# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/15/20

# What To Renounce



We have renounced the hidden things of shame…  —[2 Corinthians 4:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+4%3A2" \t "_blank)

Have you “renounced the hidden things of shame” in your life— the things that your sense of honor or pride will not allow to come into the light? You can easily hide them. Is there a thought in your heart about anyone that you would not like to be brought into the light? Then renounce it as soon as it comes to mind— renounce everything in its entirety until there is no hidden dishonesty or craftiness about you at all. Envy, jealousy, and strife don’t necessarily arise from your old nature of sin, but from the flesh which was used for these kinds of things in the past (see [Romans 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6:19) and [1 Peter 4:1-3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+4:1-3)). You must maintain continual watchfulness so that nothing arises in your life that would cause you shame.

“…not walking in craftiness…” ([2 Corinthians 4:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4:2)). This means not resorting to something simply to make your own point. This is a terrible trap. You know that God will allow you to work in only one way— the way of truth. Then be careful never to catch people through the other way— the way of deceit. If you act deceitfully, God’s blight and ruin will be upon you. What may be craftiness for you, may not be for others— God has called you to a higher standard. Never dull your sense of being your utmost for His highest— your best for His glory. For you, doing certain things would mean craftiness coming into your life for a purpose other than what is the highest and best, and it would dull the motivation that God has given you. Many people have turned back because they are afraid to look at things from God’s perspective. The greatest spiritual crisis comes when a person has to move a little farther on in his faith than the beliefs he has already accepted.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Am I becoming more and more in love with God as a holy God, or with the conception of an amiable Being who says, “Oh well, sin doesn’t matter much”?  Disciples Indeed, 389 L

# CCEL – 9/15/20

**Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**—[ROM. 6:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.14)

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.—My brethren, ye . . . are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.—Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.—The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.—Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.—If the Son . . . shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

[Rom. 6:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html" \l "Rom.6.15). -[Rom. 7:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.4). -[I Cor. 9:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.9.html" \l "iCor.9.21). -[I Cor. 15:56,57](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html" \l "iCor.15.56).[Rom. 8:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.2). -[John 8:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.8.html" \l "John.8.34). -[John 8:36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.8.html" \l "John.8.36).[Gal. 5:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.1).

“He shall not be afraid of evil tidings.” [Psalm 112:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.112.html" \l "Ps.112.7)

Christian, you ought not to dread the arrival of evil tidings; because if you are distressed by them, what do you more than other men? Other men have not your God to fly to; they have never proved his faithfulness as you have done, and it is no wonder if they are bowed down with alarm and cowed with fear: but you profess to be of another spirit; you have been begotten again unto a lively hope, and your heart lives in heaven and not on earthly things; now, if you are seen to be distracted as other men, what is the value of that grace which you profess to have received? Where is the dignity of that new nature which you claim to possess?

Again, if you should be filled with alarm, as others are, you would, doubtless, be led into the sins so common to others under trying circumstances. The ungodly, when they are overtaken by evil tidings, rebel against God; they murmur, and think that God deals hardly with them. Will you fall into that same sin? Will you provoke the Lord as they do?

Moreover, unconverted men often run to wrong means in order to escape from difficulties, and you will be sure to do the same if your mind yields to the present pressure. Trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for him. Your wisest course is to do as Moses did at the Red Sea, “Stand still and see the salvation of God.” For if you give way to fear when you hear of evil tidings, you will be unable to meet the trouble with that calm composure which nerves for duty, and sustains under adversity. How can you glorify God if you play the coward? Saints have often sung God’s high praises in the fires, but will your doubting and desponding, as if you had none to help you, magnify the Most High? Then take courage, and relying in sure confidence upon the faithfulness of your covenant God, “let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

# Word Live – 9/15/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/15/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/15/20

# A King Rejected

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 15:1–35**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335)

### The Lord Rejects Saul as King

15 Samuel said to Saul, “I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the Lord. 2This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. 3Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335#fen-NIV-7564a)] all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.’”

4So Saul summoned the men and mustered them at Telaim—two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand from Judah. 5Saul went to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the ravine. 6Then he said to the Kenites, “Go away, leave the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you along with them; for you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites.

7Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt. 8He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. 9But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335#fen-NIV-7570b)] and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.

10Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: 11“I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.” Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

12Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal.”

13When Samuel reached him, Saul said, “The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord’s instructions.”

14But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?”

15Saul answered, “The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest.”

16“Enough!” Samuel said to Saul. “Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night.”

“Tell me,” Saul replied.

17Samuel said, “Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. 18And he sent you on a mission, saying, ‘Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; wage war against them until you have wiped them out.’ 19Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?”

20“But I did obey the Lord,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. 21The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

22But Samuel replied:

“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices  
    as much as in obeying the Lord?  
To obey is better than sacrifice,  
    and to heed is better than the fat of rams.  
23For rebellion is like the sin of divination,  
    and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.  
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,  
    he has rejected you as king.”

24Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned. I violated the Lord’s command and your instructions. I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them. 25Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord.”

26But Samuel said to him, “I will not go back with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!”

27As Samuel turned to leave, Saul caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore. 28Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors—to one better than you. 29He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.”

30Saul replied, “I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord your God.” 31So Samuel went back with Saul, and Saul worshiped the Lord.

32Then Samuel said, “Bring me Agag king of the Amalekites.”

Agag came to him in chains.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335" \l "fen-NIV-7593c" \o "See footnote c)] And he thought, “Surely the bitterness of death is past.”

33But Samuel said,

“As your sword has made women childless,  
    so will your mother be childless among women.”

And Samuel put Agag to death before the Lord at Gilgal.

34Then Samuel left for Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. 35Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 15:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335#en-NIV-7564) The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them; also in verses 8, 9, 15, 18, 20 and 21.
2. [1 Samuel 15:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335#en-NIV-7570) Or the grown bulls; the meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.
3. [1 Samuel 15:32](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+15%3a1%e2%80%9335#en-NIV-7593) The meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.

In his book The God Delusion, atheist Richard Dawkins accused the God portrayed in the Old Testament of being “arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction” and “a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser.” Dawkins may have based his accusations on today’s reading. Modern readers find it hard to accept God’s command that Saul should “totally destroy” everything that belonged to the Amalekites, including “men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys” (v. 3).

To obey is better than sacrifice. 1 Samuel 15:22

The Amalekites, descendants of Esau, were marauders who attacked Israel during the Exodus when they were camped at Rephidim. At that time, the Lord promised to “completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven” (Ex. 17:14). He did not rush to fulfill this threat but waited almost four hundred years before carrying it out. For this reason, the task assigned to Saul, even though it disturbs modern sensibilities, is a testimony to God’s patience as much as it is a sobering reminder of His relentless justice.

Instead of completing the task as assigned, Saul spared their leader Agag along with the best of the animals (v. 9). Bible scholar Robert Alter notes, “There is a morally scandalous pairing in the select massacre Saul and his troop perpetrate: they kill all the defective animals and every man, woman, child, and infant, while sparing the good, edible animals, and the king (perhaps with the idea that some further profit can be extracted from him).” In this way, Saul perverted God’s justice by turning it into an exercise in opportunism; he kept the very best for himself. Even worse, Saul spiritualized his disobedience (v. 13). Obedience is better than sacrifice, and Christ’s perfect obedience is the only remedy for our sin.

**Apply the Word**

We cannot fool God with spiritual posturing. Nor can we compensate for our disobedience. The only remedy for God’s stern justice is the grace of Christ. Jesus alone can “fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15).

### Pray with Us

Today’s Scripture reading brings us back to Jesus’ victory on the cross. We praise Him for His sacrifice and His perfect obedience—the only remedy for our sin. Pray that we will always keep our eyes on Jesus.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/15/20

# Compassion on the Job

 **Read:** [**Matthew 14:1–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.1%E2%80%9314)

### John the Baptist Beheaded

14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus, 2and he said to his attendants, “This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

3Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, 4for John had been saying to him: “It is not lawful for you to have her.” 5Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered John a prophet.

6On Herod’s birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for the guests and pleased Herod so much 7that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. 8Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.” 9The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted 10and had John beheaded in the prison. 11His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. 12John’s disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

### Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

13When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. 14When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

[Jesus] had compassion on them and healed their sick. [Matthew 14:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.14)

My friend Ellen calculates payroll for an accounting firm. This may sound like a straightforward job, but there are times when employers submit their information later than requested. Ellen often makes up for this by working long hours so employees can receive their money without delay. She does this out of consideration for the families that depend on those funds to buy groceries, purchase medicine, and pay for housing.

Ellen’s compassionate approach to her job points me to Jesus. On earth, He sometimes ministered to people when it was inconvenient for Him. For instance, Christ wanted some alone time after He heard that John the Baptist had been killed, so He boarded a boat in search of an isolated place ([Matthew 14:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.13)). Perhaps He needed to grieve for His relative and pray through His sorrow.

There was just one problem. Crowds of people tagged along behind Him. This group had various physical needs. It would have been much easier to send the people away, but “when Jesus landed and saw [them], he had compassion on them and healed their sick” (v. 14).

Although it was part of Jesus’ calling to teach people and cure their diseases as He ministered on earth, His empathy affected the way in which He carried out His responsibilities. May God help us to recognize His compassion in our lives and give us the strength to pass it on to others.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How have you experienced God’s compassion and care? What prevents you from showing God’s love when you carry out your daily responsibilities?

Dear Jesus, thank You for meeting my spiritual and physical needs. Help my thankfulness to overflow in the world so that I can glorify You through caring for other people.

#### Insight

In [Matthew 14:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014.13), we read, “When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.” During key moments or times of great challenge, He would seek solitude from the crowds. This was a regular pattern in His earthly experience (v. 23; [Mark 1:35](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%201.35); [6:46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%206.46); [Luke 5:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%205.16); [6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%206.12)). In [Matthew 14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2014), the trigger for Jesus’ desire for solitude (“what had happened,” v. 13) was the sordid series of events that resulted in the murder of His forerunner, John the Baptist. Whether He wanted time to grieve John’s death or to seek the comforting presence of the Father, Jesus found value in moments of solitude.

# God Calling – 9/15/20

# Quiet Strength

Rest in Me. When tired nature rebels it is her call for rest. Rest then until My Life-Power flows through you.

Have no fear for the future. Be quiet, be still, and in that very stillness your strength will come and will be maintained.

The world sees strength in action. In My Kingdom it is known that strength lies in quiet.  "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

Such a promise!  Such glorious fulfillment!  The strength of Peace and the Peace of strength.  Rest in Me. Joy in Me.

My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.  Exodus 33:14

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/16/20

# Praying to God in Secret



When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place… —[Matthew 6:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A6)

The primary thought in the area of religion is— keep your eyes on God, not on people. Your motivation should not be the desire to be known as a praying person. Find an inner room in which to pray where no one even knows you are praying, shut the door, and talk to God in secret. Have no motivation other than to know your Father in heaven. It is impossible to carry on your life as a disciple without definite times of secret prayer.

“When you pray, do not use vain repetitions…” ([Matthew 6:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:7)). God does not hear us because we pray earnestly— He hears us solely on the basis of redemption. God is never impressed by our earnestness. Prayer is not simply getting things from God— that is only the most elementary kind of prayer. Prayer is coming into perfect fellowship and oneness with God. If the Son of God has been formed in us through regeneration ([see Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)), then He will continue to press on beyond our common sense and will change our attitude about the things for which we pray.

“Everyone who asks receives…” ([Matthew 7:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7:8)). We pray religious nonsense without even involving our will, and then we say that God did not answer— but in reality we have neverasked for anything. Jesus said, “…you will ask what you desire…” ([John 15:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:7)). Asking means that our will must be involved. Whenever Jesus talked about prayer, He spoke with wonderful childlike simplicity. Then we respond with our critical attitude, saying, “Yes, but even Jesus said that we must ask.” But remember that we have to ask things of God that are in keeping with the God whom Jesus Christ revealed.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

If a man cannot prove his religion in the valley, it is not worth anything.  Shade of His Hand, 1200 L

# CCEL – 9/16/20

**The Lord pondereth the hearts.**—[PROV. 21:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.21.html" \l "Prov.21.2)

The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.—The Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy.—Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.—There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.

Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.—When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path.—He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

[Psa. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.1.html" \l "Ps.1.6). -[Num. 16:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.16.html" \l "Num.16.5). -[Matt. 6:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.4).[Psa. 139:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.139.html" \l "Ps.139.23). -[I John 4:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.4.html" \l "iJohn.4.18).[Psa. 38:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.38.html" \l "Ps.38.9). -[Psa. 142:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.142.html" \l "Ps.142.3). -[Rom. 8:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.27).[II Tim. 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.19).

“Partakers of the divine nature.” [2 Peter 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.1.html" \l "iiPet.1.4)

To be a partaker of the divine nature is not, of course, to become God. That cannot be. The essence of Deity is not to be participated in by the creature. Between the creature and the Creator there must ever be a gulf fixed in respect of essence; but as the first man Adam was made in the image of God, so we, by the renewal of the Holy Spirit, are in a yet diviner sense made in the image of the Most High, and are partakers of the divine nature. We are, by grace, made like God. “God is love”; we become love—“He that loveth is born of God.” God is truth; we become true, and we love that which is true: God is good, and he makes us good by his grace, so that we become the pure in heart who shall see God. Moreover, we become partakers of the divine nature in even a higher sense than this—in fact, in as lofty a sense as can be conceived, short of our being absolutely divine. Do we not become members of the body of the divine person of Christ? Yes, the same blood which flows in the head flows in the hand: and the same life which quickens Christ quickens his people, for “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Nay, as if this were not enough, we are married unto Christ. He hath betrothed us unto himself in righteousness and in faithfulness, and he who is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Oh! marvellous mystery! we look into it, but who shall understand it? One with Jesus—so one with him that the branch is not more one with the vine than we are a part of the Lord, our Saviour, and our Redeemer! While we rejoice in this, let us remember that those who are made partakers of the divine nature will manifest their high and holy relationship in their intercourse with others, and make it evident by their daily walk and conversation that they have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. O for more divine holiness of life!

# Word Live – 9/16/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/16/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/16/20

# What God Sees

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 16:1–23**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+16%3a1%e2%80%9323)

### Samuel Anoints David

16 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

2But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”

The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ 3Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”

4Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”

5Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.”

7But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

8Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” 9Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the Lord chosen this one.” 10Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The Lord has not chosen these.” 11So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”

12So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”

13So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

### David in Saul’s Service

14Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+16%3a1%e2%80%9323#fen-NIV-7610a)] spirit from the Lord tormented him.

15Saul’s attendants said to him, “See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. 16Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better.”

17So Saul said to his attendants, “Find someone who plays well and bring him to me.”

18One of the servants answered, “I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him.”

19Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.” 20So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Saul.

21David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armor-bearers. 22Then Saul sent word to Jesse, saying, “Allow David to remain in my service, for I am pleased with him.”

23Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would take up his lyre and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 16:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+16%3a1%e2%80%9323#en-NIV-7610) Or and a harmful; similarly in verses 15, 16 and 23

Some say the modern age of image-oriented political campaigning began in 1960 with the first televised presidential debate between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon. On camera, Kennedy seemed more comfortable than Nixon, whose appearance and awkward manner made him appear less confident to viewers.

People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7

Beauty may only be skin deep, but we often make judgments about people’s character based solely on their appearance. Saul might have looked the part of a king, but by his actions, he was proving to be deficient in faith. God’s choice for Saul’s replacement would be surprising; He chose the least likely of Jesse’s eight sons. When David’s older brother Eliab presented himself to Samuel, the prophet was convinced he was God’s chosen. “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him,” the Lord warned. “The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (v. 7). David was the least likely to be selected. He was the youngest of all Jesse’s sons and wasn’t even invited to attend. He was tending the sheep (v. 10).

With the anointing of David, the Holy Spirit departed from Saul, and an evil Spirit “from the Lord” tormented him (v. 14). Some commentators believe this wasn’t a demon but a “spirit of disaster” sent from God. However, the New Testament makes it clear that even the demons can go no further than God allows (Matt. 8:31–32). Whatever its nature, it is clear that the arrival of this spirit was both divine judgment and the means God used to introduce David to Saul and his court.

**Apply the Word**

There is much more to godly leadership than image. This is why the qualifications for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 focus mainly on a person’s character. Leadership is about being as much as it is about doing.

### Pray with Us

“The Lord looks at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7). Make today’s key verse the focus of your prayer time. Ask the Lord to show you those things in your life you may consider important, but in reality, they are just “the outward appearance.”

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/16/20

# Give It All You’ve Got

 **Read:** [**2 Corinthians 9:6–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%209.6%E2%80%9311)

### Generosity Encouraged

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

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;  
    their righteousness endures forever.”[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9%3A6%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28966a)]

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

#### Footnotes:

1. [2 Corinthians 9:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9%3A6%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-28966) Psalm 112:9

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. [2 Corinthians 9:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%209.7)

Scaling. It’s a term used in the world of fitness that allows room for anyone to participate. If the specific exercise is a push-up, for example, then maybe you can do ten in a row, but I can only do four. The instructor’s encouragement to me would be to scale back the push-ups according to my fitness level at the time. We’re not all at the same level, but we can all move in the same direction. In other words, she would say, “Do your four push-ups with all the strength you have. Don’t compare yourself with anyone else. Scale the movement for now, keep doing what you can do, and you may be amazed in time you’re doing seven, and even one day, ten.”

When it comes to giving, the apostle Paul was clear: “God loves a cheerful giver” ([2 Corinthians 9:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%209.7)). But his encouragement to the believers in Corinth, and to us, is a variation of scaling. “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart” (v. 7). We each find ourselves at different giving levels, and sometimes those levels change over time. Comparison is not beneficial, but attitude is. Based on where you are, give generously (v. 6). Our God has promised that the disciplined practice of such cheerful giving brings enrichment in every way with a blessed life that results in “thanksgiving to God” (v. 11).

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How would you describe your giving: Cheerful? Reluctant? Under compulsion? Not comparing yourself to anyone else, what might cheerful giving look like?

Generous God, I want to be a cheerful giver, to give it my best effort. I know that discipline in this area is crucial. Give me the wisdom not to compare, the strength to sow generously, and the faith to leave the results in Your hands.

#### Insight

[Second Corinthians 8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%208%E2%80%939) contain the most comprehensive teaching on giving in the New Testament. The believers in Jerusalem were suffering in poverty because of a severe famine ([Acts 11:28–29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2011.28%E2%80%9329); [Romans 15:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2015.26)). The Macedonians, who themselves were “in extreme poverty,” responded with generous aid ([2 Corinthians 8:1–5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%208.1%E2%80%935)). However, the wealthy Corinthians had promised financial help but didn’t follow through. Paul now urges them to fulfill their pledge ([2 Corinthians 8:6–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%208.6%E2%80%9311); [9:1–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%209.1%E2%80%936)).

Stewardship that honors God is voluntary, not compulsory ([2 Corinthians 8:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%208.3); [9:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%209.5), [7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%209.7)); generous, not tightfisted (8:2; 9:6, 13); joyful, not begrudging (8:2–3, 11–12; 9:7); purposeful, not arbitrary (9:7); and within one’s means (8:11–13). God blessed the Corinthians materially so they could share that abundance with those in need (8:14–15; 9:8–11). Paul, quoting [Psalm 112:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20112.9), says this about the cheerful giver: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever” ([2 Corinthians 9:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%209.9)).

To learn more about biblical stewardship, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/ML101.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/ML101.)

# God Calling – 9/16/20

# Assurance

**And the work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. - Isaiah 32:17**

MY Peace it is which gives quietness and assurance forever.  My Peace that flows as some calm river through the dry land of life.  That causes the trees and flowers of life to spring forth and to yield abundantly.

Success is the result of work done in peace.  Only so can work yield its increase. Let there be no hurry in your plans.  You live not in time but in Eternity.  It is in the Unseen that your life-future is being planned.

Abide in Me, and I in you so shall you bring forth much fruit.  Be calm, assured, at rest.  Love, not rush.  Peace, not unrest. Nothing fitful.  All effectual.  Sown in Prayer, watered by Trust, bearing flower and fruit in Joy.  I love you.

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.  -Hebrews 4:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/17/20

# 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 – 9/17/20

**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 – 9/17/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/17/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/17/20

# Gigantic Faith

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 17:1–58**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358)

### David and Goliath

17 Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah. 2Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. 3The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

4A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358" \l "fen-NIV-7623a" \o "See footnote a)] 5He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#fen-NIV-7624b)]; 6on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. 7His spear shaft was like a weaver’s rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358" \l "fen-NIV-7626c" \o "See footnote c)] His shield bearer went ahead of him.

8Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, “Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.” 10Then the Philistine said, “This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.” 11On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

12Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul’s time he was very old. 13Jesse’s three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. 14David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, 15but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.

16For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

17Now Jesse said to his son David, “Take this ephah[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#fen-NIV-7636d)] of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. 18Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#fen-NIV-7637e)] from them. 19They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines.”

20Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. 21Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. 22David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. 23As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. 24Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.

25Now the Israelites had been saying, “Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel.”

26David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

27They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, “This is what will be done for the man who kills him.”

28When Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, “Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.”

29“Now what have I done?” said David. “Can’t I even speak?” 30He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. 31What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him.

32David said to Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.”

33Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth.”

34But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 35I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 36Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.”

Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”

38Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. 39David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.

“I cannot go in these,” he said to Saul, “because I am not used to them.” So he took them off. 40Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

41Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. 42He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. 43He said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44“Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!”

45David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.”

48As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. 49Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

50So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

51David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine’s sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.

When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. 52Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#fen-NIV-7671f)] and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. 53When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp.

54David took the Philistine’s head and brought it to Jerusalem; he put the Philistine’s weapons in his own tent.

55As Saul watched David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner, commander of the army, “Abner, whose son is that young man?”

Abner replied, “As surely as you live, Your Majesty, I don’t know.”

56The king said, “Find out whose son this young man is.”

57As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with David still holding the Philistine’s head.

58“Whose son are you, young man?” Saul asked him.

David said, “I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem.”

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 17:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7623) That is, about 9 feet 9 inches or about 3 meters
2. [1 Samuel 17:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7624) That is, about 125 pounds or about 58 kilograms
3. [1 Samuel 17:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7626) That is, about 15 pounds or about 6.9 kilograms
4. [1 Samuel 17:17](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7636) That is, probably about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms
5. [1 Samuel 17:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7637) Or some token; or some pledge of spoils
6. [1 Samuel 17:52](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17%3a1%e2%80%9358#en-NIV-7671) Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew of a valley

I was not raised in a Christian home. For the first 20 years of my life, I read very little of the Bible. But even as a child I knew the story of David and Goliath. The Scripture’s account of David’s defeat of the Philistine champion who towered over the Israelites at nine feet has become the archetypal underdog story.

Everything is possible for one who believes. Mark 9:23

Make no mistake. This is not an account of pluck or even courage. It is a story about faith. David’s conviction that God could use him to defeat Goliath was not an exercise in positive thinking. David’s faith had been proven in a variety of smaller encounters while he served as a shepherd watching over his father’s flocks (vv. 34–37). Because of this, David was shocked to arrive at the battlefield and find the armies of Israel cowering in fear (v. 24). Eliab’s reaction when he overheard David questioning the men about the situation confirmed the Lord’s wisdom in choosing David over Eliab.

David also exercised common sense when he refused the honor of wearing Saul’s armor and chose to meet Goliath carrying only his familiar staff, shepherd’s bag, and sling (v. 40). These were the weapons God had used when David faced the lion and the bear. He saw no reason why God could not use them to defeat Goliath as well. You know how the story ends.

It is not a story about how the small can defeat the large. It is a story that reminds us that the victory belongs to God who is greater than all. Faith is not a feeling of confidence, so much as it is an attitude of dependence on Him!

**Apply the Word**

We may be tempted to think that effective faith is a matter of volume. But a mere grain of faith is all that is needed! Your faith may not be as great as your present need, but you serve a God who is greater than both.

### Pray with Us

As the story of David’s victory over Goliath shows, faith is not about confidence, but about our dependence on God. Thank the Father for showing Himself faithful and strong in your life. You can always depend on Him!

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/17/20

# Don’t Be Deceived

 **Read:** [**Genesis 3:1–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%203.1%E2%80%937)

### The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

2The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so t

[The devil] is a liar and the father of lies. [John 8:44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%208.44)

The spotted lanternfly is a pretty insect with speckled outer wings and a splotch of bright red on its inner wings that flashes when it flies. But its beauty is a bit deceptive. This insect, first seen in the US in 2014, is considered invasive to North America, which means it has the potential to harm the environment and economy. The lanternfly will “eat the innards of practically any woody plant,” which includes cherry and other fruit trees, and leaves a sticky goo that leads to mold—killing trees outright or leaving them with little energy to grow fruit.

In the story of Adam and Eve, we learn of a different kind of menace. The serpent, Satan, deceived the couple into disobeying God and eating the forbidden fruit so they would “be like God” ([Genesis 3:1–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%203.1%E2%80%937)). But why listen to a serpent? Did his words alone entice Eve, or was there also something attractive about him? Scripture hints at Satan being created beautiful ([Ezekiel 28:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2028.12)). Yet Satan fell by the same temptation he used to entice Eve: “I will make myself like [God]” ([Isaiah 14:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2014.14); [Ezekiel 28:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2028.9)).

Any beauty Satan now has is used to deceive ([Genesis 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%203.1); [John 8:44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%208.44); [2 Corinthians 11:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2011.14)). Just as he fell, he seeks to pull others down—or keep them from growing. But we have someone far more powerful on our side! We can run to Jesus, our beautiful Savior.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

When have you been deceived by a person or group’s seemingly attractive idea? What helps you to recognize deception?

Dear God, help me to weigh what I see and hear by the truths of the gospel. Thank You for triumphing over evil through the cross.

#### Insight

Genesis doesn’t identify the serpent in the garden of Eden as Satan. Only when the last book of the New Testament foresees a world engulfed in the violence of deception do the Scriptures directly link the dragon, the serpent, the devil, and Satan ([Revelation 12:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2012.9); [20:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Revelation%2020.2)). In between there are hints. Along the way the voice of the enemy shows up in unexpected places. The hiss of accusing envy shows up in God’s meetings with His angels ([Job 1:6–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%201.6%E2%80%9312)). Nowhere, however, is there reason for more wonder than in [John 3:14–15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%203.14%E2%80%9315) where Jesus uses the imagery of the serpent to picture His own saving work. “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

# God Calling – 9/17/20

# 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 – 9/18/20

# 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 – 9/18/20

**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 – 9/18/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/18/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/18/20

# The Poison of Envy

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 18:1–30**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18%3a1%e2%80%9330)

### Saul’s Growing Fear of David

18 After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. 2From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. 3And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. 4Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

5Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul’s officers as well.

6When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. 7As they danced, they sang:

“Saul has slain his thousands,  
    and David his tens of thousands.”

8Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” 9And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

10The next day an evil[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18%3a1%e2%80%9330#fen-NIV-7687a)] spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand 11and he hurled it, saying to himself, “I’ll pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.

12Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. 13So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. 14In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. 15When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. 16But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

17Saul said to David, “Here is my older daughter Merab. I will give her to you in marriage; only serve me bravely and fight the battles of the Lord.” For Saul said to himself, “I will not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!”

18But David said to Saul, “Who am I, and what is my family or my clan in Israel, that I should become the king’s son-in-law?” 19So[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18%3a1%e2%80%9330#fen-NIV-7696b)] when the time came for Merab, Saul’s daughter, to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel of Meholah.

20Now Saul’s daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they told Saul about it, he was pleased. 21“I will give her to him,” he thought, “so that she may be a snare to him and so that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” So Saul said to David, “Now you have a second opportunity to become my son-in-law.”

22Then Saul ordered his attendants: “Speak to David privately and say, ‘Look, the king likes you, and his attendants all love you; now become his son-in-law.’”

23They repeated these words to David. But David said, “Do you think it is a small matter to become the king’s son-in-law? I’m only a poor man and little known.”

24When Saul’s servants told him what David had said, 25Saul replied, “Say to David, ‘The king wants no other price for the bride than a hundred Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.’” Saul’s plan was to have David fall by the hands of the Philistines.

26When the attendants told David these things, he was pleased to become the king’s son-in-law. So before the allotted time elapsed, 27David took his men with him and went out and killed two hundred Philistines and brought back their foreskins. They counted out the full number to the king so that David might become the king’s son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

28When Saul realized that the Lord was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, 29Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

30The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul’s officers, and his name became well known.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 18:10](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18%3a1%e2%80%9330#en-NIV-7687) Or a harmful
2. [1 Samuel 18:19](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+18%3a1%e2%80%9330#en-NIV-7696) Or However,

When I was growing up, my parents used to buy my shoes at a little shop at the end of our block. Getting a new pair of shoes was always a big deal, an event that warranted a family expedition. Maybe that’s why I remember being very upset when the new shoes were intended for my brother or sister instead of me.

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 1 Peter 2:1

Envy is the devil’s little hammer, bending our hearts until it turns us against anyone who possesses what we want. Envy poisons our desires and weaponizes them. Envy is the indignation we feel toward those who have what we think should have been ours. But ultimately, it is an outrage that is directed at God Himself. This sense of outrage is fueled by a conviction that the prosperity, opportunity, or blessing that we desire has gone to the wrong person.

Satan used envy to turn Saul against David after he had won the hearts of Saul’s son and the people of Israel. When Saul heard the women singing of David’s victory over Goliath (v. 7), he became angry. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” (v. 8). At that point, Saul began to distance himself both emotionally and physically from David. His actions turned against him, and he sent David out to fight in the hope that the Philistines would kill him (v. 25).

David’s success was a reminder to Saul that the Lord’s favor was no longer on him. Envy gave way to fear. Saul “remained [David’s] enemy the rest of his days” (v. 29). Envy not only made Saul David’s enemy but God’s as well.

**Apply the Word**

Recovery from envy requires that we redirect our focus and reprioritize our desires. We don’t need to stop desiring. Our desires need a conversion. Envy cannot be tamed; it can only be put to death by the cross.

### Pray with Us

Today’s Scripture warns about the consequences of envy and reminds us to confess hidden sin. Praise God for our freedom and forgiveness of sin, given to us as a gift by Christ’s victory on the cross.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/18/20

# Fixing Elevators

 **Read:** [**Leviticus 19:9–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.9%E2%80%9318)

9“‘When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. 10Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God.

11“‘Do not steal.

“‘Do not lie.

“‘Do not deceive one another.

12“‘Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the Lord.

13“‘Do not defraud or rob your neighbor.

“‘Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.

14“‘Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the Lord.

15“‘Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

16“‘Do not go about spreading slander among your people.

“‘Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor’s life. I am the Lord.

17“‘Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.

18“‘Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. [Leviticus 19:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.18)

Sarah has a rare condition that causes her joints to dislocate, making her reliant on an electric wheelchair to get around. On her way to a meeting recently, Sarah rode her wheelchair to the train station but found the elevator broken. Again. With no way of getting to the platform, she was told to take a taxi to another station forty minutes away. The taxi was called but never arrived. Sarah gave up and went home.

Unfortunately, this is a regular occurrence for Sarah. Broken elevators stop her from boarding trains, forgotten ramps leave her unable to get off them. Sometimes Sarah is treated as a nuisance by railway staff for needing assistance. She’s often close to tears.

Out of the many biblical laws governing human relationships, “love your neighbor as yourself” is key ([Leviticus 19:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.18); [Romans 13:8–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2013.8%E2%80%9310)). And while this love stops us from lying, stealing, and abusing others ([Leviticus 19:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.11), [14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Leviticus%2019.14)), it also changes how we work. Employees must be treated fairly (v. 13), and we should all be generous to the poor (vv. 9–10). In Sarah’s case, those who fix elevators and drag out ramps aren’t doing inconsequential tasks but offering important service to others.

If we treat work as just a means to a wage or other personal benefit, we will soon treat others as annoyances. But if we treat our jobs as opportunities to love, then the most everyday task becomes a holy enterprise.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

Why do you think we can become annoyed at someone needing extra assistance? How can you turn your job into a channel of love today?

Father, a job is never just a job to You but an opportunity to love You and s

#### Insight

Bible scholars refer to [Leviticus 17–26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2017%E2%80%9326) as the “Holiness Code,” so called because of the emphasis on the holy conduct of those among whom God’s presence dwelt. The previous chapters of Leviticus concern sacrificial offerings (1–7), priestly preparation and ritual (8–10), instructions regarding things clean and unclean (11–15), and the Day of Atonement (16). The remaining chapters stress holiness within the family and society, in sexual relationships, in economic dealings, and more.

To be holy is to be set apart and to live—by the power of the Spirit—according to the principles found in the Scriptures. In the New Testament, Peter called believers in Jesus to holiness using the words found in [Leviticus 11:44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2011.44) and [19:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Leviticus%2019.2): “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy’” ([1 Peter 1:15–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%201.15%E2%80%9316)).

# God Calling – 9/18/20

# 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 – 9/19/20

# 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 – 9/19/20

**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 – 9/19/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/19/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/19/20

# The Shield of God

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 19:1–24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+19%3a1%e2%80%9324)

### Saul Tries to Kill David

19 Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David 2and warned him, “My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. 3I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I’ll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out.”

4Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly. 5He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The Lord won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?”

6Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: “As surely as the Lord lives, David will not be put to death.”

7So Jonathan called David and told him the whole conversation. He brought him to Saul, and David was with Saul as before.

8Once more war broke out, and David went out and fought the Philistines. He struck them with such force that they fled before him.

9But an evil[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+19%3a1%e2%80%9324#fen-NIV-7716a)] spirit from the Lord came on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the lyre, 10Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape.

11Saul sent men to David’s house to watch it and to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David’s wife, warned him, “If you don’t run for your life tonight, tomorrow you’ll be killed.” 12So Michal let David down through a window, and he fled and escaped. 13Then Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed, covering it with a garment and putting some goats’ hair at the head.

14When Saul sent the men to capture David, Michal said, “He is ill.”

15Then Saul sent the men back to see David and told them, “Bring him up to me in his bed so that I may kill him.” 16But when the men entered, there was the idol in the bed, and at the head was some goats’ hair.

17Saul said to Michal, “Why did you deceive me like this and send my enemy away so that he escaped?”

Michal told him, “He said to me, ‘Let me get away. Why should I kill you?’”

18When David had fled and made his escape, he went to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to Naioth and stayed there. 19Word came to Saul: “David is in Naioth at Ramah”; 20so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came on Saul’s men, and they also prophesied. 21Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. 22Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Seku. And he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?”

“Over in Naioth at Ramah,” they said.

23So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even on him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. 24He stripped off his garments, and he too prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why people say, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 19:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+19%3a1%e2%80%9324#en-NIV-7716) Or But a harmful

According to tradition, the emperor Constantine saw a vision of a blazing cross against the sun and words which said, “In this sign, you will conquer.” Constantine’s troops placed this symbol, made up of the Greek letters Chi and Rho, on their shields. He believed it would be their certain defense in battle.

My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart. Psalm 7:10

David’s shield of protection was God Himself. Today’s reading shows how the Lord shielded David from Saul’s attempts to take his life. In the first instance, when Saul told his son and servants to kill David, Jonathan reasoned him out of it (vv. 4–5). Saul vowed to spare David, but his resolve was only temporary. After a string of military successes, Saul made another murderous attempt on David’s life when he “tried to pin him to the wall with a spear” (v. 10). This was the third time Saul had attempted to kill David in this manner (1 Sam. 18:11). Next, Saul sent men to lie in wait for David at his house. David’s wife Michal helped him to escape.

Saul’s sense that the kingdom was being torn from his grasp was no doubt aggravated by the knowledge that David had won the allegiance of the king’s son and daughter. Fleeing for his life, David escaped Saul’s household and took refuge with Samuel. When Saul sent troops to kill David, the Spirit of God overtook them, and they were unable to complete their mission. Saul sent two more companies of soldiers, but the same thing happened. Finally, Saul came, and “the Spirit of God came even on him” (v. 23). This was a demonstration of God’s power, as well as an ironic reminder of Saul’s initial call to kingship.

**Apply the Word**

You may not be a skilled soldier like David, but if you belong to Christ, you too are under God’s protection. “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” is His promise (Matt. 28:20).

### Pray with Us

Is the Lord your shield of protection? The same God who protected King David is your shield as well! If you belong to Christ, He is with you always. Ask, and He will help you trust and rely on Him more.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/19/20

# In Focus

 **Read:** [**Acts 3:2–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.2%E2%80%938)

2Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” 5So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

6Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” 7Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. 8He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

**Read:** [**Acts 3:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.2%E2%80%938)[**16**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.16)

16By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. [Acts 3:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.16)

Author Mark Twain suggested that whatever we look at in life—and how we see it—can influence our next steps, even our destiny. As Twain said, “You can’t depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.”

Peter too spoke of vision when he replied to a lame beggar, a man whom he and John encountered at the busy temple gate called Beautiful ([Acts 3:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.2)). As the man asked them for money, Peter and John looked directly at the man. “Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’ ” (v. 4).

Why did he say that? As Christ’s ambassador, Peter likely wanted the beggar to stop looking at his own limitations—yes, even to stop looking at his need for money. As he looked at the apostles, he would see the reality of having faith in God.

As Peter told him, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk” (v. 6). Then Peter “helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk” and give praise (vv. 7–8).

What happened? The man had faith in God (v. 16). As evangelist Charles Spurgeon urged, “Keep your eye simply on Him.” When we do, we don’t see obstacles. We see God, the One who makes our way clear.

By:  [Patricia Raybon](https://odb.org/author/patriciaraybon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What are you focused on instead of God? With refocused faith, what could you see in Him for your life?

Heavenly Father, when my eyes wander from You, focus my gaze on Your unlimited power.

#### Insight

The word faith or one of its variants (faithful, faithfulness) appears in the New International Version 458 times in the Old and New Testaments. Faith is described as what is necessary to believe in and please God. It’s the underlying factor behind what some of the most well-known characters in the Bible were able to do (see [Hebrews 11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2011)).

Today’s passage credits the healing of the lame man to faith in Jesus ([Acts 3:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.16)). But whose faith? Was it the healed man who believed in Jesus and had faith? Possibly, for it did require some faith to stand up when Peter took his hand. But it more likely refers to the faith of Peter. The pronouncement of healing and the confidence to take the lame man’s hand demonstrate that Peter, the healer, had faith in the power of Jesus’ name—the Messiah—to perform the miracle.

# God Calling – 9/19/20

# 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 – 9/20/20

# 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 – 9/20/20

**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 – 9/20/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/20/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/20/20

# Friends in Faith

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 20:1–42**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+20%3a1%e2%80%9342)

### David and Jonathan

20 Then David fled from Naioth at Ramah and went to Jonathan and asked, “What have I done? What is my crime? How have I wronged your father, that he is trying to kill me?”

2“Never!” Jonathan replied. “You are not going to die! Look, my father doesn’t do anything, great or small, without letting me know. Why would he hide this from me? It isn’t so!”

3But David took an oath and said, “Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said to himself, ‘Jonathan must not know this or he will be grieved.’ Yet as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death.”

4Jonathan said to David, “Whatever you want me to do, I’ll do for you.”

5So David said, “Look, tomorrow is the New Moon feast, and I am supposed to dine with the king; but let me go and hide in the field until the evening of the day after tomorrow. 6If your father misses me at all, tell him, ‘David earnestly asked my permission to hurry to Bethlehem, his hometown, because an annual sacrifice is being made there for his whole clan.’ 7If he says, ‘Very well,’ then your servant is safe. But if he loses his temper, you can be sure that he is determined to harm me. 8As for you, show kindness to your servant, for you have brought him into a covenant with you before the Lord. If I am guilty, then kill me yourself! Why hand me over to your father?”

9“Never!” Jonathan said. “If I had the least inkling that my father was determined to harm you, wouldn’t I tell you?”

10David asked, “Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?”

11“Come,” Jonathan said, “let’s go out into the field.” So they went there together.

12Then Jonathan said to David, “I swear by the Lord, the God of Israel, that I will surely sound out my father by this time the day after tomorrow! If he is favorably disposed toward you, will I not send you word and let you know? 13But if my father intends to harm you, may the Lord deal with Jonathan, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away in peace. May the Lord be with you as he has been with my father. 14But show me unfailing kindness like the Lord’s kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, 15and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth.”

16So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the Lord call David’s enemies to account.” 17And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

18Then Jonathan said to David, “Tomorrow is the New Moon feast. You will be missed, because your seat will be empty. 19The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid when this trouble began, and wait by the stone Ezel. 20I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. 21Then I will send a boy and say, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to him, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you; bring them here,’ then come, because, as surely as the Lord lives, you are safe; there is no danger. 22But if I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you,’ then you must go, because the Lord has sent you away. 23And about the matter you and I discussed—remember, the Lord is witness between you and me forever.”

24So David hid in the field, and when the New Moon feast came, the king sat down to eat. 25He sat in his customary place by the wall, opposite Jonathan,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+20%3a1%e2%80%9342" \l "fen-NIV-7756a" \o "See footnote a)] and Abner sat next to Saul, but David’s place was empty. 26Saul said nothing that day, for he thought, “Something must have happened to David to make him ceremonially unclean—surely he is unclean.” 27But the next day, the second day of the month, David’s place was empty again. Then Saul said to his son Jonathan, “Why hasn’t the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?”

28Jonathan answered, “David earnestly asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem. 29He said, ‘Let me go, because our family is observing a sacrifice in the town and my brother has ordered me to be there. If I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away to see my brothers.’ That is why he has not come to the king’s table.”

30Saul’s anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, “You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don’t I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? 31As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send someone to bring him to me, for he must die!”

32“Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” Jonathan asked his father. 33But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.

34Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger; on that second day of the feast he did not eat, because he was grieved at his father’s shameful treatment of David.

35In the morning Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting with David. He had a small boy with him, 36and he said to the boy, “Run and find the arrows I shoot.” As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37When the boy came to the place where Jonathan’s arrow had fallen, Jonathan called out after him, “Isn’t the arrow beyond you?” 38Then he shouted, “Hurry! Go quickly! Don’t stop!” The boy picked up the arrow and returned to his master. 39(The boy knew nothing about all this; only Jonathan and David knew.) 40Then Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and said, “Go, carry them back to town.”

41After the boy had gone, David got up from the south side of the stone and bowed down before Jonathan three times, with his face to the ground. Then they kissed each other and wept together—but David wept the most.

42Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord, saying, ‘The Lord is witness between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants forever.’” Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+20%3a1%e2%80%9342" \l "fen-NIV-7773b" \o "See footnote b)]

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 20:25](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+20%3a1%e2%80%9342#en-NIV-7756) Septuagint; Hebrew wall. Jonathan arose
2. [1 Samuel 20:42](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+20%3a1%e2%80%9342#en-NIV-7773) In Hebrew texts this sentence (20:42b) is numbered 21:1.

When Jesus began His public ministry, His family was shocked. At one point, when He was preaching to a large crowd in a house, his family members tried to remove Him by force, claiming that He had lost His mind (Mark 3:21). Jesus warned His followers that allegiance to Him would create fault lines in some of our most important relationships.

A man’s enemies will be the members of his own household. Matthew 10:36

Jonathan shared a similar experience when he threw his lot in with David. At first, Jonathan wanted to believe that there was still hope that his father could be favorable toward David (vv. 2, 9). But David, who by now has seen the king make several attempts on his life, was understandably skeptical (v. 3). The two formulated a plan that would enable Jonathan to sound out his father.

To seal it, Jonathan entered into a covenant in which David promised to show him “unfailing kindness like the Lord’s kindness” (v. 14). Jonathan, in turn, asked the Lord to “call David’s enemies to account” (v. 16). Jonathan would have realized that he was speaking of his father, Saul, when he made this promise to his friend. Jonathan also knew that his decision to support David was an implicit renunciation of any claim he might have to succeed Saul as king (v. 31).

Jonathan’s choice was decidedly not political. He and David had “sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord” (v. 42). Theirs was a lifelong commitment based on a common faith in God as much as it was a union of like-minded friends.

**Apply the Word**

Have you experienced rejection from friends or family because of your faith? Jesus promised, “. . . no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life” (Luke 18:29–30).

### Pray with Us

David and Jonathan were friends in faith! Thank God for the true and wise friends He’s given you over the years. And praise the Lord for His friendship—“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”!

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/20/20

# Stopping Rumors

 **Read:** [**Exodus 23:1–3**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2023.1%E2%80%933)

### Laws of Justice and Mercy

23 “Do not spread false reports. Do not help a guilty person by being a malicious witness.

2“Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, 3and do not show favoritism to a poor person in a lawsuit.

Do not spread false reports. [Exodus 23:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2023.1)

After Charles Simeon (1759–1836) was named the minister of Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge, England, he faced years of opposition. As most in the congregation had wanted the associate minister to be appointed rather than Simeon, they spread rumors about him and rejected his ministry—even at times locking him out of the church. But Simeon, who desired to be filled by God’s Spirit, sought to cope with the gossip by creating some principles to live by. One was never to believe rumors unless they were absolutely true and another was “always to believe, that if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter.”

In this practice, Simeon followed God’s instructions to His people to cease the gossip and malicious talk He knew would erode their love for each other. One of God’s Ten Commandments reflects His desire for them to live truthfully: “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor” ([Exodus 20:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2020.16)). Another instruction in Exodus reinforces this commandment: “Do not spread false reports” (23:1).

Think of how different the world would be if each of us never spread rumors and false reports and if we stopped them the moment we heard them. May we rely on the Holy Spirit to help us speak the truth in love as we use our words to bring glory to God.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What has helped you when you’ve faced opposition? How do you react when you hear gossip?

Jesus, help me to speak Your truth in love. Give me words that bring peace, grace, and encouragement.

#### Insight

God gave the Ten Commandments as guidelines for daily living so that His people could live faithful and holy lives. Commandments 1–4 ([Exodus 20:1–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2020.1%E2%80%9311)) teach us to love God, which Jesus said is “the first and greatest commandment” ([Matthew 22:38](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2022.38)). Commandments 5–10 ([Exodus 20:12–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2020.12%E2%80%9317)) teach us “to love [our] neighbor as [ourselves]” ([Matthew 22:39](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2022.39)). After giving the Ten Commandments, Moses laid down various stipulations that if followed would enable the Israelites to love their neighbors ([Exodus 21:1–23:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2021.1%E2%80%9323.9)). Because “the Lord is righteous, [and] he loves justice” ([Psalm 11:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2011.7)), Moses commanded them to “follow justice and justice alone” ([Deuteronomy 16:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2016.20)). Love for neighbors means justice for all. [Exodus 23:1–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2023.1%E2%80%939) is an application of the ninth commandment: “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor” (20:16). This commandment ensured impartial justice for everyone. False accusation, malicious testimony, slander, and withholding justice because of external pressure, favoritism, or bribery all contribute to the perversion of true justice and denial of neighborly love.

# God Calling – 9/20/20

# 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 – 9/21/20

# 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 – 9/21/20

**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 – 9/21/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/21/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/21/20

# Desperate Measures

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 21:1–22:20**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+21%3a1%e2%80%9322%3a20)

### David at Nob

21 [[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+21%3a1%e2%80%9322%3a20#fen-NIV-7774a)]David went to Nob, to Ahimelek the priest. Ahimelek trembled when he met him, and asked, “Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?”

2David answered Ahimelek the priest, “The king sent me on a mission and said to me, ‘No one is to know anything about the mission I am sending you on.’ As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. 3Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find.”

4But the priest answered David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here—provided the men have kept themselves from women.”

5David replied, “Indeed women have been kept from us, as usual whenever[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+21%3a1%e2%80%9322%3a20#fen-NIV-7778b)] I set out. The men’s bodies are holy even on missions that are not holy. How much more so today!” 6So the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the Lord and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away.

7Now one of Saul’s servants was there that day, detained before the Lord; he was Doeg the Edomite, Saul’s chief shepherd.

8David asked Ahimelek, “Don’t you have a spear or a sword here? I haven’t brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king’s mission was urgent.”

9The priest replied, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, is here; it is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want it, take it; there is no sword here but that one.”

David said, “There is none like it; give it to me.”

### David at Gath

10That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. 11But the servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one they sing about in their dances:

“‘Saul has slain his thousands,  
    and David his tens of thousands’?”

12David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. 13So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

14Achish said to his servants, “Look at the man! He is insane! Why bring him to me? 15Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?”

### David at Adullam and Mizpah

22 David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and his father’s household heard about it, they went down to him there. 2All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their commander. About four hundred men were with him.

3From there David went to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king of Moab, “Would you let my father and mother come and stay with you until I learn what God will do for me?” 4So he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him as long as David was in the stronghold.

5But the prophet Gad said to David, “Do not stay in the stronghold. Go into the land of Judah.” So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

### Saul Kills the Priests of Nob

6Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul was seated, spear in hand, under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing at his side. 7He said to them, “Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? 8Is that why you have all conspired against me? No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today.”

9But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul’s officials, said, “I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelek son of Ahitub at Nob. 10Ahimelek inquired of the Lord for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.”

11Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all the men of his family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. 12Saul said, “Listen now, son of Ahitub.”

“Yes, my lord,” he answered.

13Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?”

14Ahimelek answered the king, “Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king’s son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? 15Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father’s family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair.”

16But the king said, “You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and your whole family.”

17Then the king ordered the guards at his side: “Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.”

But the king’s officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord.

18The king then ordered Doeg, “You turn and strike down the priests.” So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. 19He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep.

20But one son of Ahimelek son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to join David.

#### Footnotes:

1. [1 Samuel 21:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+21%3a1%e2%80%9322%3a20#en-NIV-7774) In Hebrew texts 21:1-15 is numbered 21:2-16.
2. [1 Samuel 21:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+21%3a1%e2%80%9322%3a20#en-NIV-7778) Or from us in the past few days since

In his first inaugural address, delivered at the height of the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt famously declared, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.” Fear is a powerful force and will often drive a person to take desperate measures.

I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed. Psalm 57:1

David’s flight from Saul took him first to Nob, located about three miles south of Gibeah and two miles east of Jerusalem, where the tabernacle was located. David lied about the purpose of his visit to Ahimelek and asked for supplies. All that was available was the consecrated bread that was placed before the Lord in the tabernacle and then eaten by the priests (Lev. 24:5–9). He also took Goliath’s sword, which had been kept there as a memorial of David’s victory. Unfortunately, Doeg, an Edomite servant of King Saul, also witnessed this exchange (21:7). He would later inform Saul.

David left Nob and retreated southwest into enemy territory until he came to Goliath’s hometown of Gath, where the servants of its ruler Achish spotted him. When they raised the alarm, David pretended to be insane to show that he was not a threat. He returned to the territory of Judah and took refuge in the cave of Adullam. David’s family went to him there in part to avoid any retaliation from Saul.

David did not remain in the cave of Adullam but left his parents in Moab and then returned to Judah. Meanwhile, Saul ordered his men to execute Ahimelech and the other priests at Nob. When his men were unwilling to comply, Doeg the Edomite killed them, along with the women, children, infants, and animals.

**Apply the Word**

Are you struggling with fear today? In his desperation, David looked to the Lord. Give your worries to God by reading aloud the words from Psalm 57 which express David’s thoughts during his flight from Saul.

### Pray with Us

As you pray, ask God to help you give your fears and worries to Him. Look at King David’s example and use his strategies of overcoming fear, anxiety, and anger that he expressed so well in his psalms.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/21/20

# Making Peace with Trouble

 **Read:** [**John 16:25–33**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2016.25%E2%80%9333)

25“Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

29Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. 30Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

31“Do you now believe?” Jesus replied. 32“A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. [John 16:33](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2016.33)

We were almost home when I noticed it: the needle of our car’s temperature gauge was rocketing up. As we pulled in, I killed the engine and hopped out. Smoke wafted from the hood. The engine sizzled like bacon. I backed the car up a few feet and found a puddle beneath: oil. Instantly, I knew what had happened: The head gasket had blown.

I groaned. We’d just sunk money into other expensive repairs. Why can’t things just work? I grumbled bitterly. Why can’t things just stop breaking?

Can you relate? Sometimes we avert one crisis, solve one problem, pay off one big bill, only to face another. Sometimes those troubles are much bigger than an engine self-destructing: an unexpected diagnosis, an untimely death, a terrible loss.

In those moments, we yearn for a world less broken, less full of trouble. That world, Jesus promised, is coming. But not yet: “In this world you will have trouble,” He reminded His disciples in [John 16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2016). “But take heart! I have overcome the world” (v. 33). Jesus spoke in that chapter about grave troubles, such as persecution for your faith. But such trouble, He taught, would never have the last word for those who hope in Him.

Troubles small and large may dog our days. But Jesus’ promise of a better tomorrow with Him encourages us not to let our troubles define our lives today.

By:  [Adam R. Holz](https://odb.org/author/adamholz/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What does it look like for you to surrender your troubles to God? What might you use as a prompt to remind yourself to offer up your anxieties to Him throughout the day?

Father, troubles never seem far away. But when they’re close, You’re even closer. Please help me to cling to You in trust today.

#### Insight

[John 14–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014%E2%80%9316) is Jesus’ Upper Room Discourse, His final extended teaching time with His disciples before going to the cross. In today’s verses (16:25–33), Jesus concludes His message by paralleling its beginning. In 16:28, Jesus says He’s leaving this world and going to the Father, which echoes 14:2–3 where He says He’s going to the Father’s house. In [John 16:32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2016.32), He says they’ll scatter to their own homes, leaving Him alone. But in [John 14:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.3) He assures them that there’s a place in the Father’s house for them—an infinitely better home! Finally, in 14:1, Jesus begins by encouraging them not to allow their hearts to be troubled by His departure, while in 16:33 He assures them they can have peace because of His coming victory. In this way, the message concludes by closing the loop on the ideas that opened it.

# God Calling – 9/21/20

# 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