# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/17/19

# Is There Good in Temptation?



No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man… —[1 Corinthians 10:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+10%3A13)

The word temptation has come to mean something bad to us today, but we tend to use the word in the wrong way. Temptation itself is not sin; it is something we are bound to face simply by virtue of being human. Not to be tempted would mean that we were already so shameful that we would be beneath contempt. Yet many of us suffer from temptations we should never have to suffer, simply because we have refused to allow God to lift us to a higher level where we would face temptations of another kind.

A person’s inner nature, what he possesses in the inner, spiritual part of his being, determines what he is tempted by on the outside. The temptation fits the true nature of the person being tempted and reveals the possibilities of his nature. Every person actually determines or sets the level of his own temptation, because temptation will come to him in accordance with the level of his controlling, inner nature.

Temptation comes to me, suggesting a possible shortcut to the realization of my highest goal— it does not direct me toward what I understand to be evil, but toward what I understand to be good. Temptation is something that confuses me for a while, and I don’t know whether something is right or wrong. When I yield to it, I have made lust a god, and the temptation itself becomes the proof that it was only my own fear that prevented me from falling into the sin earlier.

Temptation is not something we can escape; in fact, it is essential to the well-rounded life of a person. Beware of thinking that you are tempted as no one else— what you go through is the common inheritance of the human race, not something that no one has ever before endured. God does not save us from temptations— He sustains us in the midst of them (see [Hebrews 2:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+2:18) and [Hebrews 4:15-16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4:15-16)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Jesus Christ reveals, not an embarrassed God, not a confused God, not a God who stands apart from the problems, but One who stands in the thick of the whole thing with man.  Disciples Indeed, 388 L

# CCEL – 9/17/19

**A bruised reed shall he not break.**—[MATT. 12:20.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.12.html" \l "Matt.12.20)

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.—He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.—Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.—Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.—Behold, your God . . . will come and save you.

[Psa. 51:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.17). -[Psa. 147:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.147.html" \l "Ps.147.3). -[Isa. 57:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.57.html" \l "Isa.57.15).[Ezek. 34:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.34.html" \l "Ezek.34.16). -[Heb. 12:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.12). -[Isa. 35:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.35.html" \l "Isa.35.4).

“Bring him unto me.” [Mark 9:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.9.html" \l "Mark.9.19)

Despairingly the poor disappointed father turned away from the disciples to their Master. His son was in the worst possible condition, and all means had failed, but the miserable child was soon delivered from the evil one when the parent in faith obeyed the Lord Jesus’ word, “Bring him unto me.” Children are a precious gift from God, but much anxiety comes with them. They may be a great joy or a great bitterness to their parents; they may be filled with the Spirit of God, or possessed with the spirit of evil. In all cases, the Word of God gives us one receipt for the curing of all their ills, “Bring him unto me.” O for more agonizing prayer on their behalf while they are yet babes! Sin is there, let our prayers begin to attack it. Our cries for our offspring should precede those cries which betoken their actual advent into a world of sin. In the days of their youth we shall see sad tokens of that dumb and deaf spirit which will neither pray aright, nor hear the voice of God in the soul, but Jesus still commands, “Bring them unto me.” When they are grown up they may wallow in sin and foam with enmity against God; then when our hearts are breaking we should remember the great Physician’s words, “Bring them unto me.” Never must we cease to pray until they cease to breathe. No case is hopeless while Jesus lives.

The Lord sometimes suffers his people to be driven into a corner that they may experimentally know how necessary he is to them. Ungodly children, when they show us our own powerlessness against the depravity of their hearts, drive us to flee to the strong for strength, and this is a great blessing to us. Whatever our morning’s need may be, let it like a strong current bear us to the ocean of divine love. Jesus can soon remove our sorrow, he delights to comfort us. Let us hasten to him while he waits to meet us.

# Word Live – 9/17/19

# Cloudy and sleepy

## Prepare

Ever wondered why sleep and distraction are often the partners of prayer? Today’s reading describes three men overwhelmed with tiredness despite the immense glory of God. As we turn to God now, we offer him our wild hearts and minds.



## Bible passage: Luke 9:28–36

##### The Transfiguration

28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. 29 As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. 30 Two men, Moses and Elijah, 31 appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. 33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what he was saying.)

34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.” 36 When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves, and told no one at that time what they had seen.

## Explore

**Comedy and divinity**

One of my favourite laugh-out-loud books is Jerome K Jerome’sThree Men in a Boat. It tells of a hapless and pointless boat journey along the Thames one warm nineteenth-century summer. This passage swings between comedy and divinity.

**God's rescue plan**

Alone with Jesus on a mountain, the three disciples witness a sequence of eerie scenes. First, they watch as Jesus is physically transformed by dazzling light. And then into this bleached landscape appear two greats from Israel’s past: Moses and Elijah. The lawmaker and the prophet. Both are in deep conversation with Jesus about coming events in Jerusalem. To be precise, they are talking about Jesus’ imminent departure, or exodus if the word is literally translated. In his book The Day the Revolution Began, Tom Wright argues that this little word is one of the keys to understanding God’s plan to rescue the world.

**Escape from death and sin**

Just as Moses led the slaves out of Egypt and into freedom, so Jesus’ death signals escape from the clutches of death and sin and into God’s renewed future.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

Faced with audio and visual overload, the three disciples are overcome with torpor and Peter ends up saying something banal just to fill space. How do we react in the face of God’s mystery and power?

## Deeper Bible study

After Peter’s profession, we enter more fully into the mystery of who Christ is. Is it possible to say that as the Gospel progresses, so the glory of God shines more and more brightly through Jesus, culminating, despite everything, in resurrection glory? Here it is as though the curtain is pulled aside. Peter, John and James (the innermost circle of disciples) are privileged to catch a sustained glimpse of the brilliant light that temporarily transfigures Jesus as he communes with the Father. Jesus is not alone but is supported by Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets and the fact that what they anticipate will be fulfilled in him. Truly, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

There may be some who would describe this incident as ‘paranormal’ or as involving an ‘altered state of consciousness’. It’s certainly true that it doesn’t happen every day! My preference would be to characterise it as ‘numinous’, involving as it does an overwhelming and mysterious sense of divine presence. In biblical narratives clouds almost invariably signify the awesome presence of God (eg [Exod 19:16–19; Acts 1:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exod+19%3A16%E2%80%9319%3B+Acts+1%3A9&version=NIV)). Manifestations of the divine presence are found throughout Scripture and in Christian experience, but there is more here. This is incarnation, God coming to us in and through a particular person. Jesus is God’s Son, chosen by the Father, pleasing to him and speaking for him (v 35). This Jesus has a departure to complete in Jerusalem, literally translated ‘exodus’ (v 31). Jesus is going away, but in so doing will lead his own people to freedom and glory.

The reaction of the three disciples in this situation is almost comical. Having got things gloriously right in the previous section, Peter now just babbles on (v 33). Perhaps he should simply have remained speechless, as should we.

Take a few moments to bow humbly in God’s presence and to worship without words.

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## Bible Background: Why Moses and Elijah?

Since none of the Gospel writers state why Moses and Elijah are present at the Transfiguration it is hard to be certain. Several ideas have been suggested.  
  
● They are two towering Old Testament figures, with significant roles in shaping (Moses) and reforming (Elijah) the people of God.  
  
● Both met with God on mountains.  
  
● Both are seen in the Old Testament as either a precursor (Moses, [Deuteronomy 18:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%2018:15&version=TNIV)) or forerunner (Elijah, [Malachi 4:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Malachi%204:5&version=TNIV)) of the Messiah. Their presence is a powerful indicator that the Messiah is here.  
  
● Moses has often been seen as representing the law and Elijah the prophets, although Moses could equally be seen as representing the prophets. In this way they show that Jesus is the fulfilment of the totality of the Old Testament.  
  
● Their presence demonstrates that Jesus is not to be identified with Elijah as some were saying ([Luke 9:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%209:19&version=TNIV)).  
  
● They indicate that Jesus, although fully in the world, is also truly at home in the heavenly realm.  
  
● They bear witness to God’s purposes being fulfilled in Jesus. They talk about his exodus (the Greek word translated departure in verse 31) – especially appropriate for Moses. Two men used in the past by God to bring salvation are discussing the greater salvation which is about to be secured.  
  
● Both suffered and there may be a hint of the suffering that Jesus is about to undergo.  
  
In the final analysis the purpose of the Gospel writers seems to be to demonstrate the power, glory and majesty of Jesus which surpasses that of the great heroes of the Old Testament.  
  
John Grayston

## Peter’s unusual day

<https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W270711A1.mp3>

The transfiguration was undoubtedly an extraordinary event, but to have witnessed it must have been mind-blowing. This audio meditation depicts what this landmark moment might have been like from Peter’s point of view.

[Peter’s unusual day (pdf)](https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W270711A1%20transcript.pdf)

Peter’s unusual day

Well, that was some day. You won’t believe what happened.

I can barely believe it myself. Now, let me set the scene. About a week ago, we were with Jesus at Andrew’s house. We were just relaxing and chewing the fat, while Jesus was praying. He then suddenly turned around and asked us what – or more precisely who – people thought he was. Some of the guys relayed to Jesus the town rumours about him being a prophet, but I declared that he was God’s Messiah. Straight away, he told me to keep my voice down, which hurt me a bit. After all, I was only telling the truth.

Anyway, he then started to talk about the Son of Man dying and being raised to life in three days. None of us knew what he was talking about, to be honest. He then went on to say that some of us would see the kingdom of God before we died. We politely nodded our heads while he said this, but we were all a bit flummoxed. But after today’s events, I know exactly what he was talking about...I think.

So, this morning, Jesus took me, James and John onto the top of a mountain to pray. Jesus dropped to his knees, and we followed suit. It was really early and we were looking forward to catching up on our sleep. Sometimes, praying can be a good disguise for a quick 40 winks. However, before we could close our eyes, Jesus changed. I mean, he was completely transformed. His face altered itself and his clothes became a dazzling white. They were so bright that we had to shield our eyes. Forget the Daz doorstep challenge – this was something else. The most incredible thing, though, is that we weren’t frightened. Jesus didn’t look scary – he looked ... well ... beautiful.

Then, to cap it off, Moses and Elijah appeared! They stood there, right next to Jesus, right next to us. I looked at James and John and they just stared back at me. We were speechless. The prophets started to talk to Jesus about his departure – whatever that means. Maybe he’s off on a trip somewhere. Anyway, they stayed for about 15 minutes or so – just chatting to Jesus – but as always, I seemed to put my foot in it. As they were leaving, I suggested that we should put up three shelters for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. The others just stared at me. Actually, on this occasion, they probably had a point. It was a daft thing to say. It’s hardly going to be an everyday occurrence, is it?

But another strange thing happened as I was talking. We were suddenly surrounded by a giant cloud. Now, this wouldn’t normally be unusual on a mountain, but today was a gloriously sunny day. There wasn’t a cloud to be seen in the sky, so to suddenly be confronted by a massive cloud was more than a tad scary. I couldn’t see my hand in front of my face – very weird. But that’s not all. A voice seemed to be coming from the cloud. It said, ‘This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.’ At first, we all thought that it was either Moses or Elijah, but when the cloud cleared, Jesus was once again on his own. I kept saying, ‘Who was that?’, but Jesus just smiled at me.

Since then, myself, James and John have spoken of little else. We’ve come to the conclusion that it must have been God who spoke through the cloud. At one point, I jumped up and said, ‘See! I told you he was God’s Messiah,’ but they didn’t really appreciate that. I can’t think why. Anyway, we’ve decided not to tell the other disciples. They’ll only get jealous. They wouldn’t believe us anyway. But it’s amazing – Jesus is God’s Son. Who’d have thought it, eh?!

Andy Evans for WordLive www.wordlive.org.uk © Scripture Union 2011

## This is my Son



An artist’s impression of the transfiguration

# Today in the Word – 9/17/19

# The Good Shepherd

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

#### A psalm of David.

1The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
2    He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
3    he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
    for his name’s sake.  
4Even though I walk  
    through the darkest valley,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23#fen-NIV-14240a)]  
I will fear no evil,  
    for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
    they comfort me.

5You prepare a table before me  
    in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
    my cup overflows.  
6Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
    all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
    forever.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 23:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+23#en-NIV-14240) Or the valley of the shadow of death

According to Time magazine, the most popular song in the world is the Disney anthem, “It’s a Small World.” It was written by the Sherman Brothers whom Walt Disney told, “I need one song that can be easily translated into many languages and be played as a round.” But if you were asked to name the most popular Psalm in the world, you would probably answer: Psalm 23. Even in our post-Christian society, most people can quote the opening line, “The Lord​ is my shepherd, I shall not want.”

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11

Psalm 23 portrays God in two roles, as shepherd and host. As shepherd, the Lord provides for the needs of His people. David declares, “I lack nothing” (v. 1). It does not mean he gets whatever he wants; it means the Lord can and will provide everything he needs. In a barren climate, the Lord leads His sheep to “green pastures” and “quiet waters” (v. 1). This consistent care and provision led David to have a deep trust in the Lord. Even when the Lord led him through the “darkest valley,” he was not afraid (v. 4). As one commentator put it, “The dark valley . . . is as truly one of his ‘right paths’ as are the green pastures—a fact that takes much of the sting out of any ordeal.” In any situation the Lord is there to guide with His shepherd’s tools: a staff and a rod.

In verse 5, the image shifts, and God is pictured as a gracious host. The Lord invites David to enjoy His hospitality even in the presence of his enemies (v. 5). As a good host, the Lord makes sure that His guest has an anointed head and a full cup (v. 5). David responds with gratitude, confessing that the Lord’s “goodness and love” will pursue him throughout his life. He was confident that he would live with God in His presence forever (v. 6).

### Apply the Word

At times, you may wonder if God really sees what you are going through. Does He notice? Does He care? Today’s psalm assures us that God is present with His people, even when we walk through dark valleys. God’s provision is most perfectly seen in Jesus, who laid down His life so that we could dwell in the Father’s house forever (John 10:15).

### Pray with Us

As we study the beloved Psalm 23 today, we can be at peace in God’s presence, assured of His eternal love and protection. Come to Him in prayer and praise Him for His salvation and His work of grace in your life.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/17/19

# More than Water

 **Read:** [**Galatians 3:23–29**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/17/more-than-water)

### Children of God

23Before the coming of this faith,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Galatians+3%3A23%E2%80%9329#fen-NIV-29126a)] we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. 24So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. 25Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

26So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Galatians 3:23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Galatians+3%3A23%E2%80%9329#en-NIV-29126) Or through the faithfulness of Jesus … 23Before faith came

All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. [Galatians 3:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Galatians+3%3A27)

One of my earliest childhood memories of church was a pastor walking down the aisle, challenging us to “remember the waters of our baptism.” Remember the waters? I asked myself. How can you remember water? He then proceeded to splash everyone with water, which as a young child both delighted and confused me.

Why should we think about baptism? When a person is baptized, there’s so much more to it than water. Baptism symbolizes how through faith in Jesus, we’ve become “clothed” with Him (Galatians 3:27). Or in other words, it’s celebrating that we belong to Him and that He lives in and through us.

As if that weren’t significant enough, the passage tells us that if we’ve been clothed with Christ our identity is found in Him. We’re the very children of God (v. 26). As such, we’ve been made right with God by faith—not by following Old Testament law (vv. 23–25). We’re not divided against one another by gender, culture, and status. We’re set free and brought into unity through Christ and are now His own (v. 29).

So there are very good reasons to remember baptism and all it represents. We aren’t simply focusing on the act itself but that we belong to Jesus and have become children of God. Our identity, future, and spiritual freedom are found in Him.

By:  [Peter Chin](https://odb.org/author/peterwchin/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What does it mean for you to be clothed with Christ and to belong to Him? What are ways in which you can regularly celebrate and remember the meaning of baptism?

God, help me to never forget that through Jesus I am a child of God!

#### Insight

Much has been written about Paul’s view of the law as it relates to the Christian life. The apostle wrote about the law in several letters to the early believers in Jesus, most notably in his letter to the Romans. Here in Galatians, Paul initially paints the law as a jailer who held us in custody until faith was revealed (3:23). A jailer restricts prisoners’ activities and keeps them confined within certain parameters. In verse 24, however, Paul calls the law our guardian—a role with a different connotation. A guardian is charged with protection and safety; one who keeps those under his care from harm and helps them to grow and flourish. In each case, jailer or guardian, Paul says that because faith has come, they’re no longer needed.

# God Calling – 9/17/19

# Faltering Steps

**Show me Thy way, O Lord, and let us walk in Thy Paths.**

You are doing so.  This is the way.  The way of uncertain future and faltering steps.  It is My Way ...

Put all fear of the future aside.  Know that you will be led.  Know that you will be shown.  I have promised.

Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham.. I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.  - Genesis 24:27

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/18/19

# His Temptation and Ours



We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. —[Hebrews 4:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Hebrews+4%3A15)

Until we are born again, the only kind of temptation we understand is the kind mentioned in [James 1:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1:14), “Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.” But through regeneration we are lifted into another realm where there are other temptations to face, namely, the kind of temptations our Lord faced. The temptations of Jesus had no appeal to us as unbelievers because they were not at home in our human nature. Our Lord’s temptations and ours are in different realms until we are born again and become His brothers. The temptations of Jesus are not those of a mere man, but the temptations of God as Man. Through regeneration, the Son of God is formed in us (see [Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)), and in our physical life He has the same setting that He had on earth. Satan does not tempt us just to make us do wrong things— he tempts us to make us lose what God has put into us through regeneration, namely, the possibility of being of value to God. He does not come to us on the premise of tempting us to sin, but on the premise of shifting our point of view, and only the Spirit of God can detect this as a temptation of the devil.

Temptation means a test of the possessions held within the inner, spiritual part of our being by a power outside us and foreign to us. This makes the temptation of our Lord explainable. After Jesus’ baptism, having accepted His mission of being the One “who takes away the sin of the world” ([John 1:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1:29)) He “was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness” ([Matthew 4:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+4:1)) and into the testing devices of the devil. Yet He did not become weary or exhausted. He went through the temptation “without sin,” and He retained all the possessions of His spiritual nature completely intact.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We begin our Christian life by believing what we are told to believe, then we have to go on to so assimilate our beliefs that they work out in a way that redounds to the glory of God. The danger is in multiplying the acceptation of beliefs we do not make our own. Conformed to His Image, 381 L

# CCEL – 9/18/19

**Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.**—[PSA. 119:18.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.18)

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.—It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.—I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.—We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.—How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.—O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

[Luke 24:45](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.45). -[Matt. 13:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.13.html" \l "Matt.13.11). -[Matt. 11:25,26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.11.html" \l "Matt.11.25). -[I Cor. 2:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.2.html" \l "iCor.2.12). -[Psa. 139:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.139.html" \l "Ps.139.17). -[Rom. 11:33,34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.11.html" \l "Rom.11.33),[36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.11.html" \l "Rom.11.36).

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” **[Galatians 5:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.25)**

The two most important things in our holy religion are the life of faith and the walk of faith. He who shall rightly understand these is not far from being a master in experimental theology, for they are vital points to a Christian. You will never find true faith unattended by true godliness; on the other hand, you will never discover a truly holy life which has not for its root a living faith upon the righteousness of Christ. Woe unto those who seek after the one without the other! There are some who cultivate faith and forget holiness; these may be very high in orthodoxy, but they shall be very deep in condemnation, for they hold the truth in unrighteousness; and there are others who have strained after holiness of life, but have denied the faith, like the Pharisees of old, of whom the Master said, they were “whitewashed sepulchres.” We must have faith, for this is the foundation; we must have holiness of life, for this is the superstructure. Of what service is the mere foundation of a building to a man in the day of tempest? Can he hide himself therein? He wants a house to cover him, as well as a foundation for that house. Even so we need the superstructure of spiritual life if we would have comfort in the day of doubt. But seek not a holy life without faith, for that would be to erect a house which can afford no permanent shelter, because it has no foundation on a rock. Let faith and life be put together, and, like the two abutments of an arch, they will make our piety enduring. Like light and heat streaming from the same sun, they are alike full of blessing. Like the two pillars of the temple, they are for glory and for beauty. They are two streams from the fountain of grace; two lamps lit with holy fire; two olive trees watered by heavenly care. O Lord, give us this day life within, and it will reveal itself without to thy glory.

# Word Live – 9/18/19

# Down in the valley

## Prepare

Coming down to earth with a bump is a common experience. It applies as much in our spiritual lives as in any other area. This may be a dry and depleted time, so simply wait in the silence of God.



## Bible passage: Luke 9:37–45

##### The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit

37 The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. 38 A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. 39 A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. 40 I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.”

41 “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.”

42 Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. 43 And they were all amazed at the greatness of God.

   While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, 44 “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.” 45 But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it.

## Explore

**Daily realities**

After the mystery and power of yesterday, the four men step into the daily realities of pain, oppression and danger.

**Lack of faith**

It’s a setting that could happen anywhere in the world: a desperate father pleading for the health and well-being of his child. He has asked the disciples who weren’t up the mountain to heal the boy but they have failed. But Jesus’ initial reaction is disturbing. He attributes his son’s continuing sickness to the disciples’ lack of faith and focus (v 41).

**Authority and power**

What’s Jesus getting at here? Could it be that he’s referring to an earlier incident ([9:1,2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9%3A1%2C2&version=NIV)) where he gave them authority and power to drive out all demons and cure diseases before sending them out? Maybe these stern words are borne out of frustration that they already possess the skills to deal with this kind of situation?

**Hardly comforting**

This would make sense although it is hardly comforting for them or us. We tend to be much more comfortable with a kind of open-ended discipleship with few expectations placed on us by Jesus.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

What is God saying to us and what are we doing about it? These two basic questions of discipleship are among the most searching that will be addressed to us.

## Deeper Bible study

We are tempted to feel superior to the disciples as portrayed in this passage. For one thing, they lack skill and authority when it comes to healing a demon-possessed boy and are next to useless. They earn Jesus’ stinging and disappointed rebuke (v 41). For another, they are obtuse in failing to grasp Jesus’ way to the cross, despite having been told before (9:22). In documents that some critics would dismiss as Christian propaganda, the disciples are consistently presented in unheroic terms. I find it easy to see myself in them. The overall effect is to magnify the mighty authority and clarity of Jesus himself. This is not propaganda but testimony.

Jesus comes down from the mountain of transfiguration fully armed with God’s power – power put to a compassionate use. Our hearts go out to this father (and surely to the mother as well) whose only son is dreadfully possessed by an evil power beyond control, convulsing the poor boy with screaming and foaming at the mouth and destroying him. It is a distressing and frightening scene, but Jesus is not intimidated. In the power of God, he overcomes the spirit, heals the boy and hands him back to a relieved father. God is glorified (v 43). Jesus is God incarnate and compassion personified.

It is a modern assumption that such happenings should now be read as mental illnesses for which the remedy is psychiatric. Of course, this is often the case, but perhaps sometimes we are dealing with realities that are more complicated, more intertwined than that. It is well to remember that our modern concept of reality is a theory, not a fact. In our world evil is a power, not an illusion. To overcome it requires more than human resources. We need the power and presence of God working in us through Jesus.

Reflect on these words: ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe.’ ([Mark 5:36](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+5%3A36&version=NIV))

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## Why don’t I understand?

<https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W280711A1.mp3>

The disciples didn’t understand Jesus’ predictions. Why was that? Why do we like knowing what’s going on and what happens when we don’t?

[Why don’t I understand? (pdf)](https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W280711A1%20transcript.pdf)

Why don’t I understand?

What happens when our understanding runs out?

What happens when we reach the limits of our comprehension?

We live in an age of knowledge and reason.

So what happens when God goes beyond us and we simply don’t understand?

Why didn’t the disciples understand what Jesus said?

Why was it hidden from them, so they couldn’t grasp it?

And why do things happen to me that only make sense afterwards?

Why doesn’t God explain everything right now? Is he playing tricks?

Does the One who knows the end from the beginning enjoy keeping us in the dark?

Or, does he know us better than we know ourselves?

What would happen if God explained himself and we could see round every corner?

I’m a rational person; I believe that most things can be worked out if clearly understood. I don’t like being kept in the dark.

But, if I’m honest, I don’t like pain and I don’t like sacrifice either.

If I was a disciple and I’d understood clearly what Jesus was saying, I’d have tried to stop him. (Hang on, didn’t Peter do that?)

If I’d understood the pain and sacrifice ahead, I might have given up and gone home.

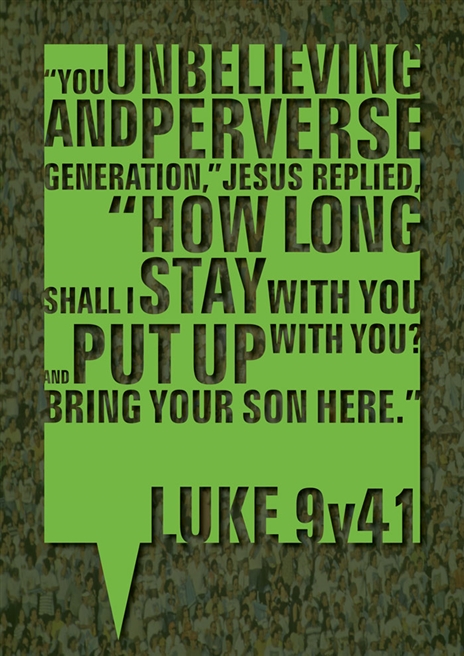
Maybe God knew that.

Maybe God knew that too much understanding hinders us from trusting and following. So, to the disciples it was hidden, so that they did not grasp it. But they kept trusting and they kept following.

Will you, next time you don’t understand?

Richard England for WordLive www.wordlive.org.uk© Scripture Union 2011

## Harsh words



# Today in the Word – 9/18/19

# The Owner of All

**Read:** [**Psalm 24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24)

#### Of David. A psalm.

1The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it,  
    the world, and all who live in it;  
2for he founded it on the seas  
    and established it on the waters.

3Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord?  
    Who may stand in his holy place?  
4The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
    who does not trust in an idol  
    or swear by a false god.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#fen-NIV-14246a)]

5They will receive blessing from the Lord  
    and vindication from God their Savior.  
6Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
    who seek your face, God of Jacob.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#fen-NIV-14248b)][[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#fen-NIV-14248c)]

7Lift up your heads, you gates;  
    be lifted up, you ancient doors,  
    that the King of glory may come in.  
8Who is this King of glory?  
    The Lord strong and mighty,  
    the Lord mighty in battle.  
9Lift up your heads, you gates;  
    lift them up, you ancient doors,  
    that the King of glory may come in.  
10Who is he, this King of glory?  
    The Lord Almighty—  
    he is the King of glory.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 24:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#en-NIV-14246) Or swear falsely
2. [Psalm 24:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#en-NIV-14248) Two Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac (see also Septuagint); most Hebrew manuscripts face, Jacob
3. [Psalm 24:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24#en-NIV-14248) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verse 10.

As I backed down a driveway one night, I was startled by a loud crash. I had accidentally gone off the driveway and backed the car into a large potted plant leaving a scratch on the rear bumper. If the car had been my own, it would not have been a big deal. However, this particular car was not my own, but a rental. I would have to give an account of my mistake to someone else.

The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1

In today’s reading, David reminds us that the world we inhabit and everything in it belong to God. We may sometimes act as if our house, car, possessions, or even our bodies belong to us. The reality is that God created everything and everyone. All creation belongs to Him (vv. 1–2). Israel was reminded of this truth every fiftieth year, when all debts were canceled and all property reverted back to its original tribal allotment (Leviticus 25). They were not the ultimate owners of the land.

In verses 3–4, David reminds Israel that approaching God in worship is not to be done lightly. He outlines two characteristics of an authorized worshiper. We must have “clean hands and a pure heart” (v. 4). That is, we are to be people who have purity in their actions and in their motives. We must also be loyal to the Lord alone. Our trust cannot be in any of the false gods who so easily attract our attention (v. 4). These are the people who can worship the Lord, and receive His blessing (v. 5).

The final portion of the psalm calls for the gates of Jerusalem to be prepared to receive the King of glory. Since the whole earth belongs to the Lord, it is appropriate that the psalm ends by anticipating the future coming of the Messiah-King to take up His throne (Matt. 25:31).

### Apply the Word

Jesus realized it was easy for us to worry about things like food and clothing (Matt. 6:25). Our anxiety can be eased when we remember the truths from this psalm. Everything we have belongs to God. One day Jesus will return and make all things new. Just one more reason to seek Him with all our hearts.

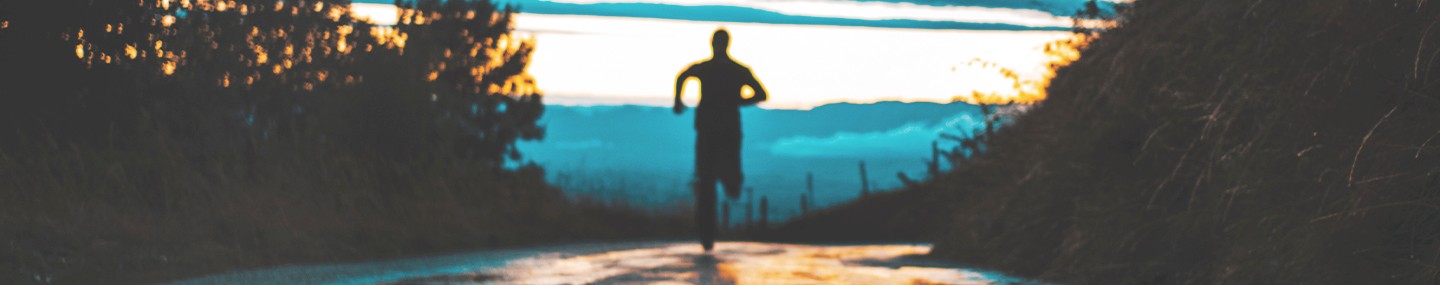
### Pray with Us

Would you join us as we uphold in prayer Dr. Heather Shalley, vice president of Student Enrollment Services, today? Her faithful service to students, from the time they come to Moody until their graduation, bears fruit in their lives.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/18/19

# Turn and Run

 **Read:** [**1 Peter 5:8–10**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/18/turn-and-run)

8Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

10And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Resist [the devil], standing firm in the faith. [1 Peter 5:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=1+Peter+5%3A9)

Ali was a beautiful, smart, and talented teenager with loving parents. But after high school something prompted her to try heroin. Her parents noticed changes in her and sent her to a rehabilitation facility after Ali eventually admitted the impact it was having on her. After treatment, they asked what she would tell her friends about trying drugs. Her advice: “Just turn and run.” She urged that “just saying no” wasn’t enough.

Tragically, Ali relapsed and died at age twenty-two of an overdose. In an attempt to keep others from the same fate, her heartbroken parents appeared on a local news program encouraging listeners to “run for Ali” by staying far from situations where they could be exposed to drugs and other dangers.

The apostle Paul urged his spiritual son Timothy (and us) to run from evil (2 Timothy 2:22), and the apostle Peter likewise warned, “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith” (1 Peter 5:8–9).

None of us is immune to temptation. And often the best thing to do is to steer clear of situations where we’ll be tempted—though they can’t always be avoided. But we can be better prepared by having a strong faith in God based in the Bible and strengthened through prayer. When we “[stand] firm in the faith” we’ll know when to turn and run to Him.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

In what area(s) are you particularly susceptible to temptation? What has helped you to resist?

Dear God, there are so many temptations out there. Help us to watch and pray so that we won’t fall. And thank You for welcoming us back when we do.

#### Insight

The Scriptures have much to tell us about our spiritual adversary, Satan. Peter, writing from his own painful defeat, warns us of our adversary “the devil [who] prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Some thirty years before writing this letter, Peter boasted that he would never disown Jesus (Matthew 26:33–35), but in his overconfident pride he failed to “be alert and of sober mind” (1 Peter 5:8). According to John, the whole world is presently under Satan’s control (1 John 5:19), but Jesus came “to destroy the devil’s work” (3:8). Jesus has already defeated Satan (John 12:31; 16:11; Hebrews 2:14), but the devil is permitted to continue to deceive people for a season (2 Corinthians 11:14). Satan’s end is sealed, however, for he will be “thrown into the lake of burning sulfur . . . tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).

# God Calling – 9/18/19

# Dwell There

**He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.  - Psalm 91:1**

Hidden in a sure place, known only to God and you.  So secret that no power on earth can even find it.

But, My beloved children, you must dwell therein.  No fitful visit, a real abiding. Make it your home.  Your dwelling place.

Over that home shall My Shadow rest, to make it doubly safe, doubly secret.  Like brooding mother-bird wings that Shadow rests.  How safe, how sure, you must feel there.

When fears assail you, and cares trouble you, then it is because you have ventured out of that protecting Shadow. Then the one, the only thing to do is to creep back into shelter again. So rest.

Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.  Psalm 17:8

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/19/19

# Are You Going on With Jesus?



You are those who have continued with Me in My trials. —[Luke 22:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+22%3A28)

It is true that Jesus Christ is with us through our temptations, but are we going on with Him through His temptations? Many of us turn back from going on with Jesus from the very moment we have an experience of what He can do. Watch when God changes your circumstances to see whether you are going on with Jesus, or siding with the world, the flesh, and the devil. We wear His name, but are we going on with Him? “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” ([John 6:66](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:66)).

The temptations of Jesus continued throughout His earthly life, and they will continue throughout the life of the Son of God in us. Are we going on with Jesus in the life we are living right now?

We have the idea that we ought to shield ourselves from some of the things God brings around us. May it never be! It is God who engineers our circumstances, and whatever they may be we must see that we face them while continually abiding with Him in His temptations. They are His temptations, not temptations to us, but temptations to the life of the Son of God in us. Jesus Christ’s honor is at stake in our bodily lives. Are we remaining faithful to the Son of God in everything that attacks His life in us?

Are you going on with Jesus? The way goes through Gethsemane, through the city gate, and on “outside the camp” ([Hebrews 13:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+13:13)). The way is lonely and goes on until there is no longer even a trace of a footprint to follow— but only the voice saying, “Follow Me” ([Matthew 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+4:19)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Beware of isolation; beware of the idea that you have to develop a holy life alone. It is impossible to develop a holy life alone; you will develop into an oddity and a peculiarism, into something utterly unlike what God wants you to be. The only way to develop spiritually is to go into the society of God’s own children, and you will soon find how God alters your set. God does not contradict our social instincts; He alters them.  Biblical Psychology, 189 L

# CCEL – 9/19/19

**The God of all grace.**—[I PET. 5:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.10)

I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.—He is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.—Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.—Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.—Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.—Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.—As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.—He giveth more grace.

Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.

[Exo. 33:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.19). -[Job 33:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.33.html" \l "Job.33.24). -[Rom. 3:24,25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.3.html" \l "Rom.3.24). -[John 1:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.17).[Eph. 2:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.8). -[I Tim. 1:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.1.html" \l "iTim.1.2). -[Eph. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.7). -[I Pet. 4:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.10). -[Jas. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.4.html" \l "Jas.4.6).[II Pet. 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.18).

“The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” **[Galatians 5:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.1)**

This “liberty” makes us free to heaven’s charter—the Bible. Here is a choice passage, believer, “When thou passest through the rivers, I will be with thee.” You are free to that. Here is another: “The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee”; you are free to that. You are a welcome guest at the table of the promises. Scripture is a never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace. It is the bank of heaven; you may draw from it as much as you please, without let or hindrance. Come in faith and you are welcome to all covenant blessings. There is not a promise in the Word which shall be withheld. In the depths of tribulations let this freedom comfort you; amidst waves of distress let it cheer you; when sorrows surround thee let it be thy solace. This is thy Father’s love-token; thou art free to it at all times. Thou art also free to the throne of grace. It is the believer’s privilege to have access at all times to his heavenly Father. Whatever our desires, our difficulties, our wants, we are at liberty to spread all before him. It matters not how much we may have sinned, we may ask and expect pardon. It signifies nothing how poor we are, we may plead his promise that he will provide all things needful. We have permission to approach his throne at all times—in midnight’s darkest hour, or in noontide’s most burning heat. Exercise thy right, O believer, and live up to thy privilege. Thou art free to all that is treasured up in Christ—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It matters not what thy need is, for there is fulness of supply in Christ, and it is there for thee. O what a “freedom” is thine! freedom from condemnation, freedom to the promises, freedom to the throne of grace, and at last freedom to enter heaven!

# Word Live – 9/19/19

# Small is beautiful

## Prepare

Ambition and drive are generally encouraged in our culture, although today’s reading sees Jesus challenging those values. As we pray, we ask that the Lord will help us turn down the volume on our need to be noticed, and worship him.



Bottom of Form

## Bible passage: Luke 9:46–50

##### Who Will Be the Greatest?

46 An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. 47 Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. 48 Then he said to them, “Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest.”

49 “Master,” said John, “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us.”

50 “Do not stop him,” Jesus said, “for whoever is not against you is for you.”

## Explore

**Memorable response**

Another situation where the disciples’ actions provoke a memorable response from Jesus. For some inexplicable reason, after Jesus has once again spoken of his impending death in Jerusalem (vs 44,45), they start arguing about their place in the pecking order. This depressing need to be recognised and lauded crops up time after time in the Gospels.

**True greatness**

Meanwhile Jesus arranges for a small child to stand next to him and then says that true greatness among his followers will be given to the least powerful and most vulnerable. Moreover, when we welcome such a child, Jesus says we are welcoming him.

**Complete humility**

As an antidote to the self-aggrandisement of his friends, Jesus identifies fully with all who are poor and of no status. The power of his miracles and teaching; the drama and triumph of his final days in Jerusalem all flow from an attitude of complete humility. And once again we are left feeling uncomfortable.

**Let it go**

I have a profound need to be endorsed by others, but Jesus calls me to let it go and follow him.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

Few of us will admit to sharing the same feelings as the disciples in this reading but deep down we recognise the same insecurity. Let’s be honest as we bring this to God.

## Deeper Bible study

Once more the disciples get a bad press. They have a bad attitude. Even in the most spiritual of environments, humans never seem to rise above vying for position and prestige. Here the disciples are fantasising about who would be greatest in God’s kingdom when it comes. They remain far from learning the true values of that kingdom. But then, has a great deal changed?

By contrast, Jesus acts as the patient teacher and gives them an object lesson. Jesus is invariably tender towards children and they seem to have flocked around him quite often. The child stands for those who have no reputation or standing within human affairs. Although no doubt loved by its parents, the child is of no importance in social affairs and is not a big shot, to be impressed. Yet such an unimportant child is to be welcomed, not ignored or overlooked; treated to show he or she is of great value. Doing this is acting in Jesus’ name – that is, in his character. Those who can do so show that they have understood something about the kingdom in which standard social protocols are turned upside down: the least is the greatest (v 48). The carry-through for ourselves is ‘do not think of yourself more highly than you ought’ ([Rom 12:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Rom+12%3A3&version=NIV)).

The attitudes in this passage are not confined to those within the band of disciples. They have come across someone who is ‘not one of us’ (v 49). The outsider has nonetheless been casting out demons in Jesus’ name, without their accreditation! Yet Jesus exhibits a generous rather than a sectarian spirit, an attitude of permission rather than prohibition (v 50). The fact that he says virtually the opposite in [Matthew 12:30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+12%3A30&version=NIV) is worth pondering. It is not a contradiction, but a difference of context.

Reflection: Do you think it is true to say that when our attitudes are wholesome we can usually discern how to respond correctly to others?

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## Who is the greatest?

## <https://youtu.be/vDDjyAEuco4>

## Roll up, roll up!



# Today in the Word – 9/19/19

# In God We Trust

### Read: [Psalm 25](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25)[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#fen-NIV-14253a)]

#### Of David.

1In you, Lord my God,  
    I put my trust.

2I trust in you;  
    do not let me be put to shame,  
    nor let my enemies triumph over me.  
3No one who hopes in you  
    will ever be put to shame,  
but shame will come on those  
    who are treacherous without cause.

4Show me your ways, Lord,  
    teach me your paths.  
5Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
    for you are God my Savior,  
    and my hope is in you all day long.  
6Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love,  
    for they are from of old.  
7Do not remember the sins of my youth  
    and my rebellious ways;  
according to your love remember me,  
    for you, Lord, are good.

8Good and upright is the Lord;  
    therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.  
9He guides the humble in what is right  
    and teaches them his way.  
10All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful  
    toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.  
11For the sake of your name, Lord,  
    forgive my iniquity, though it is great.

12Who, then, are those who fear the Lord?  
    He will instruct them in the ways they should choose.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#fen-NIV-14264b)]  
13They will spend their days in prosperity,  
    and their descendants will inherit the land.  
14The Lord confides in those who fear him;  
    he makes his covenant known to them.  
15My eyes are ever on the Lord,  
    for only he will release my feet from the snare.

16Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
    for I am lonely and afflicted.  
17Relieve the troubles of my heart  
    and free me from my anguish.  
18Look on my affliction and my distress  
    and take away all my sins.  
19See how numerous are my enemies  
    and how fiercely they hate me!

20Guard my life and rescue me;  
    do not let me be put to shame,  
    for I take refuge in you.  
21May integrity and uprightness protect me,  
    because my hope, Lord,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#fen-NIV-14273c)] is in you.

22Deliver Israel, O God,  
    from all their troubles!

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 25:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#en-NIV-14253) This psalm is an acrostic poem, the verses of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
2. [Psalm 25:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#en-NIV-14264) Or ways he chooses
3. [Psalm 25:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+25#en-NIV-14273) Septuagint; Hebrew does not have Lord.

The Global Positioning System (GPS) is an indispensable part of modern life. It is part of our phones, cars, airplanes, and even agricultural harvesting equipment. This technology was originally developed by the U.S. Department of Defense to assist the military. But today, the thirty-two active GPS satellites impact most people every day. How else would we find our way?

Who, then, are those who fear the LORD? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. Psalm 25:12

In Psalm 25, David describes a world that is difficult to navigate. At every turn, he was threatened by enemies (v. 2), snares that could entrap him (v. 15), general afflictions and anxieties (v. 17), and his own sins and iniquity (vv. 7, 11, 18). In this dangerous and confusing world, David looked to God for guidance. “Show me your ways, Lord​, teach me your paths” (v. 4). He knew that God, “guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way” (v. 9). God’s ways are “loving and faithful” (v. 10). Therefore, David trusted God to lead him in the right direction (v. 12).

David prayed for forgiveness (vv. 11, 18). He knew the dangers he faced were not just the threats of the enemy, but the deceitfulness of his own heart. He was aware of his wrongdoings (vv. 7, 11). This knowledge did not lead him to despair, but drove him into the arms of God. He was reminded not only of his need for forgive- ness but also of his need for a Savior (vv. 5, 15).

David’s confession was rooted in his faith in the Lord. “In you, Lord​ my God, I put my trust” (v. 1). Even while surrounded by dangers and enemies, his “eyes are ever on the Lord​” (v. 15). The good news is that this truth is not just for David, but for all of God’s people.

### Apply the Word

It can be easy for us to feel overwhelmed by troubles in life. David reminds us to keep our eyes on the Lord, who is our only real source of hope. David wrote this psalm as an acrostic following the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It is as if David is saying, “Trust God in every circumstance, from A to Z.” We can fully rely on Him.

### Pray with Us

“In you, Lord​ my God, I put my trust.” May these words from Psalm 25:1, today’s Scripture reading, be our prayer today! Ask God to increase your faith and trust in Him, even when you face trials and hardships.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/19/19

# Feeling Small

 **Read:** [**Matthew 6:25–32**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/19/feeling-small)

### Do Not Worry

25“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Matthew+6%3A25%E2%80%9332#fen-NIV-23310a)]?

28“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Matthew 6:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Matthew+6%3A25%E2%80%9332#en-NIV-23310) Or single cubit to your height

What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? [Psalm 8:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+8%3A4)

Many movie critics consider David Lean’s Lawrence of Arabia one of the greatest films of all time. With its seemingly endless vistas of the Arabian deserts, it has influenced a generation of filmmakers—including Academy Award-winning director Steven Spielberg. “I was inspired the first time I saw Lawrence,” said Spielberg. “It made me feel puny. It still makes me feel puny. And that’s one measure of its greatness.”

What makes me feel small is creation’s vastness—when I gaze at an ocean, fly over the polar ice cap, or survey a night sky sparkling with a billion stars. If the created universe is so expansive, how much greater must be the Creator who spoke it into being!

God’s greatness and our feelings of insignificance are echoed by David when he declares, “What are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them?” (Psalm 8:4 nlt). But Jesus assures us, “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matthew 6:26).

I may feel small and insignificant, but through my Father’s eyes, I have great worth—a worth that is proven every time I look at the cross. The price He was willing to pay to restore me to fellowship with Him is evidence of how He values me.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What wonder of creation draws your attention to God? How does it impact you to know how much your Creator values you?

Father, help us to remember Your heart is for us. Read The Surprising Side of God at [discoveryseries.org/q0213](https://discoveryseries.org/q0213).

# God Calling – 9/19/19

# Full Joy

**These things have I spoken unto you... that your joy might be full.  - John 15:11**

Remember that the Truths I teach you have all been given to you too (as to My disciples of old) with the idea of giving you that overflowing Joy ...

Search for the Joy in life.  Hunt for it as for hidden treasure.  Love and Laugh.  Delight yourselves in the Lord.

Joy in Me.  Full Joy it was I wished My disciples to have.  I intended them to have it.  Had they lived My Teachings out in their daily lives they would have had Fullness of Joy.

Thou will shew me the path of life, in thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.  Psalm 16:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/20/19

# The Divine Commandment of Life



…be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. —[Matthew 5:48](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+5%3A48)

Our Lord’s exhortation to us in [Matthew 5:38-48](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5:38-48) is to be generous in our behavior toward everyone. Beware of living according to your natural affections in your spiritual life. Everyone has natural affections— some people we like and others we don’t like. Yet we must never let those likes and dislikes rule our Christian life. “If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another” ([1 John 1:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1:7)), even those toward whom we have no affection.

The example our Lord gave us here is not that of a good person, or even of a good Christian, but of God Himself. “…be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” In other words, simply show to the other person what God has shown to you. And God will give you plenty of real life opportunities to prove whether or not you are “perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Being a disciple means deliberately identifying yourself with God’s interests in other people. Jesus says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” ([John 13:34-35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+13:34-35)).

The true expression of Christian character is not in good-doing, but in God-likeness. If the Spirit of God has transformed you within, you will exhibit divine characteristics in your life, not just good human characteristics. God’s life in us expresses itself as God’s life, not as human life trying to be godly. The secret of a Christian’s life is that the supernatural becomes natural in him as a result of the grace of God, and the experience of this becomes evident in the practical, everyday details of life, not in times of intimate fellowship with God. And when we come in contact with things that create confusion and a flurry of activity, we find to our own amazement that we have the power to stay wonderfully poised even in the center of it all.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

There is nothing, naturally speaking, that makes us lose heart quicker than decay—the decay of bodily beauty, of natural life, of friendship, of associations, all these things make a man lose heart; but Paul says when we are trusting in Jesus Christ these things do not find us discouraged, light comes through them.  The Place of Help, 1032 L

# CCEL – 9/20/19

**Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.**—[PROV. 3:13.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.3.html" \l "Prov.3.13)

Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might: . . . but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord.—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom

.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.—In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.—Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.

Christ Jesus, . . . is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

He that winneth souls is wise.

[Prov. 8:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.35).[Jer. 9:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.9.html" \l "Jer.9.23). -[Prov. 9:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.9.html" \l "Prov.9.10).[Phi. 3:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html" \l "Phil.3.7). -[Col. 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.3). -[Prov. 8:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.8.html" \l "Prov.8.14).[I Cor. 1:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.30).[Prov. 11:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.11.html" \l "Prov.11.30).

“The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.” **[Judges 7:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Judg.7.html" \l "Judg.7.20)**

Gideon ordered his men to do two things: covering up a torch in an earthen pitcher, he bade them, at an appointed signal, break the pitcher and let the light shine, and then sound with the trumpet, crying, “The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon! the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!” This is precisely what all Christians must do. First, you must shine; break the pitcher which conceals your light; throw aside the bushel which has been hiding your candle, and shine. Let your light shine before men; let your good works be such, that when men look upon you, they shall know that you have been with Jesus. Then there must be the sound, the blowing of the trumpet. There must be active exertions for the ingathering of sinners by proclaiming Christ crucified. Take the gospel to them; carry it to their door; put it in their way; do not suffer them to escape it; blow the trumpet right against their ears. Remember that the true war-cry of the Church is Gideon’s watchword, “The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!” God must do it, it is his own work. But we are not to be idle; instrumentality is to be used—“The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!” If we only cry, “The sword of the Lord!” we shall be guilty of an idle presumption; and if we shout, “The sword of Gideon!” alone, we shall manifest idolatrous reliance on an arm of flesh: we must blend the two in practical harmony, “The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!” We can do nothing of ourselves, but we can do everything by the help of our God; let us, therefore, in his name determine to go out personally and serve with our flaming torch of holy example, and with our trumpet tones of earnest declaration and testimony, and God shall be with us, and Midian shall be put to confusion, and the Lord of hosts shall reign forever and ever.

# Word Live – 9/20/19

# A purpose-driven life

## Prepare

Each day is a mixture of the plans we have made and reacting to situations that arise. But what are the essential things in our lives? How do we sense God’s leading at present? Where are we heading today?



## Bible passage: Luke 9:51–56

### Samaritan Opposition

51As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. 52And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; 53but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. 54When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” 55But Jesus turned and rebuked them. 56Then he and his disciples went to another village.

## Explore

**Exploring the challenge**

The Road Less Travelled is the title of a bestselling book by Scott Peck, a title taken from a poem of the same name by Robert Frost. Both works explore in different ways the challenge of following life paths and making decisions that may not be understood by many around us.

**Two unique journeys**

Luke introduces us to a major moment in Jesus’ life at the beginning of this reading. And he does so by way of two unique journeys. The ultimate destination is his exaltation in heaven but only after the crucial events that must take place in Jerusalem. And he embarks on this journey resolutely.

**Embrace of destiny**

We might use words like focused, driven, determined, committed, in trying to unpack Jesus’ attitude. And this is puzzling. The Gospels show Jesus telling stories, enjoying the company of unlikely friends, giving time to strangers on virtually every page. Yet undergirding everything was his willing embrace of the destiny ahead, flavoured by an astonishing ability to accept others, even those who would not receive him   
(v 55).

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

‘May I today be open to God and the needs of others. Lord, show me the path I must tread as I follow you. Let me be faithful to you and open to all whom I meet.’

## Deeper Bible study

The fulfilment of Jesus’ life and mission is drawing near. He is on his way to Jerusalem, where he will die. He knows this. Luke tells us even more: the time is coming when he will be ‘taken up to heaven’ (v 51). We are to imagine that Jesus is set and resolute and that the foreboding of the coming anguish shows on his face. Perhaps this is why the Samaritan villagers (Jesus has probably travelled down the east side of the Jordan valley) did not welcome him. They sense that something dreadful is about to happen.

It is well known that Jews and Samaritans did not get on ([John 4:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4%3A9&version=NIV)), although there were ethnic ties between them. Jesus appears not to have shared this general prejudice and soon the gospel in the early church would spread into Samaritan territory ([Acts 8:4–8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+8%3A4%E2%80%938&version=NIV)). Yet in today’s story they want nothing to do with him, thus incurring the ire of James and John, the ‘sons of thunder’ ([Mark 3:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+3%3A17&version=NIV)). They are all for re-enacting Sodom and Gomorrah, or Elijah ([Gen 19; 1 Kings 18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Gen+19%3B+1+Kings+18&version=NIV)). It is good to be passionate about the Lord’s honour, but aggression and violence do not promote it. They earn Jesus’ rebuke – and another village welcomes him.

Clearly, James and John had an attitude and they knew how to use it. We should be concerned when similar attitudes are displayed in the contemporary church. When Christ is insulted (and it happens often) the temptation is strong to unleash the dogs of war and respond to insult with insult. Jesus knew this and for that reason he taught his disciples the discipline of absorbing insults and persecutions and returning good for evil ([Matt 5:38–48](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matt+5%3A38%E2%80%9348&version=NIV)). Anything else simply recycles bad attitudes and does nothing to overcome them. The ability to respond to evil with good is close to the heart of what being truly Christian is about.

‘Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.’ ([Rom 12:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Rom+12%3A21&version=NIV))

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## No buts, it’s got to be better

<https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W150811A2.mp3>

Today’s reading introduces us to three characters who nearly follow Jesus, but don’t quite make it. This audio meditation considers what went wrong.

[Transcript](https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W150811A2%20audio.pdf)

No buts, it’s got to be better

But. Three little letters. Three little letters that reverse, excuse and reduce.

Jesus, I will follow you, but I don’t fancy sleeping rough, if you don’t mind.

Jesus, I will follow you one day, but I need to wait until I come into my inheritance.

Jesus, I’d quite like to follow you, but first let me see if my family can talk me out of it.

What are your buts? Where do you reverse, excuse or reduce in your discipleship?

I’ll try to obey you but don’t expect me to do anything too radical.

I’ll follow you, but you need to make my life good.

I’ll serve you when I’m older but at the moment I’m busy establishing my career.

I’ll follow you one day but at the moment I’m busy raising my family.

I’d serve you if I was younger but what can I do at my age?

I’ll give you my loose change but I really do need that latest gadget.

I’ll forgive him but don’t expect me to love him.

Don’t reverse. Don’t excuse. Don’t reduce. Put your hand to the plough and don’t look back.

Helen Paynter for WordLive www.wordlive.org.uk© Scripture Union 2011

# Today in the Word – 9/20/19

# The One Thing

**Read:** [**Psalms 26**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+26%e2%80%9327)

#### Of David.

1Vindicate me, Lord,  
    for I have led a blameless life;  
I have trusted in the Lord  
    and have not faltered.  
2Test me, Lord, and try me,  
    examine my heart and my mind;  
3for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love  
    and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.

4I do not sit with the deceitful,  
    nor do I associate with hypocrites.  
5I abhor the assembly of evildoers  
    and refuse to sit with the wicked.  
6I wash my hands in innocence,  
    and go about your altar, Lord,  
7proclaiming aloud your praise  
    and telling of all your wonderful deeds.

8Lord, I love the house where you live,  
    the place where your glory dwells.  
9Do not take away my soul along with sinners,  
    my life with those who are bloodthirsty,  
10in whose hands are wicked schemes,  
    whose right hands are full of bribes.  
11I lead a blameless life;  
    deliver me and be merciful to me.

12My feet stand on level ground;  
    in the great congregation I will praise the Lord.

### Read: Psalm 27

#### Of David.

1The Lord is my light and my salvation—  
    whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life—  
    of whom shall I be afraid?

2When the wicked advance against me  
    to devour[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+26%e2%80%9327#fen-NIV-14288a)] me,  
it is my enemies and my foes  
    who will stumble and fall.  
3Though an army besiege me,  
    my heart will not fear;  
though war break out against me,  
    even then I will be confident.

4One thing I ask from the Lord,  
    this only do I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
    all the days of my life,  
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord  
    and to seek him in his temple.  
5For in the day of trouble  
    he will keep me safe in his dwelling;  
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent  
    and set me high upon a rock.

6Then my head will be exalted  
    above the enemies who surround me;  
at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;  
    I will sing and make music to the Lord.

7Hear my voice when I call, Lord;  
    be merciful to me and answer me.  
8My heart says of you, “Seek his face!”  
    Your face, Lord, I will seek.  
9Do not hide your face from me,  
    do not turn your servant away in anger;  
    you have been my helper.  
Do not reject me or forsake me,  
    God my Savior.  
10Though my father and mother forsake me,  
    the Lord will receive me.  
11Teach me your way, Lord;  
    lead me in a straight path  
    because of my oppressors.  
12Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,  
    for false witnesses rise up against me,  
    spouting malicious accusations.

13I remain confident of this:  
    I will see the goodness of the Lord  
    in the land of the living.  
14Wait for the Lord;  
    be strong and take heart  
    and wait for the Lord.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 27:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+26%e2%80%9327#en-NIV-14288) Or slander

According to a recent study by Smart Growth America, pedestrian fatalities are at a 30-year high. The main reason for this increase is distracted driving. Most people believe they are pretty good at multitasking. We think we can text, talk on the phone, and drive at the same time. This delusion has made it much more dangerous to cross the street. Sometimes we need to focus on what is most important.

One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life. Psalm 27:4

Throughout the Psalms, David is honest in his description of the trials and difficulties of life. In Psalm 27, he talks about enemies, hostile armies, war, oppression, and false accusers. When trials come, it can be easy to be distracted by them. We naturally hustle to put out this fire or that fire. We notice threats coming at us from different quarters and try to meet them. Yet, David reminds us that only one thing is really necessary.

David declares that his one passion is not to defeat his enemy or silence the false accuser, as great as those things would be. Instead, he says, “One thing I ask from the Lord​, and this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord​ all the days of my life” (v. 4). Most of all, he desires intimacy with the Father. He longs to be in God’s presence where there is safety, protection, and joy (vv. 5–6).

Time in the presence of God allows David to meet his trials with the proper perspective. He knows there is no person or situation that he needs to fear because God is with him (v. 1). Confident that God will hear his cries for help, David is able to “be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord​” (v. 14).

### Apply the Word

Do you have trouble keeping your eyes on God? When Peter got out of the boat to walk toward Jesus on the water, he did pretty well until “he saw the wind” and began to sink (Matt. 14:29–30). We can become so focused on our difficulties that we take our eyes off of Jesus. But David reminds us in Psalm 27 to keep our eyes on God.

### Pray with Us

Moody’s chief financial officer, Ken Heulitt, oversees Moody’s finances, coming from donors from all over the country and even from abroad. Will you pray for enduring discernment in Ken’s trusted leadership role at MBI?

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/20/19

# In the Vine

 **Read:** [**John 15:1–8**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/20/in-the-vine)

### The Vine and the Branches

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=John+15%3A1%E2%80%938#fen-NIV-26702a)] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

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

#### Footnotes:

1. [John 15:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=John+15%3A1%E2%80%938#en-NIV-26702) The Greek for he prunes also means he cleans.

No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. [John 15:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=John+15%3A4)

One spring after a particularly dreary winter during which she helped a family member through a long illness, Emma found encouragement each time she walked past a cherry tree near her home in Cambridge, England. Bursting out at the top of the pink blossoms grew blossoms of white. A clever gardener had grafted into the tree a branch of white flowers. When Emma passed the unusual tree, she thought of Jesus’s words about being the Vine and His followers the branches (John 15:1–8).

By calling Himself the Vine, Jesus was speaking of an image familiar to the Israelites in the Old Testament, for there the vine symbolized God’s people (Psalm 80:8–9; Hosea 10:1). Jesus extended this symbolism to Himself, saying He was the Vine and that His followers were grafted into Him as branches. And as they remained in Him, receiving His nourishment and strength, they would bear fruit (John 15:5).

As Emma supported her family member, she needed the reminder that she was connected to Jesus. Seeing the white flowers among the pink ones gave her a visual prompt of the truth that as she remained in the Vine, she gained nourishment through Him.

When we who believe in Jesus embrace the idea of being as close to Him as a branch is to a vine, our faith is strengthened and enriched.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How are you receiving spiritual nourishment from Jesus? What will help you remain in the Vine?

Jesus, thank You for helping me to remain in You. May I find the peace, hope, and strength I need today.

#### Insight

The vineyard metaphor is used to describe the relationship between God and Israel (Psalm 80:8–9; Isaiah 5:1–7; 27:2–6). God expected His people to produce “a crop of good grapes, but [they] yielded only bad fruit” (Isaiah 5:2).

Jesus also spoke of a spurned vineyard owner who wasn’t given his share of the crop at harvest time (Matthew 21:33–43). He warned the Jews that God wants a “people who will produce its fruit” (v. 43). We can’t bear fruit if we’re not connected to the Vine. Jesus said that when we bear fruit we demonstrate we’re His disciples (John 15:8). The Holy Spirit’s work produces good fruit in us (Galatians 5:22–23) and causes us to become more and more like Christ (Romans 8:29).

# God Calling – 9/20/19

# Taste and Trust

**O taste and see that the Lord is good.  Psalm 34:8**

He is good. Trust in Him. Know that all is well.  Say "God is good.  God is good."  Just leave in His Hands the present and the future, knowing only that He is good.  He can bring order out of chaos, good out of evil, peace out of turmoil.  God is good.

I and My Father are one.  One in desire to do good.  For God to do good to His children is for Him to share His goodness with them.  God is good, anxious to share His goodness, and good things, with you and He will do this.

Trust and be not afraid.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.  Psalm 100:5

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/21/19

# The Missionary’s Predestined Purpose



Now the Lord says, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant… —[Isaiah 49:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+49%3A5)

The first thing that happens after we recognize our election by God in Christ Jesus is the destruction of our preconceived ideas, our narrow-minded thinking, and all of our other allegiances— we are turned solely into servants of God’s own purpose. The entire human race was created to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Sin has diverted the human race onto another course, but it has not altered God’s purpose to the slightest degree. And when we are born again we are brought into the realization of God’s great purpose for the human race, namely, that He created us for Himself. This realization of our election by God is the most joyful on earth, and we must learn to rely on this tremendous creative purpose of God. The first thing God will do is force the interests of the whole world through the channel of our hearts. The love of God, and even His very nature, is introduced into us. And we see the nature of Almighty God purely focused in [John 3:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:16)— “For God so loved the world….”

We must continually keep our soul open to the fact of God’s creative purpose, and never confuse or cloud it with our own intentions. If we do, God will have to force our intentions aside no matter how much it may hurt. A missionary is created for the purpose of being God’s servant, one in whom God is glorified. Once we realize that it is through the salvation of Jesus Christ that we are made perfectly fit for the purpose of God, we will understand why Jesus Christ is so strict and relentless in His demands. He demands absolute righteousness from His servants, because He has put into them the very nature of God.

Beware lest you forget God’s purpose for your life.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

To read the Bible according to God’s providential order in your circumstances is the only way to read it, viz., in the blood and passion of personal life. Disciples Indeed, 387 R

# CCEL – 9/21/19

**We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.**—[ROM. 8:28.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.28)

Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.—Ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good.

All things are yours; whether . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.—All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

[Psa. 76:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.76.html" \l "Ps.76.10). -[Gen. 50:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.50.html" \l "Gen.50.20).[I Cor. 3:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.3.html" \l "iCor.3.21). -[II Cor. 4:15-17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html" \l "iiCor.4.15).[Jas. 1:2-4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.2).

“I will rejoice over them to do them good.” **[Jeremiah 32:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.32.html" \l "Jer.32.41)**

How heart-cheering to the believer is the delight which God has in his saints! We cannot see any reason in ourselves why the Lord should take pleasure in us; we cannot take delight in ourselves, for we often have to groan, being burdened; conscious of our sinfulness, and deploring our unfaithfulness; and we fear that God’s people cannot take much delight in us, for they must perceive so much of our imperfections and our follies, that they may rather lament our infirmities than admire our graces. But we love to dwell upon this transcendent truth, this glorious mystery: that as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so does the Lord rejoice over us. We do not read anywhere that God delighteth in the cloud-capped mountains, or the sparkling stars, but we do read that he delighteth in the habitable parts of the earth, and that his delights are with the sons of men. We do not find it written that even angels give his soul delight; nor doth he say, concerning cherubim and seraphim, “Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee”; but he does say all that to poor fallen creatures like ourselves, debased and depraved by sin, but saved, exalted, and glorified by his grace. In what strong language he expresses his delight in his people! Who could have conceived of the eternal One as bursting forth into a song? Yet it is written, “He will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.” As he looked upon the world he had made, he said, “It is very good”; but when he beheld those who are the purchase of Jesus’ blood, his own chosen ones, it seemed as if the great heart of the Infinite could restrain itself no longer, but overflowed in divine exclamations of joy. Should not we utter our grateful response to such a marvellous declaration of his love, and sing, “I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation?”

# Word Live – 9/21/19

# Sitting comfortably?

## Prepare

Comfort isn’t always the friend of Christianity. Instead of embracing change and challenge, I opt for familiarity and ease. Now is the time to hear the call of Jesus to leave what we’re doing and follow him. Are we ready?



## Bible passage: Luke 9:57–62

##### The Cost of Following Jesus

57 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

58 Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

59 He said to another man, “Follow me.”

   But the man replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

60 Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

61 Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family.”

62 Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

## Explore

**Priority of being a disciple**

The celebrated theologian JI Packer once described the malaise of western Christianity in a book called Hot Tub Religion. It’s a collection of essays about the dangers of a faith that is cosy, comfy and cheap. Jesus won’t have any of it. In a series of staccato encounters, Jesus stresses the priority of being a disciple. And they leave us feeling uncomfortable.

**Not a wistful pursuit**

The first conversation represents faith as idealism and Jesus is quick to disabuse the enquirer’s romantic viewpoint. Discipleship is not a wistful pursuit; it’s for realists who know what they are getting into. Jesus is homeless, and his followers should expect the same.

**Uncompromising**

The second involves the obligation to bury the dead. In the culture of the time, burial was a two-stage ritual: the initial burial of the body followed a year later by the interment of the bones, a lengthy process. He is told that his commitment to Christ takes priority even over this. The third is about tying up loose ends with family and Jesus’ response is again uncompromising.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

Jesus wants us to count the cost, assess the impact, before following him. How will this affect me today?

## Deeper Bible study

Here we refer to the circles of disciples mentioned in the Introduction to these notes (page 95). There was an innermost core of disciples – Peter, James and John – and Jesus held them close. Around them was a more extensive group of men and women who gave up their regular lives and accompanied him on his missionary journeys. Their lifestyle was strenuous and embraced a degree of homelessness, for at least that part of the year in which they were on the road (v 58). Then there were disciples who remained in their towns and villages and acted as the support systems for the itinerant workers on mission. Discipleship was worked out in these different ways.

In this passage we are introduced to three men who wished to join themselves to those who travelled with Jesus, moving from the settled group into the itinerants. Jesus had no intention of making it easy for them. In effect he tried to put them off. He knew they would find it hard and perhaps he understood that they would prove more hindrance than help. His provocative questions were intended to penetrate beyond their surface, possibly romantic, enthusiasm and to test their resolve. To turn back having set one’s hand to the plough would help no one (v 62). Today we might do the same with those who feel themselves called to pastoral or missionary service: we put people off to see if they bounce back.

What Jesus does contrasts with what we sometimes do. We might lessen the demands of discipleship to recruit people to the kingdom. We might emphasise its joys rather than its cost. Yet does this really work? Jesus did not make grace cheap or entry into the kingdom easy. What counts is not an easy beginning but endurance to the end ([Matt 24:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matt+24%3A13&version=NIV)). Those who are truly saved will demonstrate this through perseverance.

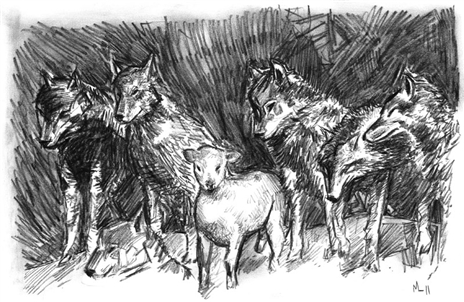
‘Make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble.’ ([2 Pet 1:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Pet+1%3A10&version=NIV))

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## Background: Significant places

In the early days of his ministry, it was in the towns of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum that most of Jesus’ miracles were done. In prophetic style, Jesus therefore pronounces woes on them for failing to believe in him or to respond to the good news of salvation he brought.   
  
Their lack of response, despite seeing the wonderful works of healing Jesus did, stands in sharp contrast to the Samaritans, who when they saw the signs that Philip performed, ‘all paid close attention to what he said’ ([Acts 8:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%208:7&version=TNIV)), believed and were baptised (v 12).   
  
**Capernaum**This town, which means ‘village of Nahum’, seems to have been Jesus’ home and base of operations during his early ministry. It was near the border of the Jordan and because of its strategic location as a frontier town had a small Roman garrison (see [Luke 7:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%207:2&version=TNIV)).   
  
Mark refers to Jesus coming home to Capernaum ([2:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%202:1&version=TNIV)), and he is said to have performed many miracles there ([Mark 1:23, 31,34; 2:2–12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%201:23,%2031,34;%202:2-12&version=TNIV)).     
  
**Chorazin**The church father and biblical scholar Jerome (c ad 347–419) located this town 2 miles from Capernaum, on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee. Probably the ruins of Khirbet Kerazeh on the basalt hills north of Capernaum are of this town, which was clearly important.   
  
A carved seat with an inscription has been found in an ancient synagogue there. According to the Jewish Talmud the town was famous for its wheat.  
  
**Bethsaida**According to John’s Gospel, this was the home town of Peter, Andrew and Philip ([John 1:44; 12:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201:44;%2012:21&version=TNIV)). The Gospel of Mark records that a blind man was healed there, while Luke mentions that the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 took place in its vicinity ([Luke 9:10–17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%209:10-17&version=TNIV)).  
  
According to the Jewish historian Josephus, Bethsaida, originally just a fishing village, was enlarged and beautified by Philip the tetrarch (4 bc – ad 34; see [Luke 3:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%203:1&version=TNIV)).

## Like a lamb amongst wolves



Consider what Jesus meant by using this imagery.

## Setting out on mission

<https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W160811A21.mp3>

Two members of the 72 set out on their missionary journey!

[Transcript](https://www.wordlive.org/uploads/wordlight/resources/W160811A2%20audio.pdf)

Setting out on mission

Silas: It’s you and me, then, Josh.

Josh: Looks like it.

Silas: Where are we going?

Josh: Er, it says on the list ‘Beit Zera’.

Silas: Where’s that?

Josh: About half a day’s walk. What’s that?

Silas: My lunch.

Josh: Silas, Jesus said...

Silas: I know. I’ll leave it. But what am I going to eat?

Josh: I’m sure something will turn up.

Silas: I’ll take some money, just in case.

Josh: Silas, Jesus said no money, no bag, nothing.

Silas: (sighs) Okay... Why are we doing it like this anyway?

Josh: It’s a trust exercise. We have to trust that God can provide for us.

Silas: God has provided for me – my lunch!

Josh: Look, if we can’t trust God for our needs, how are we going to trust him when we have to preach the Kingdom and heal the sick? Come on, we need to get off.

Silas: Okay, let’s go. (Yells) Bye, Dinah! Bye, Simeon, Bye ...

Josh: Silas! What are you doing? Jesus said we weren’t to talk to anyone on the way!

Silas: What? That’s a lame rule.

Josh: From now on, our focus is Beit Zera, no distractions, no interruptions. Got it?

Silas: Yes. I suppose if I did stop to talk, we’d probably never get there.

Josh: You said it. (Pause)

Silas: Remind me – what do we do when we get there?

Josh: Jesus said we look for a person of peace.

Silas: And that is...?

Josh: Someone who’ll welcome us, listen to us and serve us.

Silas: Don’t we just preach to everyone? I like preaching.

Josh: No, Jesus was very specific: a person of peace. If we find someone like that, we stay. If not, we don’t.

Silas: And this ‘person of peace’, they’re going to feed us, right?

Josh: (smiling) Silas, for both our sakes, they’d better.

Richard England for WordLive www.wordlive.org.uk© Scripture Union 2011

# Today in the Word – 9/21/19

# Hear My Cry

**Read:** [**Psalms 28**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+28)

#### Of David.

1To you, Lord, I call;  
    you are my Rock,  
    do not turn a deaf ear to me.  
For if you remain silent,  
    I will be like those who go down to the pit.  
2Hear my cry for mercy  
    as I call to you for help,  
as I lift up my hands  
    toward your Most Holy Place.

3Do not drag me away with the wicked,  
    with those who do evil,  
who speak cordially with their neighbors  
    but harbor malice in their hearts.  
4Repay them for their deeds  
    and for their evil work;  
repay them for what their hands have done  
    and bring back on them what they deserve.

5Because they have no regard for the deeds of the Lord  
    and what his hands have done,  
he will tear them down  
    and never build them up again.

6Praise be to the Lord,  
    for he has heard my cry for mercy.  
7The Lord is my strength and my shield;  
    my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.  
My heart leaps for joy,  
    and with my song I praise him.

8The Lord is the strength of his people,  
    a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.  
9Save your people and bless your inheritance;  
    be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Silence can be a powerful weapon. During conflict, we might use silence as a way of defense or retreat. This is true not only in human relationships but also in our relationship with God. The Psalms model for us ways to engage with God even in the midst of intense suffering.

The LORD is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one. Psalm 28:8

As David faced a trial, he begged God to listen and act. “To you, Lord​, I call; you are my Rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me” (v. 1). David had not been silent with God and asked God to not be silent with him. He is persistent in his prayer, lifting up his hands toward the Holy of Holies (v. 2). We can be thankful that we have a God who does care and who listens to our prayers and responds, even if it does not feel like it in the moment. David saw people speak peacefully with their neighbors, but “harbor malice in their hearts” (v. 3). Their friendly disposition was really just a front to hide their malicious intent. These people were busy doing evil and did not care about the Lord (vv. 4–5). David asked that God would “bring back on them what they de- serve” (v. 4). He longed for God’s justice.

The tone of the psalm changes abruptly in verse 6. David resounds with praise to the Lord for answered prayer. It seems some time has gone by and David is able to rejoice in what God has done. The depth of his despair is matched by the exuberance of his joy. He closes the psalm by focusing on the people of Israel as a whole. He asks God to save, bless, and guide Israel (v. 9). He wants for his community the kind of answered prayer he has received personally.

### Apply the Word

When we experience hardships, it may seem like God is not listening. We may be tempted to go silent. After all, if it feels like God is not listening, why keep praying? But David models a way for us to engage with God during difficult times. Like David, you can pray, “Do not turn a deaf ear to me . . . hear my cry for mercy” (vv. 1–2).

### Pray with Us

In today’s Psalm 28, King David sets a good example of prayer for his people and his community. We also focus our prayers on the Moody family in Chicago, Spokane, and Plymouth, as well as our donors and friends who make our ministries possible.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/21/19

# Name of Names

 **Read:** [**Exodus 6:1–8**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/21/name-of-names)

6 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country.”

2God also said to Moses, “I am the Lord. 3I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Exodus+6%3A1%E2%80%938#fen-NIV-1659a)] but by my name the Lord[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Exodus+6%3A1%E2%80%938#fen-NIV-1659b)] I did not make myself fully known to them. 4I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they resided as foreigners. 5Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant.

6“Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. 7I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. 8And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.’”

#### Footnotes:

1. [Exodus 6:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Exodus+6%3A1%E2%80%938#en-NIV-1659) Hebrew El-Shaddai
2. [Exodus 6:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Exodus+6%3A1%E2%80%938#en-NIV-1659) See note at 3:15.

God exalted [Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. [Philippians 2:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Philippians+2%3A9)

The name of Antonio Stradivari (1644–1737) is legendary in the world of music. His violins, cellos, and violas are so treasured for their craftsmanship and clarity of sound that many have been given their own names. One of them, for instance, is known as the Messiah-Salabue Stradivarius. After violinist Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) played it, he wrote, “The sound of the Strad, that unique ‘Messie,’ turns up again and again in my memory, with its combined sweetness and grandeur.”

Even the name and sound of a Stradivarius, however, doesn’t deserve to be compared to the work of a far greater Source. From Moses to Jesus, the God of gods introduces Himself with a name above all names. For our sake, He wants the wisdom and work of His own hand to be recognized, valued, and celebrated with the sound of music (Exodus 6:1; 15:1–2).

Yet this deliverance of strength in response to the groans of a troubled people was only a beginning. Who could have foreseen that, by the weakness of crucified hands, He would one day leave a legacy of eternal and infinite value? Could anyone have predicted the resulting wonder and grandeur of music sung in praise of the name of One who died—bearing the insult of our sin and rejection—to show how much He loves us?

By:  [Mart DeHaan](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

#### Reflect & Pray

In what ways can you see the hand of a Master patiently shaping your life to put His name on you? What is He doing today to remind you that you’re His child?

Father in heaven, please do something in and through us today that helps others see that we owe everything to You.

#### Insight

As God had instructed, Moses asked Pharaoh for some time off to sacrifice to God (Exodus 5:1). Pharaoh responded by worsening the Hebrews’ workload (vv. 2–9). The Hebrews directed their anger over this injustice at Moses and Aaron (vv. 19–21). Moses, in turn, questioned God: “Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me?” (v. 22). God responded, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh” (6:1). He also reminded Moses that while He didn’t reveal His Name to Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, He did share it with him (3:13–15).

To learn more about the time of Moses in Egypt visit [christianuniversity.org/OT216-02.](https://christianuniversity.org/OT216-02)

# God Calling – 9/21/19

# See The Father

**Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.  - John 14:8**

My children, have I been so long time with you, coming to you, speaking to you and yet have you not known the Father.

Your Father is the God and Controller of a mighty Universe.  But He is as I am.  All the Love and the Strength and Beauty you have seen in Me are in My Father.

If you see that, and know Him and Me as we really are, then that sufficeth you - is really sufficient for you - completes your life - satisfies you - is all you need.

See the Father, see Me, and it sufficeth you.  This is Love in abundance.  Joy in abundance.  All you need.

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Phillip?  He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.  - John 14:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/22/19

# The Missionary’s Master and Teacher



You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am ….I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master… —[John 13:13, 16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+13%3A13%2C+16)

To have a master and teacher is not the same thing as being mastered and taught. Having a master and teacher means that there is someone who knows me better than I know myself, who is closer than a friend, and who understands the remotest depths of my heart and is able to satisfy them fully. It means having someone who has made me secure in the knowledge that he has met and solved all the doubts, uncertainties, and problems in my mind. To have a master and teacher is this and nothing less— “…for One is your Teacher, the Christ…” ([Matthew 23:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+23:8)).

Our Lord never takes measures to make me do what He wants. Sometimes I wish God would master and control me to make me do what He wants, but He will not. And at other times I wish He would leave me alone, and He does not.

“You call Me Teacher and Lord…”— but is He? Teacher, Master, and Lord have little place in our vocabulary. We prefer the words Savior, Sanctifier, and Healer. The only word that truly describes the experience of being mastered is love, and we know little about love as God reveals it in His Word. The way we use the word obey is proof of this. In the Bible, obedience is based on a relationship between equals; for example, that of a son with his father. Our Lord was not simply God’s servant— He was His Son. “…though He was a Son,yet He learned obedience…” ([Hebrews 5:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+5:8)). If we are consciously aware that we are being mastered, that idea itself is proof that we have no master. If that is our attitude toward Jesus, we are far away from having the relationship He wants with us. He wants us in a relationship where He is so easily our Master and Teacher that we have no conscious awareness of it— a relationship where all we know is that we are His to obey.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We are all based on a conception of importance, either our own importance, or the importance of someone else; Jesus tells us to go and teach based on the revelation of His importance. “All power is given unto Me.… Go ye therefore ….”  So Send I You, 1325 R

# CCEL – 9/22/19

**My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.**—[PSA. 104:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.104.html" \l "Ps.104.34)

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.—For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?

My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.—One pearl of great price.—The prince of the kings of the earth.

His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.—The head over all things.—He is the head of the body, the church.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers.—He could not be hid.

His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.—Never man spake like this man.

His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.—Make thy face to shine upon thy servant.—Lord, lift thou up the light thy countenance upon us.

[Song 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.3). -[Psa. 89:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.89.html" \l "Ps.89.6).[Song 5:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.10). -[Matt. 13:46](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.13.html" \l "Matt.13.46). -[Rev. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.1.html" \l "Rev.1.5).[Song 5:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.11). -[Eph. 1:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.22). -[Col. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.18).[Song 5:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.13). -[Mark 7:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.7.html" \l "Mark.7.24).[Song 5:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html#Song.5.13). -[John 7:46](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.7.html" \l "John.7.46).[Song 5:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.15). -[Psa. 31:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html" \l "Ps.31.16). -[Psa. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.6).

“Let Israel rejoice in him.” [Psalm 149:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.149.html" \l "Ps.149.2)

Be glad of heart, O believer, but take care that thy gladness has its spring in the Lord. Thou hast much cause for gladness in thy God, for thou canst sing with David, “God, my exceeding joy.” Be glad that the Lord reigneth, that Jehovah is King! Rejoice that he sits upon the throne, and ruleth all things! Every attribute of God should become a fresh ray in the sunlight of our gladness. That he is wise should make us glad, knowing as we do our own foolishness. That he is mighty, should cause us to rejoice who tremble at our weakness. That he is everlasting, should always be a theme of joy when we know that we wither as the grass. That he is unchanging, should perpetually yield us a song, since we change every hour. That he is full of grace, that he is overflowing with it, and that this grace in covenant he has given to us; that it is ours to cleanse us, ours to keep us, ours to sanctify us, ours to perfect us, ours to bring us to glory—all this should tend to make us glad in him. This gladness in God is as a deep river; we have only as yet touched its brink, we know a little of its clear sweet, heavenly streams, but onward the depth is greater, and the current more impetuous in its joy. The Christian feels that he may delight himself not only in what God is, but also in all that God has done in the past. The Psalms show us that God’s people in olden times were wont to think much of God’s actions, and to have a song concerning each of them. So let God’s people now rehearse the deeds of the Lord! Let them tell of his mighty acts, and “sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously.” Nor let them ever cease to sing, for as new mercies flow to them day by day, so should their gladness in the Lord’s loving acts in providence and in grace show itself in continued thanksgiving. Be glad ye children of Zion and rejoice in the Lord your God.

# Word Live – 9/22/19

# Living on a prayer

## Prepare

‘We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed’ ([2 Corinthians 4:8,9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4%3A8%2C9&version=NIV)). Use Paul’s words to sound a note of reality in your prayers.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)



#### Psalm 70

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

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

2 May those who seek my life   
       be put to shame and confusion;   
       may all who desire my ruin   
       be turned back in disgrace.

3 May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!"   
       turn back because of their shame.

4 But may all who seek you   
       rejoice and be glad in you;   
       may those who love your salvation always say,   
       "Let God be exalted!"

5 Yet I am poor and needy;   
       come quickly to me, O God.   
       You are my help and my deliverer;   
       O LORD, do not delay.

## Explore

**Feeling powerless**

This short psalm has been described by one scholar as being in the form of a sigh. A kind of resignation in the face of opposition. The psalmist serves God in some way and yet is in deep need. People are out to hurt him and mock him. And he feels powerless. In fact, he admits to being poor and needy (v 5). All he has in his defence is a prayer to God who ‘is great’ (v 4).

**Trusting God anyway**

Like so many of the psalms, lament is given a voice and is heard. Whilst we tend to avoid expressing frustration and fear in worship, the psalms are awash with the ambiguities of our spiritual lives. Some commentators have wondered if the psalmist officiated at the Temple and, having devoted his life to God, feels let down. Presenting a bold faith in public but inwardly sighing with disappointment. It’s as though he’s saying, ‘This shouldn’t be happening to me, but I will trust you anyway.’

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

We worship a God who is all-powerful and all-loving and yet live in a world where evil and injustice often win the day. In the spirit of this psalm, offer a lament to the Lord, giving voice to your protest and disquiet.

## Deeper Bible study

These opening words will be familiar to many because of their place in the liturgies of some Western churches. Much of this psalm has in fact already appeared as the final verses of Psalm 40. Like many good prayers or hymns, it is worth repeating.

Although the superscription of the psalm says ‘Of David’, this could mean that it belonged to David’s collection rather than that it was composed by him. We can imagine times in David’s career when it might indeed have applied, but, as with many psalms, no context is given. It can thus be used by many different people for many different occasions. We can use it to give expression to our urgently felt needs. The psalm makes no bones about the need for help and swift deliverance. The ‘saving’ that is sought (eg v 1) is not the ultimate salvation of Christian hope (though this is not excluded) but rather the temporal and immediate deliverance that is needed from the hostile intentions of others. There is a lot of this in the psalms, more perhaps than most of us are apt to experience in our ordinary lives. However, there is no doubt that those who hold positions of significant leadership often have to contend with more than their fair share. Others might wonder why anyone is foolish enough to want to lead. For some, though, it is their vocation.

Is it reverent to ask God to get a move on? Apparently so. Or at least, God does not mind if we do. Urgent language expresses how deep we feel our need to be (v 5), our sense of yearning and the importance of what we believe to be at stake. Furthermore, ‘The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness’ ([2 Pet 3:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Pet+3%3A9&version=NIV)). We can ask God to be true to God’s own self.

‘He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”’ ([Rev 22:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Rev+22%3A20&version=NIV))

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

# Today in the Word – 9/22/19

# The Lord Is King

**Read:** [**Psalm 29**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29)

#### A psalm of David.

1Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings,  
    ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
2Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
    worship the Lord in the splendor of his[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#fen-NIV-14311a)] holiness.

3The voice of the Lord is over the waters;  
    the God of glory thunders,  
    the Lord thunders over the mighty waters.  
4The voice of the Lord is powerful;  
    the voice of the Lord is majestic.  
5The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;  
    the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.  
6He makes Lebanon leap like a calf,  
    Sirion[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#fen-NIV-14315b)] like a young wild ox.  
7The voice of the Lord strikes  
    with flashes of lightning.  
8The voice of the Lord shakes the desert;  
    the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh.  
9The voice of the Lord twists the oaks[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#fen-NIV-14318c)]  
    and strips the forests bare.  
And in his temple all cry, “Glory!”

10The Lord sits enthroned over the flood;  
    the Lord is enthroned as King forever.  
11The Lord gives strength to his people;  
    the Lord blesses his people with peace.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 29:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#en-NIV-14311) Or Lord with the splendor of
2. [Psalm 29:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#en-NIV-14315) That is, Mount Hermon
3. [Psalm 29:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+29#en-NIV-14318) Or Lord makes the deer give birth

According to the National Geographic, about a 100 lightning bolts strike the earth’s surface about every second. Despite its commonality, the facts about lightning still boggle the mind. Each bolt of lightning can contain up to one billion volts of electricity. These bolts of energy streak toward the earth at around 200,000 mph, heating the air to five times hotter than the surface of the sun. Lightning is certainly an illuminating example of the power of God.

The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever. Psalm 29:10

In the ancient world around Israel, many cultures worshiped storm deities. The Canaanites worshiped Baal, the Babylonians worshiped Marduk, and the Assyrians worshiped Asshur. In Psalm 29, David takes this storm imagery and applies it to the Lord. He argues that thunderstorms demonstrate the Lord’s power and should not be attributed to Baal or any other god.

The psalm begins with a call to all heavenly beings to “Ascribe to the Lord​ glory and strength” (v. 1). The heart of the psalm is structured around seven statements David makes about the “voice of the Lord​” (vv. 3–9). He pictures the Lord’s voice thundering over the waters, breaking the mighty cedars of Lebanon, shaking the desert, and stripping the forests of their leaves. The imagery is mighty. God’s power is untamable and demands respect.

Because of the Lord’s power, the final two verses describe the Lord taking up His throne and reigning as King forever (vv. 10–11). Despite the Lord’s destructive power celebrated in this psalm, the poem ends with the line, “the Lord​ blesses his people with peace” (v. 11). He uses His power to bring wholeness and well-being to His people. The voice of the Lord is ultimately the voice of peace for those who acknowledge and submit to His reign.

### Apply the Word

How long has it been since you were overwhelmed by God’s greatness? In our churches today, we sometimes overemphasize God as our friend. While there is a sense in which that is true, this psalm reminds us not to take our relationship with God too casually. Today, let’s remember that “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord​ Almighty” (Isa. 6:3).

### Pray with Us

Lord, we are overwhelmed by your majesty and glory, shining through the words of the psalmist! Help us always remember how glorious you are and how great are your deeds in all the world. Keep us humble and bless us with peace.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/22/19

# Growing to Know

 **Read:** [**Philippians 4:10–13**](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/22/growing-to-know)

### Thanks for Their Gifts

10I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

I can do all this through him who gives me strength. [Philippians 4:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Philippians+4%3A13)

“You’re going to be an exchange student!” I was seventeen and thrilled to hear I was approved to study in Germany. But it was only three months before my departure, and I had never taken a class in German.

The days that followed found me cramming—studying for hours and even writing words on my hands to memorize them.

Months later I was in a classroom in Germany, discouraged because I didn’t know more of the language. That day a teacher gave me wise advice. “Learning a language is like climbing a sand dune. Sometimes you feel like you’re not getting anywhere. But just keep going and you will.”

Sometimes I reflect on that insight when I consider what it means to grow as a follower of Jesus. The apostle Paul recalled, “I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.” Even for Paul, personal peace didn’t happen overnight. It was something he grew into. Paul shares the secret of his progress: “I can do all this through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:12–13).

Life has its challenges. But as we turn to the One who has “overcome the world” (John 16:33), we discover not only that He’s faithful to get us through but also that nothing matters more than closeness to Him. He gives us His peace, helps us to trust, and empowers us to go the distance as we walk with Him.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

In what ways will you focus on Jesus today? How can you encourage others to draw near to Him?

Thank You for the peace You give me as I turn to You, Jesus. Help me to stay very close to You today!

#### Insight

In Philippians 4:7–19, Paul describes a paradox. On the one hand, he lived each day with peace and a sense of having “enough,” confident that God would give exactly what was needed (v. 11). On the other hand, Paul describes believers’ complete dependence on God and others and urges them to honestly name and prayerfully lift up their needs (vv. 7, 9, 19). The apostle also alludes to a further paradox: despite having all we need in God, His abundance and peace is best experienced in community, with fellow believers who share in each other’s joy and sorrows. Despite maintaining that he was not "in need” (v. 11), Paul was profoundly grateful for other believers’ willingness to share in his struggles (vv. 10, 14). Elsewhere he elaborates on these ideas by describing the believing community as an interdependent body where each person is needed (1 Corinthians 12:12–27).

# God Calling – 9/22/19

# Joy Tribute

Jesus, Our Lord, we Thee adore.

Sing unto Me from a glad heart.  Sing and praise My Holy Name.  Praise is man's joy-tribute to Me, and as you praise, thrills of joy surge through your being, and you learn something of the joy of the Heavenly Host.

Sing unto him a new song, play skillfully with a loud noise.  For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.  Psalm 33:3-4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/23/19

# The Missionary’s Goal



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

In our natural life our ambitions change as we grow, but in the Christian life the goal is given at the very beginning, and the beginning and the end are exactly the same, namely, our Lord Himself. We start with Christ and we end with Him— “…till we all come…to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ…” ([Ephesians 4:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4:13)), not simply to our own idea of what the Christian life should be. The goal of the missionary is to do God’s will, not to be useful or to win the lost. A missionary is useful and he does win the lost, but that is not his goal. His goal is to do the will of his Lord.

In our Lord’s life, Jerusalem was the place where He reached the culmination of His Father’s will upon the cross, and unless we go there with Jesus we will have no friendship or fellowship with Him. Nothing ever diverted our Lord on His way to Jerusalem. He never hurried through certain villages where He was persecuted, or lingered in others where He was blessed. Neither gratitude nor ingratitude turned our Lord even the slightest degree away from His purpose to go “up to Jerusalem.”

“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master” ([Matthew 10:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10:24)). In other words, the same things that happened to our Lord will happen to us on our way to our “Jerusalem.” There will be works of God exhibited through us, people will get blessed, and one or two will show gratitude while the rest will show total ingratitude, but nothing must divert us from going “up to [our] Jerusalem.”

“…there they crucified Him…” ([Luke 23:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+23:33)). That is what happened when our Lord reached Jerusalem, and that event is the doorway to our salvation. The saints, however, do not end in crucifixion; by the Lord’s grace they end in glory. In the meantime our watchword should be summed up by each of us saying, “I too go ‘up to Jerusalem.’ ”

**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 – 9/23/19

**Our God hath not forsaken us.**—[EZRA 9:9.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezra.9.html" \l "Ezra.9.9)

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.—If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.—Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.—Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.

[I Pet. 4:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.12). -[Heb. 12:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.7).[Deut. 13:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.13.html" \l "Deut.13.3).[I Sam. 12:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.12.html" \l "iSam.12.22). -[Isa. 49:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.15). -[Psa. 146:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.146.html" \l "Ps.146.5).[Luke 18:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.18.html" \l "Luke.18.7).

“Accepted in the beloved.” [Ephesians 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.6)

What a state of privilege! It includes our justification before God, but the term “acceptance” in the Greek means more than that. It signifies that we are the objects of divine complacence, nay, even of divine delight. How marvellous that we, worms, mortals, sinners, should be the objects of divine love! But it is only “in the beloved.” Some Christians seem to be accepted in their own experience, at least, that is their apprehension. When their spirit is lively, and their hopes bright, they think God accepts them, for they feel so high, so heavenly-minded, so drawn above the earth! But when their souls cleave to the dust, they are the victims of the fear that they are no longer accepted. If they could but see that all their high joys do not exalt them, and all their low despondencies do not really depress them in their Father’s sight, but that they stand accepted in One who never alters, in One who is always the beloved of God, always perfect, always without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, how much happier they would be, and how much more they would honour the Saviour! Rejoice then, believer, in this: thou art accepted “in the beloved.” Thou lookest within, and thou sayest, “There is nothing acceptable here!” But look at Christ, and see if there is not everything acceptable there. Thy sins trouble thee; but God has cast thy sins behind his back, and thou art accepted in the Righteous One. Thou hast to fight with corruption, and to wrestle with temptation, but thou art already accepted in him who has overcome the powers of evil. The devil tempts thee; be of good cheer, he cannot destroy thee, for thou art accepted in him who has broken Satan’s head. Know by full assurance thy glorious standing. Even glorified souls are not more accepted than thou art. They are only accepted in heaven “in the beloved,” and thou art even now accepted in Christ after the same manner.

# Word Live – 9/23/19

# Go, I am sending you out

## Prepare

Ever been to a party or visited a church where everyone is in a group, apart from you? You probably felt isolated, awkward and unwanted. Is Jesus sending us out of our comfort zones and into new environments?



## Bible passage: Luke 10:1–24

##### Jesus Sends Out the Seventytwo

1After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. 3Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. 4Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

5"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. 7Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

8"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. 9Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' 10But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 11'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' 12I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

13"Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

16"He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

17The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

18He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. 20However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

21At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

22"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

23Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. 24For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

## Explore

**Cherishing the status quo**

It’s generally easier to stay put. Remain where we are, in the same house, with the same friends and let our roots go long and deep. Leaving, moving, going, all signal upheaval and a change to the status quo we all cherish. But Jesus has a different agenda for his disciples.

**Go...and go simply**

Parts of this reading are identical to [9:1–6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV), where Jesus sends out the twelve with his authority to proclaim and demonstrate that authority. The instructions we read are given to a larger group of 72, but it’s the same imperative to go and show that God’s kingdom has arrived. And to go simply. Without money, accessories or extra clothes.

**Vulnerability and simplicity**

Yet again, Jesus makes his disciples uncomfortable and we feel it ourselves. Without delay, the disciples are to travel lightly, announce the message Jesus has given them and take care to speak only to the people who are interested (v 10). It’s the same emphasis on vulnerability and simplicity that we have seen in earlier readings.

[Gethin Russell-Jones](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/R-S/3527737.id)

## Respond

Apologies for the mixed metaphors, but we instinctively build nests and sink our roots deep into our communities. But where is Jesus asking us to go today? To whom is he sending us? And how will we act?

## Deeper Bible study

There is so much in this section that it repays multiple readings. The return of the seventy-two with their triumphant reports of power over demons (v 17) provides the occasion for Jesus, in a moment of ecstatic joy in the Spirit, to utter some of his most significant words. We have here a profound glimpse into the inner life of Jesus, a life of intimate prayer in which there is joy, deep reverence and a sense that his mission was coming to fulfilment in the community that he had gathered. If the Christian claim about the relationship of Jesus to the Father is true (and it is!), what we see here is not only a glimpse into time but into eternity: ‘the glory I had with you before the world began’ ([John 17:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A5&version=NIV)).

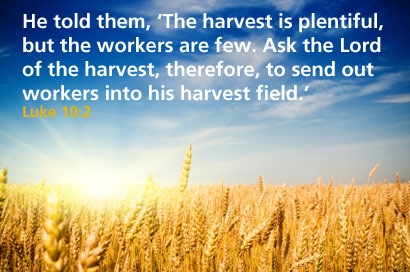
The doctrine of the Trinity is meant to express and safeguard the unique relationship of the Son to the Father. This does not mean that Jesus went around talking of himself as ‘the second person of the Trinity’ (such language came later). It does, however, reflect the fact that Jesus was conscious of a unique relationship of communion with the Father, known to none other (v 22). These are astonishing words, not least because they sound more like something we would read in John’s Gospel (eg [John 6:44–46; 10:30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6%3A44%E2%80%9346%3B+10%3A30&version=NIV)). The later doctrine (that of the Council of Nicea, ad 325) was meant to capture the eternal reality of the relation between Father and Son, which is of supreme importance for Christians. Jesus is the mediator between God and humanity, the one through whom we may know the Father as he did himself. Astonishing – and crucial.

The disciples around Jesus were those to whom Christ was revealing the Father (vs 22,23). He goes on choosing people, such as ourselves, to be numbered among his disciples.

Charles Spurgeon used to pray, ‘Lord save thine elect, and then elect some more!’ What did he mean?

[Nigel Wright](https://www.wordlive.org/Otherstuff/Contributors/V-W/3529885.id)

## Lord of the harvest



What do you understand by the ‘harvest field’ that Jesus is talking about? Is the time for harvest connected specifically to Jesus’ ministry, or is it still going on now?   
  
Either way, God is putting a call out for workers – what challenge do you hear from this image?

# Today in the Word – 9/23/19

# Praise Is Life

### Read: [Psalm 30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30)[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#fen-NIV-14321a)]

#### A psalm. A song. For the dedication of the temple.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#fen-NIV-14321b)] Of David.

1I will exalt you, Lord,  
    for you lifted me out of the depths  
    and did not let my enemies gloat over me.  
2Lord my God, I called to you for help,  
    and you healed me.  
3You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead;  
    you spared me from going down to the pit.

4Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people;  
    praise his holy name.  
5For his anger lasts only a moment,  
    but his favor lasts a lifetime;  
weeping may stay for the night,  
    but rejoicing comes in the morning.

6When I felt secure, I said,  
    “I will never be shaken.”  
7Lord, when you favored me,  
    you made my royal mountain[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#fen-NIV-14327c)] stand firm;  
but when you hid your face,  
    I was dismayed.

8To you, Lord, I called;  
    to the Lord I cried for mercy:  
9“What is gained if I am silenced,  
    if I go down to the pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
    Will it proclaim your faithfulness?  
10Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me;  
    Lord, be my help.”

11You turned my wailing into dancing;  
    you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,  
12that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.  
    Lord my God, I will praise you forever.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 30:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#en-NIV-14321) In Hebrew texts 30:1-12 is numbered 30:2-13.
2. [Psalm 30:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#en-NIV-14321) Title: Or palace
3. [Psalm 30:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30#en-NIV-14327) That is, Mount Zion

In the early 1970s, Charles Colson rose to political power as Special Counsel to the President of the United States. But all of that came crashing down when he was indicted in the Watergate scandal. After being sent to prison, Colson came to faith in Christ. Of that experience, he wrote, “My greatest humiliation—being sent to prison—was the beginning of God’s greatest use of my life; He chose the one thing in which I could not glory for His glory.”

You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy. Psalm 30:11

David’s life followed a similar pattern. In Psalm 30 David recounts a time when he found himself in significant distress. He described being in the “realm of the dead” and on his way down “to the pit” (v. 3). Most commentators believe he experienced a serious illness. Upon reflection, David realized his downfall was due to his arrogance. Pride had been his downfall. He cried out to the Lord for mercy, and the Lord answered his prayer (v. 2).

What is most interesting in this psalm is one of the reasons David asked God to heal him. He told the Lord, “What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you?” (v. 9). For David, life and death were more than just physical states. To be truly alive meant to live in right relation to God. For David, life consisted of praising God. Death is described as a state where there is no longer any praise. There is no such thing as true life without praise. This is why David was so overjoyed at the Lord’s answered prayer. The Lord turned his “wailing into dancing” so that “my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. Lord​ my God, I will praise you forever” (vv. 11–12).

### Apply the Word

Often when the Lord answers our prayers, it can be easy to forget about the situation we were in. David models the importance of giving public testimony to the Lord’s work in our life. Has the Lord answered your prayer recently? Make a point to let that be known. You’ll give God the glory and can be a great encouragement to others.

### Pray with Us

WCRF, Moody Radio station in Cleveland, Ohio, brings the good news of Christ to our listeners. Join us as we uphold in prayer its staff: Brian Dahlen, Doug Hainer, Jannelle Nevels, Josue Villa, Kelly Reiter, and Paul Carter.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 9/23/19

# A Shield Around Me

### Devotional Image Read: [Psalm 3](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me) [[](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[[a](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+3#fen-NIV-13959a)[]](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

#### [A psalm of David. When he fled from his son Absalom.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

[1](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[Lord, how many are my foes!  
    How many rise up against me!](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[2](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[Many are saying of me,  
    “God will not deliver him.”](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[[](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[[b](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+3#fen-NIV-13960b)[]](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

[3](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[But you, Lord, are a shield around me,  
    my glory, the One who lifts my head high.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[4](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[I call out to the Lord,  
    and he answers me from his holy mountain.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

[5](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[I lie down and sleep;  
    I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[6](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[I will not fear though tens of thousands  
    assail me on every side.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

[7](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[Arise, Lord!  
    Deliver me, my God!  
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;  
    break the teeth of the wicked.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

[8](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)[From the Lord comes deliverance.  
    May your blessing be on your people.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

#### [Footnotes:](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

1. [[Psalm 3:1](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+3#en-NIV-13959) [In Hebrew texts 3:1-8 is numbered 3:2-9.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)
2. [[Psalm 3:2](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+3#en-NIV-13960) [The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verses 4 and 8.](https://www.odb.org/2019/09/23/a-shield-around-me)

But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. [Psalm 3:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NIV&search=Psalm+3%3A3)

Our church experienced an agonizing loss when Paul, our gifted worship minister, died at the age of thirty-one in a boating accident. Paul and his wife, DuRhonda, were no strangers to pain; they had buried several children who hadn’t made it to term. Now there would be another grave near the small graves of these little ones. The life-crushing crisis this family experienced hit those who loved them like a knockout blow to the head.

David was no stranger to personal and family crises. In Psalm 3, he found himself overwhelmed because of the rebellion of his son Absalom. Rather than stay and fight, he chose to flee his home and throne (2 Samuel 15:13–23). Though “many” considered him forsaken by God (Psalm 3:2), David knew better; he saw the Lord as his protector (v. 3), and he called upon Him accordingly (v. 4). And so did DuRhonda. In the midst of her grief, when hundreds had gathered to remember her husband, she raised her soft, tender voice in a song that expressed confidence in God.

When doctors’ reports are not encouraging, when financial pressures won’t ease up, when efforts to reconcile relationships fail, when death has left those we cherish in its wake—may we too be strengthened to say, “But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high” (v. 3).

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How did you respond the last time you found yourself in an overwhelming situation? How does knowing God is a shield around you help?

Heavenly Father, help me to see that though life can be uncomfortable, I can find comfort in You.

#### Insight

The book of Psalms is Israel’s poetry and songbook that captures the human experience and emotions of the psalmists as they seek to trust God in the midst of life’s struggles and pains. Psalm 3 is the first of fourteen psalms that David wrote in response to a specific event (7; 18; 30; 34; 51; 52; 54; 56; 57; 59; 60; 63; 142). The superscription to Psalm 3—“When he fled from his son Absalom”—tells of David’s crisis when his son usurped the throne, forcing the king to flee because he’d be killed if he remained in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 15:13–14). Despite the danger and threat to his life, David was fully confident of God’s protection, deliverance, and sustenance: “I lie down and sleep. . . . I will not fear” (Psalm 3:5–6). David experienced the “perfect peace” promised in Isaiah 26:3 that comes through trusting God.

# God Calling – 9/23/19

# Turn Again

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

This is a law in the Spiritual Life.  You must turn to Me before you are conscious of My nearness.  It is that turning to Me you must cultivate in every circumstance.  A glad turning of thankfulness, or a turning of weak appeal.

It is so wonderful that naught is needed but that mute appeal.  You have no need to voice your longing.  No need to plead, no need to bring gifts.  How wonderful to feel you can so simply claim help, and so promptly, so lovingly, it is there.

Not only Help but the comfort and joy of Divine Nearness and Companionship.  A nearness that brings sweetness into life, and confidence, and peace.

Never fear, never lose heart.  Draw nigh to Me, and in that nearness is all you need.  My Presence alone can transform conditions and lives - bring Harmony and Beauty , Peace and Love.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.  James 1:7