaints of some in the Corinthian church who preferred other teachers. His warning? Be careful when you judge. Our assessment of others is often based on insufficient information. The same is true of the justifications we offer for our actions. We do not have enough perspective even to judge ourselves. In the church, this can lead to two extremes. On one end, we can be hypercritical of the church’s leaders. The other extreme makes us undiscerning in our devotion to them. Paul offers a better approach in verse 6: “Do not go beyond what is written.” This saying was apparently familiar to the Corinthians. Paul reminds the church of the need to let Scripture shape our thinking. We must base our assessment of church’s leaders on biblical standards rather than personal preference.

The criticism leveled against Paul was unwarranted. He had proven his integrity in the way he had faithfully served the church at large (vv. 9–13). The Corinthians had experienced that ministry first-hand (vv. 14–16). Paul urged the church to cast aside its hypercritical spirit and accept him both as an apostle and a role model.

**Apply the Word**

If you’re disappointed with your church’s leaders (even with legitimate grounds) do not let your differences lead to an attitude of contempt. When this happens, you have crossed the line from discernment to sinful arrogance. As you pray for them, ask God to soften your heart as well.

### Pray with Us

Lord God, convict us of arrogance toward our leaders. Grant us Spirit-led discernment and teach us how to love church leaders with grace and understanding. Guide our leaders in wisdom when they receive criticism.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/4/21

# Man of Prayer

 **Read:** [**Matthew 6:9–13**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.9%E2%80%9313)

9“This, then, is how you should pray:

“‘Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
10your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
    on earth as it is in heaven.  
11Give us today our daily bread.  
12And forgive us our debts,  
    as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
13And lead us not into temptation,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A9%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23296a)]  
    but deliver us from the evil one.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A9%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23296b)]’

#### Footnotes

1. [Matthew 6:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A9%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-23296) The Greek for temptation can also mean testing.
2. [Matthew 6:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A9%E2%80%9313&version=NIV#en-NIV-23296) Or from evil; some late manuscripts one, / for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. [1 Thessalonians 5:17–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%205.17%E2%80%9318)

My family remembers my Grandpa Dierking as a man of strong faith and prayer. But it wasn’t always so. My aunt recalls the first time her father announced to the family, “We’re going to start giving thanks to God before we eat.” His first prayer was far from eloquent, but Grandpa continued the practice of prayer for the next fifty years, praying often throughout each day. When he died, my husband gave my grandmother a “praying hands” plant, saying, “Grandpa was a man of prayer.” His decision to follow God and talk to Him each day changed him into a faithful servant of Christ.

The Bible has a lot to say about prayer. In [Matthew 6:9–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.9%E2%80%9313), Jesus gave a pattern for prayer to His followers, teaching them to approach God with sincere praise for who He is. As we bring our requests to God, we trust Him to provide “our daily bread” (v. 11). As we confess our sins, we ask Him for forgiveness and for help to avoid temptation (vv. 12–13).

But we aren’t limited to praying the “Lord’s Prayer.” God wants us to pray “all kinds of prayers” on “all occasions” ([Ephesians 6:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%206.18)). Praying is vital for our spiritual growth, and it gives us the opportunity to be in continual conversation with Him every day ([1 Thessalonians 5:17–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%205.17%E2%80%9318)).

As we approach God with humble hearts that yearn to talk with Him, may He help us know and love Him better.

By:  [Cindy Hess Kasper](https://odb.org/author/cindyhesskasper/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How does God view the humble prayers of His children that may be less than eloquent? How can you make prayer a part of your daily life?

Father, thank You for the blessing of prayer and Your acceptance of me whenever I call on You.

[Grow deeper](https://ChristianUniversity.org/understandingprayer) in your understanding of prayer.

#### Insight

Though most of us are familiar with the Lord’s Prayer, the Gospels contain several other prayers of Jesus. In [John 17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2017), we read Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer uttered on the night of His betrayal and arrest. After praying for Himself (vv. 1–5), Jesus prays for His disciples (vv. 6–19) and for all believers (vv. 20–26). He asks the Father to protect the church, sanctify it, and cause it to grow. Jesus also prays three short prayers on the cross ([Luke 23:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2023.34); [Mark 15:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2015.34); [Luke 23:46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2023.46)).

Other prayers of Jesus include a prayer of thanks ([John 6:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.11)), a prayer before raising Lazarus (11:41–42), and a prayer after entering Jerusalem (12:27–28). Moreover, Jesus often withdrew from others to spend time in prayer with His Father ([Matthew 14:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.23); [Mark 1:35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%201.35); [John 6:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.15)). He exemplifies what it means to “pray continually” ([1 Thessalonians 5:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%205.17)).

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

# God Calling – 9/4/21

# Drop Those Burdens

**Our God is our supply.**

Look to Me for all ... Rely on Me for all.  Drop those burdens, and then, singing and free, you can go on your way rejoicing. Encumbered with them you will fall.

Drop them at My Feet, knowing surely that I will lift them and deal with each one as is truly best.

When he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he ... blessed, and brake the loaves ... and they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.  Mark 6:41-44

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/5/21

# Watching With Jesus



Stay here and watch with Me. — **Read:** [**Matthew 26:38**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+26%3A38)

“Watch with Me.” Jesus was saying, in effect, “Watch with no private point of view at all, but watch solely and entirely with Me.” In the early stages of our Christian life, we do not watch with Jesus, we watch for Him. We do not watch with Him through the revealed truth of the Bible even in the circumstances of our own lives. Our Lord is trying to introduce us to identification with Himself through a particular “Gethsemane” experience of our own. But we refuse to go, saying, “No, Lord, I can’t see the meaning of this, and besides, it’s very painful.” And how can we possibly watch with Someone who is so incomprehensible? How are we going to understand Jesus sufficiently to watch with Him in His Gethsemane, when we don’t even know why He is suffering? We don’t know how to watch with Him— we are only used to the idea of Jesus watching with us.

The disciples loved Jesus Christ to the limit of their natural capacity, but they did not fully understand His purpose. In the Garden of Gethsemane they slept as a result of their own sorrow, and at the end of three years of the closest and most intimate relationship of their lives they “all…forsook Him and fled” ([Matthew 26:56](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26:56)).

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit…” ([Acts 2:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2:4)). “They” refers to the same people, but something wonderful has happened between these two events— our Lord’s death, resurrection, and ascension— and the disciples have now been invaded and “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Our Lord had said, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)). This meant that they learned to watch with Him the rest of their lives.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We never enter into the Kingdom of God by having our head questions answered, but only by commitment. [The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption](http://www.dhp.org/Products/Quotable-Oswald-Chambers--The__BW382.aspx?affid=RBCHAMB)

# CCEL – 9/5/21

**As the body is one, and hath many members, . . . so also is Christ.**—[I COR. 12:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.12.html" \l "iCor.12.12)

He is the head of the body, the church.—The head over things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

A body hast thou prepared me.—Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.—He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.—Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.

Grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth . . . maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

[Col. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.18). -[Eph. 1:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.22). -[Eph. 5:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.30).[Heb. 10:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.5). -[Psa. 139:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.139.html" \l "Ps.139.16).[John 17:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.6). -[Eph. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.4). -[Rom. 8:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.29).[Eph. 4:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.15).

“Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.” **[Psalm 120:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.120.html" \l "Ps.120.5)**

As a Christian you have to live in the midst of an ungodly world, and it is of little use for you to cry “Woe is me.” Jesus did not pray that you should be taken out of the world, and what he did not pray for, you need not desire. Better far in the Lord’s strength to meet the difficulty, and glorify him in it. The enemy is ever on the watch to detect inconsistency in your conduct; be therefore very holy. Remember that the eyes of all are upon you, and that more is expected from you than from other men. Strive to give no occasion for blame. Let your goodness be the only fault they can discover in you. Like Daniel, compel them to say of you, “We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.” Seek to be useful as well as consistent. Perhaps you think, “If I were in a more favourable position I might serve the Lord’s cause, but I cannot do any good where I am”; but the worse the people are among whom you live, the more need have they of your exertions; if they be crooked, the more necessity that you should set them straight; and if they be perverse, the more need have you to turn their proud hearts to the truth. Where should the physician be but where there are many sick? Where is honour to be won by the soldier but in the hottest fire of the battle? And when weary of the strife and sin that meets you on every hand, consider that all the saints have endured the same trial. They were not carried on beds of down to heaven, and you must not expect to travel more easily than they. They had to hazard their lives unto the death in the high places of the field, and you will not be crowned till you also have endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Therefore, “stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”

# Word Live – 9/5/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/5/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/5/21

# Judging the Church

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+5)

### Dealing With a Case of Incest

5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father’s wife. 2And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? 3For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. 4So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, 5hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28460a)][[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28460b)] so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

6Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? 7Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— 10not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. 11But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28466c)] but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

12What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked person from among you.”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28468d)]

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 5:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#en-NIV-28460) In contexts like this, the Greek word for flesh (sarx) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.
2. [1 Corinthians 5:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#en-NIV-28460) Or of his body
3. [1 Corinthians 5:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#en-NIV-28466) The Greek word for brother or sister (adelphos) refers here to a believer, whether man or woman, as part of God’s family; also in 8:11, 13.
4. [1 Corinthians 5:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%205&version=NIV#en-NIV-28468) Deut. 13:5; 17:7; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21,24; 24:7

If you ask those who do not attend church why they refuse to go, some will answer that it is because the church is full of hypocrites. Others will say they don’t attend because the church is too judgmental. Ironically, Paul would say that if the church is full of hypocrites, it is because the church doesn’t judge enough.

What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 1 Corinthians 5:12

Many people mistakenly believe that when Jesus said “Do not judge” in Matthew 7:1, He meant that we should never make a judgment about another’s behavior. They ignore the fact that Jesus also told His disciples not to “give dogs what is sacred” or “throw your pearls to pigs,” two commands which require an assessment of character (Matt. 7:6). Jesus’ command not to judge is a warning about the danger of judging others without first judging yourself (Matt. 7:3–5). His main point is that we should apply the same standard to ourselves that we use for others.

In today’s passage, Paul echoes Jesus’ teaching on judgment when he tells the Corinthians that the church has a responsibility to “judge those inside” (v. 12). Specifically, he tells them to put out of their fellowship a man who had been sleeping with his father’s wife (v. 1). The aim of this kind of church discipline is not punitive but redemptive (v. 5). It places the erring member in a position to experience a combination of social and spiritual pressure, hoping that they will repent (vv. 9–11; see 1 Tim. 1:20). Accountability is a relational practice that begins with a conversation between two people who care about one another (Matt. 18:15).

**Apply the Word**

Don’t fret over the morality of unbelievers. Paul’s directive to the church in such matters is to tend to its own and let God judge those who are outside. Jesus would say, “You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye” (Matt. 7:5).

### Pray with Us

It is unloving to ignore another believer’s sin. Lord, give us love that grieves over another’s sin because it separates them from You. Give us love to confront them on their sin for the purpose of restoration.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/5/21

# Help from the Holy Spirit

 **Read:** [**Jeremiah 3:11–15**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%203.11%E2%80%9315)

11The Lord said to me, “Faithless Israel is more righteous than unfaithful Judah. 12Go, proclaim this message toward the north:

“‘Return, faithless Israel,’ declares the Lord,  
    ‘I will frown on you no longer,  
for I am faithful,’ declares the Lord,  
    ‘I will not be angry forever.  
13Only acknowledge your guilt—  
    you have rebelled against the Lord your God,  
you have scattered your favors to foreign gods  
    under every spreading tree,  
    and have not obeyed me,’”  
declares the Lord.

14“Return, faithless people,” declares the Lord, “for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion. 15Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 3:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%203.11%E2%80%9315)[**22**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jeremiah%203.22)

22“Return, faithless people;  
    I will cure you of backsliding.”

“Yes, we will come to you,  
    for you are the Lord our God.

Return, faithless people. I will cure you of backsliding. [Jeremiah 3:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%203.22)

While my classmates and I used to skip the occasional lecture in university, everyone always made sure to attend Professor Chris’ lecture the week before the year-end exams. That was when he would unfailingly drop big hints about the exam questions he’d set.

I always wondered why he did that, until I realized that Prof. Chris genuinely wanted us to do well. He had high standards, but he would help us meet them. All we had to do was show up and listen so we could prepare properly.

It struck me that God is like that too. God can’t compromise His standards, but because He deeply desires us to be like He is, He’s given us the Holy Spirit to help us meet those standards.

In [Jeremiah 3:11–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%203.11%E2%80%9314), God urged unfaithful Israel to acknowledge their guilt and return to Him. But knowing how stubborn and weak they were, He would help them. He promised to cure their backsliding ways (v. 22), and He sent shepherds to teach and guide them (v. 15).

How comforting it is to know that no matter how big the sin we’re trapped in or how far we’ve turned from God, He’s ready to heal us of our faithlessness! All we need to do is to acknowledge our wrong ways and allow His Holy Spirit to begin changing our hearts.

By:  [Leslie Koh](https://odb.org/author/lesliekoh/)

#### Reflect & Pray

Where do you struggle to follow God faithfully and obediently? How can you ask God to heal you and help you?

Loving God, thank You for Your merciful love that enables me to be holy like You are. Please help me to let Your Spirit heal me of my faithlessness and transform my heart.

Read Filled with the Spirit at [DiscoverySeries.org/Q0301](https://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0301).

#### Insight

The faithlessness of Old Testament Israel is a story that began at the foot of Mount Sinai. There, a covenant agreement between God and Israel ([Exodus 24:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2024.3)) established the new nation as a people of God. This covenant was quickly forgotten. Having been rescued from bondage by the God of their ancestors and having witnessed numerous acts of wonder by that same God, the Israelites turned their backs on Him—seeking instead a god of their own making, a golden calf ([Exodus 32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2032)). Even worse, the architect of this false idol was Aaron, chosen by God to be the high priest of the nation of Israel! Similar patterns would continue throughout the days of the judges and the kings, ultimately culminating in exile as God lovingly disciplined His people to bring them back to Himself. Israel’s frequent faithlessness stands in stark contrast to the constant faithfulness of God.

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

# God Calling – 9/5/21

# Progress

Progress is the Law of Heaven. Higher, ever higher, rise to Life and Beauty, Knowledge and Power. Higher and higher.

Tomorrow be stronger, braver, more loving than you have been today.

The Law of Progress gives a meaning, a purpose to life.

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.  Romans 12:2

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/6/21

# The Far-Reaching Rivers of Life



He who believes in Me…out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. —[John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+7%3A38)

A river reaches places which its source never knows. And Jesus said that, if we have received His fullness, “rivers of living water” will flow out of us, reaching in blessing even “to the end of the earth” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)) regardless of how small the visible effects of our lives may appear to be. We have nothing to do with the outflow— “This is the work of God, that you believe…” ([John 6:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:29)). God rarely allows a person to see how great a blessing he is to others.

A river is victoriously persistent, overcoming all barriers. For a while it goes steadily on its course, but then comes to an obstacle. And for a while it is blocked, yet it soon makes a pathway around the obstacle. Or a river will drop out of sight for miles, only later to emerge again even broader and greater than ever. Do you see God using the lives of others, but an obstacle has come into your life and you do not seem to be of any use to God? Then keep paying attention to the Source, and God will either take you around the obstacle or remove it. The river of the Spirit of God overcomes all obstacles. Never focus your eyes on the obstacle or the difficulty. The obstacle will be a matter of total indifference to the river that will flow steadily through you if you will simply remember to stay focused on the Source. Never allow anything to come between you and Jesus Christ— not emotion nor experience— nothing must keep you from the one great sovereign Source.

Think of the healing and far-reaching rivers developing and nourishing themselves in our souls! God has been opening up wonderful truths to our minds, and every point He has opened up is another indication of the wider power of the river that He will flow through us. If you believe in Jesus, you will find that God has developed and nourished in you mighty, rushing rivers of blessing for others.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else. “Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord”;…  The Highest Good—The Pilgrim’s Song Book, 537 L

# CCEL – 9/6/21

**Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.**—[LAM. 3:41.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.41)

Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!—Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.—I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.—Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.

[Psa. 113:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.113.html" \l "Ps.113.5). -[Psa. 25:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.25.html" \l "Ps.25.1). -[Psa. 143:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.143.html" \l "Ps.143.6).[Psa. 63:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.63.html" \l "Ps.63.3). -[Psa. 86:4.5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.86.html" \l "Ps.86.4).[John 14:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.13).

“In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” **[Philippians 2:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.15)**

We use lights to make manifest. A Christian man should so shine in his life, that a person could not live with him a week without knowing the gospel. His conversation should be such that all who are about him should clearly perceive whose he is, and whom he serves; and should see the image of Jesus reflected in his daily actions. Lights are intended for guidance. We are to help those around us who are in the dark. We are to hold forth to them the Word of life. We are to point sinners to the Saviour, and the weary to a divine resting-place. Men sometimes read their Bibles, and fail to understand them; we should be ready, like Philip, to instruct the inquirer in the meaning of God’s Word, the way of salvation, and the life of godliness. Lights are also used for warning. On our rocks and shoals a light-house is sure to be erected. Christian men should know that there are many false lights shown everywhere in the world, and therefore the right light is needed. The wreckers of Satan are always abroad, tempting the ungodly to sin under the name of pleasure; they hoist the wrong light, be it ours to put up the true light upon every dangerous rock, to point out every sin, and tell what it leads to, that so we may be clear of the blood of all men, shining as lights in the world. Lights also have a very cheering influence, and so have Christians. A Christian ought to be a comforter, with kind words on his lips, and sympathy in his heart; he should carry sunshine wherever he goes, and diffuse happiness around him.

Gracious Spirit dwell with me;

I myself would gracious be,

And with words that help and heal

Would thy life in mine reveal,

And with actions bold and meek

Would for Christ my Saviour speak.

# Word Live – 9/6/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/6/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/6/21

# Morality Matters

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 6**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6)

### Lawsuits Among Believers

6 If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord’s people? 2Or do you not know that the Lord’s people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! 4Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church? 5I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? 6But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers!

7The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? 8Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers and sisters. 9Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28477a)] 10nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

### Sexual Immorality

12“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 15Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28484b)] 17But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28485c)]

18Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 6:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#en-NIV-28477) The words men who have sex with men translate two Greek words that refer to the passive and active participants in homosexual acts.
2. [1 Corinthians 6:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#en-NIV-28484) Gen. 2:24
3. [1 Corinthians 6:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%206&version=NIV#en-NIV-28485) Or in the Spirit

Some estimate that over 40 million lawsuits are filed every year in the United States. According to the American Bar Association, there are over a million registered lawyers. Litigation has become so common that we often see commercials for class action suits on late-night television.

You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

One indicator of division in the Corinthian church was that its members took one another to court. “The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already,” Paul charged in 1 Corinthians 6:7. “Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?” His accusation offers an ironic counterpoint to the criticism made in the previous chapter. Even as the church ignored one members’ notorious sin, they turned to the secular court to air personal disputes.

The assertion of the previous chapter (5:12) that the church has no business judging those outside the church does not mean that morality does not matter to God (6:9). Corinth’s problem seems to have been an odd combination of hypersensitivity to others’ offenses mixed with personal moral dullness. As they dragged one another to court, they justified their own moral laxity by misapplying the rule of Christian liberty. Their slogan was “I have the right to do anything” (v. 12). This lack of self-awareness was mixed with spiritual amnesia. They did not see their own behavior for what it was. They had forgotten who they were and what God had done for them! They thought they were free to do anything they wished. They did not understand that God’s grace gives us the freedom to obey.

**Apply the Word**

Maybe you have things in your past of which you are now ashamed. Perhaps you are suffering consequences because of this. You may even be in prison. Whatever you once were, if you have trusted in Jesus Christ, “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (v. 11). Honor God with your body.

### Pray with Us

We pray the words of the hymn by Frances Ridley Havergal: “Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee. Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King.”

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/6/21

# Resting Secure in God

 **Read:** [**Deuteronomy 33:1–5**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2033.1%E2%80%935)

### Moses Blesses the Tribes

33 This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. 2He said:

“The Lord came from Sinai  
    and dawned over them from Seir;  
    he shone forth from Mount Paran.  
He came with[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5813a)] myriads of holy ones  
    from the south, from his mountain slopes.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5813b)]  
3Surely it is you who love the people;  
    all the holy ones are in your hand.  
At your feet they all bow down,  
    and from you receive instruction,  
4the law that Moses gave us,  
    the possession of the assembly of Jacob.  
5He was king over Jeshurun[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5816c)]  
    when the leaders of the people assembled,  
    along with the tribes of Israel.

#### Footnotes

1. [Deuteronomy 33:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#en-NIV-5813) Or from
2. [Deuteronomy 33:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#en-NIV-5813) The meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.
3. [Deuteronomy 33:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+33%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+12&version=NIV#en-NIV-5816) Jeshurun means the upright one, that is, Israel; also in verse 26.

**Read:** [**Deuteronomy 33:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2033.1%E2%80%935)[**12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deuteronomy%2033.12)

12About Benjamin he said:

“Let the beloved of the Lord rest secure in him,  
    for he shields him all day long,  
    and the one the Lord loves rests between his shoulders.”

Let the beloved of the Lord rest secure in him, for he shields him all day long. [Deuteronomy 33:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2033.12)

I wrote a letter to our children as each became a teenager. In one I talked about our identity in Christ, remembering that when I was a teenager, I felt unsure of myself, lacking confidence. I had to learn that I was God’s beloved—His child. I said in the letter, “Knowing who you are comes down to knowing Whose you are.” For when we understand that God has created us and we commit to following Him, we can be at peace with who He’s made us to be. And we also know that He changes us to be more like Him each day.

A foundational passage from Scripture about our identity as God’s children is [Deuteronomy 33:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2033.12): “Let the beloved of the Lord rest secure in him, for he shields him all day long, and the one the Lord loves rests between his shoulders.” Just before Moses died, he proclaimed this blessing over the tribe of Benjamin as God’s people prepared to enter the land He’d promised them. God wanted them to always remember that they were His beloved and to rest secure in their identity as His children.

Knowing our identity as God’s children is equally important for everyone—teenagers, those in the middle of life, and those who have lived a long time. When we understand that God created us and watches over us, we can find security, hope, and love.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How does knowing that you can “rest between his shoulders” increase your love for God? How does this deepen your understanding of who you are?

Loving Father, You created me and You hold me close. Let my identity as Your child permeate my thoughts and actions.

#### Insight

Moses’ blessing to the Israelites before his death follows the tradition of a father blessing his children before death ([Genesis 49](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2049)). He addresses each of the tribes as if they were individual sons. These individual blessings ([Deuteronomy 33:6–25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2033.6%E2%80%9325)) are framed before and after with a poem of blessing addressed to all of Israel (vv. 1–5, 26–29). (Jeshurun, vv. 5, 26, means “the upright one” and refers to all of Israel.) Because Yahweh was their God, they were blessed—saved, secure, and strong. God was their warrior and king who defeats all foes (vv. 26–29) and rules His people through the law given to Moses (v. 4).

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

# God Calling – 9/6/21

# Your Loved Ones

Your loved ones are very safe in My Keeping. Learning and loving and working, theirs is a life of happiness and progress.  They live to serve, and serve they truly do. They serve Me and those they love. Ceaselessly they serve.

But their ministrations, so many, so diverse, you see no more than those in my time on earth in human form could have seen the angels who ministered unto Me in the wilderness.

How often mortals rush to earthly friends who can serve them in so limited a way, when the friends who are freed from the limitations of humanity can serve them so much better, understand them better, protect better, plan better, and even plead better their cause with Me.

You do well to remember your friends in the Unseen. Companying with them the more you live in this Unseen World the gentler will be your passing when it comes. Earth's troubles and difficulties will seem, even now, less overwhelming as you look, not at the things that are seen but at the real, the Eternal Life.

"And this is Life Eternal that we may know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent."

Learning to know Me draws that Kingdom very near, and in Me, and through Knowledge of Me, the dear ones there become very near and dear.

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31