# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/14/21

# Arguments or Obedience



…the simplicity that is in Christ.  —[2 Corinthians 11:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+11%3A3)

Simplicity is the secret to seeing things clearly. A saint does not think clearly until a long time passes, but a saint ought to see clearly without any difficulty. You cannot think through spiritual confusion to make things clear; to make things clear, you must obey. In intellectual matters you can think things out, but in spiritual matters you will only think yourself into further wandering thoughts and more confusion. If there is something in your life upon which God has put His pressure, then obey Him in that matter. Bring all your “arguments and…every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” regarding the matter, and everything will become as clear as daylight to you ([2 Corinthians 10:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+10:5)). Your reasoning capacity will come later, but reasoning is not how we see. We see like children, and when we try to be wise we see nothing (see [Matthew 11:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+11:25)).

Even the very smallest thing that we allow in our lives that is not under the control of the Holy Spirit is completely sufficient to account for spiritual confusion, and spending all of our time thinking about it will still never make it clear. Spiritual confusion can only be conquered through obedience. As soon as we obey, we have discernment. This is humiliating, because when we are confused we know that the reason lies in the state of our mind. But when our natural power of sight is devoted and submitted in obedience to the Holy Spirit, it becomes the very power by which we perceive God’s will, and our entire life is kept in simplicity.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One Who is leading.  My Utmost for His Highest, March 19, 761 L

# CCEL – 9/14/21

**I, even I, am he that comforteth you.**—[ISA. 51:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.51.html" \l "Isa.51.12)

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.—Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.—As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.—Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Another Comforter . . . even the Spirit of truth.—The Spirit . . . helpeth our infirmities.

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

[II Cor. 1:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.1.html" \l "iiCor.1.3). -[Psa. 103:13,14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.103.html" \l "Ps.103.13). -[Isa. 66:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.66.html" \l "Isa.66.13). -[I Pet. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.7).[Psa. 86:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.86.html" \l "Ps.86.15).[John 14:16,17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.16). -[Rom. 8:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.26).[Rev. 21:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.4).

“There were also with him other little ships.” **[Mark 4:36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.4.html" \l "Mark.4.36)**

Jesus was the Lord High Admiral of the sea that night, and his presence preserved the whole convoy. It is well to sail with Jesus, even though it be in a little ship. When we sail in Christ’s company, we may not make sure of fair weather, for great storms may toss the vessel which carries the Lord himself, and we must not expect to find the sea less boisterous around our little boat. If we go with Jesus we must be content to fare as he fares; and when the waves are rough to him, they will be rough to us. It is by tempest and tossing that we shall come to land, as he did before us.

When the storm swept over Galilee’s dark lake all faces gathered blackness, and all hearts dreaded shipwreck. When all creature help was useless, the slumbering Saviour arose, and with a word, transformed the riot of the tempest into the deep quiet of a calm; then were the little vessels at rest as well as that which carried the Lord. Jesus is the star of the sea; and though there be sorrow upon the sea, when Jesus is on it there is joy too. May our hearts make Jesus their anchor, their rudder, their lighthouse, their life-boat, and their harbour. His Church is the Admiral’s flagship, let us attend her movements, and cheer her officers with our presence. He himself is the great attraction; let us follow ever in his wake, mark his signals, steer by his chart, and never fear while he is within hail. Not one ship in the convoy shall suffer wreck; the great Commodore will steer every barque in safety to the desired haven. By faith we will slip our cable for another day’s cruise, and sail forth with Jesus into a sea of tribulation. Winds and waves will not spare us, but they all obey him; and, therefore, whatever squalls may occur without, faith shall feel a blessed calm within. He is ever in the centre of the weather-beaten company: let us rejoice in him. His vessel has reached the haven, and so shall ours.

# Word Live – 9/14/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/14/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/14/21

# The Way of Love

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+13)

13 If I speak in the tongues[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++1++Corinthians+13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28667a)] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++1++Corinthians+13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28669b)] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. 11When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. 12For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 13:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++1++Corinthians+13&version=NIV#en-NIV-28667) Or languages
2. [1 Corinthians 13:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++1++Corinthians+13&version=NIV#en-NIV-28669) Some manuscripts body to the flames

If you were formulating a top ten list of the world’s favorite Scripture passages, today’s reading would surely be on it. Most of us have attended at least one wedding where these verses have been read as a part of the ceremony. Even people who have never read the Bible can quote portions of this chapter.

The greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

It may seem to you, once again, that Paul has suddenly changed the subject. But the fact that he continues to talk about spiritual gifts in chapter 14 indicates that Paul’s love poem (these verses are written in poetic form using parallelism and symmetrical language) is a commentary on those gifts. Indeed, the apostle mentions several gifts as a contrast to love to emphasize its priority. Paul begins with tongues and prophecy because these gifts were being abused by the Corinthian church (vv. 1–2). He will deal with them in greater detail in the next chapter. Love, says Paul, is superior to all spiritual gifts. If our spiritual gifts are not exercised in love, even the most excellent gift is reduced to nothing (vv. 2–3).

In verses 4–7, the apostle lists attributes of love. It should be no surprise that these characteristics are also attributes of God. Scripture tells us God is love (1 John 4:8, 16). The four qualities Paul highlights in these verses were especially evident in the life of Christ who was “gentle and humble in heart” (Matt. 11:29). The negatives in verses 4–5 mirror many of the Corinthian believers’ failings: envy, boasting, pride, dishonor, self– seeking, anger, and keeping account of wrongs. The gifts are temporary and incomplete (vv. 8–10). Instead of being marks of spiritual perfection, they are signs of the church’s immaturity (v. 11).

**Apply the Word**

Paul does not dismiss spiritual gifts as unimportant, but he does imply that the Corinthians’ view of them was imbalanced. As important as the exercise of spiritual gifts is to the church, the practice of love is even more necessary.

### Pray with Us

The apostle Paul outlines high standards for how we should love one another. God of love, we lean on You as the source of this love, asking that You empower us to live out Paul’s instructions in these verses.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/14/21

# Outside the Camp

 **Read:** [**Hebrews 13:11–16**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2013.11%E2%80%9316)

11The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. 12And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. 13Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. 14For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

15Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. 16And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. [Hebrews 13:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2013.12)

Friday was market day in the rural town in Ghana where I grew up. After all these years, I still recall one particular vendor. Her fingers and toes eroded by Hansen’s disease (leprosy), she would crouch on her mat and scoop her produce with a hollowed-out gourd. Some avoided her. My mother made it a point to buy from her regularly. I saw her only on market days. Then she would disappear outside the town.

In the time of the ancient Israelites, diseases like leprosy meant living “outside the camp.” It was a forlorn existence. Israelite law said of such people, “They must live alone” ([Leviticus 13:46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2013.46)). Outside the camp was also where the carcasses of the sacrificial bulls were burned (4:12). Outside the camp was not where you wanted to be.

This harsh reality breathes life into the statement about Jesus in [Hebrews 13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2013): “Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore” (v. 13). Jesus was crucified outside the gates of Jerusalem, a significant point when we study the Hebrew sacrificial system.

We want to be popular, to be honored, to live comfortable lives. But God calls us to go “outside the camp”—where the disgrace is. That’s where we’ll find the vendor with Hansen’s disease. That’s where we’ll find people the world has rejected. That’s where we’ll find Jesus.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How do you initially react to outsiders and misfits? In what practical way might you go to Jesus “outside the camp”?

Thank You, Jesus, that You don’t show any favoritism. Thank You for going outside the camp for me.

#### Insight

The audience for the New Testament letter to the Hebrews consisted of the Diaspora—Jewish Christ-followers who’d been scattered due to persecution. The nature of the audience perhaps explains the heavy emphasis on Israel’s history and the sacrificial system of Judaism, which forms a point of reference for the work of Jesus. The content of the letter is clearly Christ-centered, lifting Jesus up as superior to angels, priests, and Moses, and affirming Christ’s redemptive sacrifice as superior to the sacrificial system of Israel’s temple. Hebrews is also shrouded in mystery, due largely to the fact that this letter is anonymous. The human authorship of Hebrews has long been the subject of both scholarly and devotional examination, with much ink being spilled arguing for a particular author. The individuals named as potential authors range from Paul to Apollos to Barnabas to Luke to Priscilla and more.

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

# God Calling – 9/14/21

# When Faith Fails

**Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.     Mark 9:24**

This cry of the human heart is as expressive of human need as it was when uttered to Me while I was on earth. It expresses the soul's progress.

As a soul realizes Me and My Power, and knows Me as Helper and Savior, that soul believes in Me more and more. At the same time it is more conscious than before of its falling short of absolute trust in Me.

"Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief." The soul's progress - an increased belief - then a cry for more faith - a plea to conquer all unbelief, all lack of trust.

That cry heard. That prayer answered. More faith, and at the same time more power to see where trust is lacking.

My children seek to go up this path, leading by each stage, nearer to Me.

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.    Hebrews 3:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/15/21

# 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)

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 – 9/15/21

**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 – 9/15/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/15/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/15/21

# Godly Order

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 14**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+14)

### Intelligibility in Worship

14 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. 2For anyone who speaks in a tongue[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28681a)] does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. 3But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. 4Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. 5I would like every one of you to speak in tongues,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28684b)] but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28684c)] unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

6Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? 7Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the pipe or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? 8Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? 9So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. 10Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. 11If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me. 12So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.

13For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say. 14For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. 16Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28695d)] say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? 17You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified.

18I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. 21In the Law it is written:

“With other tongues  
    and through the lips of foreigners  
I will speak to this people,  
    but even then they will not listen to me,  
says the Lord.”[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28700e)]

22Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. 23So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? 24But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, 25as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, “God is really among you!”

### Good Order in Worship

26What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. 27If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. 28If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God.

29Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. 30And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. 31For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged. 32The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. 33For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.

34Women[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28713f)] should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. 35If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28714g)]

36Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached? 37If anyone thinks they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by the Spirit, let them acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord’s command. 38But if anyone ignores this, they will themselves be ignored.[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28717h)]

39Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. 40But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 14:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28681) Or in another language; also in verses 4, 13, 14, 19, 26 and 27
2. [1 Corinthians 14:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28684) Or in other languages; also in verses 6, 18, 22, 23 and 39
3. [1 Corinthians 14:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28684) Or in other languages; also in verses 6, 18, 22, 23 and 39
4. [1 Corinthians 14:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28695) The Greek word for inquirer is a technical term for someone not fully initiated into a religion; also in verses 23 and 24.
5. [1 Corinthians 14:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28700) Isaiah 28:11,12
6. [1 Corinthians 14:34](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28713) Or peace. As in all the congregations of the Lord’s people, 34women
7. [1 Corinthians 14:35](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28714) In a few manuscripts these verses come after verse 40.
8. [1 Corinthians 14:38](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2014&version=NIV#en-NIV-28717) Some manuscripts But anyone who is ignorant of this will be ignorant

Many people in the ancient world sought counsel from Delphi’s oracle on Mount Parnassus, about 75 miles west of Athens. Its priestess claimed to speak for the God Apollo and prophesied in a trance state after breathing fumes from a crevice in the mountain. The oracle’s messages were often obscure and could be interpreted in many ways.

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. 1 Corinthians 14:33

Unlike the Delphi oracle, the church’s prophets spoke clearly so that people would be strengthened, encouraged, and comforted (v. 3). New Testament scholar Leon Morris explains that the New Testament practice of prophecy was similar to preaching but not identical with it: “It is not the delivery of a carefully prepared sermon, but the uttering of words directly inspired by God.” Those who spoke in tongues, on the other hand, could not be understood unless there was someone present who was able to interpret (v. 5). For this reason, the apostle urged the church to prefer prophecy over tongues (vv. 1, 19).

Paul also provided guidelines for the practice of tongues and prophecy when the church met together. No more than three were to speak in tongues, one at a time and only when an interpreter was present. If there was no interpreter, the speaker should “keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God” (v. 28). Likewise, no more than two or three prophets were to speak as others tested the validity of their message (v. 29).

Paul’s command in verse 34 that women in the congregation “should remain silent in the churches” is not absolute. Earlier in this letter, he gave guidelines for women who prayed and prophesied in the assembly (1 Cor. 11:5, 13). The basic rule for exercising spiritual gifts was that “everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way” (v. 40).

**Apply the Word**

The church’s ministry must be built on the solid foundation of God’s Word. Spend a few minutes praying for those who will be ministering the Word in your church this week.

### Pray with Us

Heavenly Father, we intercede for Bible teachers this week, asking that you guide their studies and grant them insight into Your Word so that they can teach it accurately and powerfully to those under their authority.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/15/21

# God’s Molded Instruments

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 64:5–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2064.5%E2%80%939)

5You come to the help of those who gladly do right,  
    who remember your ways.  
But when we continued to sin against them,  
    you were angry.  
    How then can we be saved?  
6All of us have become like one who is unclean,  
    and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;  
we all shrivel up like a leaf,  
    and like the wind our sins sweep us away.  
7No one calls on your name  
    or strives to lay hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us  
    and have given us over to[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+64%3A5%E2%80%939&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18893a)] our sins.

8Yet you, Lord, are our Father.  
    We are the clay, you are the potter;  
    we are all the work of your hand.  
9Do not be angry beyond measure, Lord;  
    do not remember our sins forever.  
Oh, look on us, we pray,  
    for we are all your people.

#### Footnotes

1. [Isaiah 64:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+64%3A5%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-18893) Septuagint, Syriac and Targum; Hebrew have made us melt because of

We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. [Isaiah 64:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2064.8)

Considered one of the greatest video games ever made, Nintendo’s The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time has sold more than seven million copies worldwide. It’s also popularized the ocarina, a tiny, ancient, potato-shaped musical instrument made of clay.

The ocarina doesn’t look like much of a musical instrument. However, when it’s played—by blowing into its mouthpiece and covering various holes around its misshapen body—it produces a strikingly serene and hauntingly hopeful sound.

The ocarina’s maker took a lump of clay, applied pressure and heat to it, and transformed it into an amazing musical instrument. I see a picture of God and us here. [Isaiah 64:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2064.6), [8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isaiah%2064.8%E2%80%939) tells us: “All of us have become like one who is unclean. . . . Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter. . . . Do not be angry beyond measure.” The prophet was saying: God, You’re in charge. We’re all sinful. Shape us into beautiful instruments for You.

That’s exactly what God does! In His mercy, He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sin, and now He’s shaping and transforming us as we walk in step with His Spirit every day. Just as the ocarina maker’s breath flows through the instrument to produce beautiful music, God works through us—His molded instruments—to accomplish His beautiful will: to be more and more like Jesus ([Romans 8:29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%208.29)).

#### Reflect & Pray

How can knowing that you’re a recipient of God’s mercy affect what you think, say, and do today? How can you submit yourself to His transformation?

Father, thank You for saving me and transforming me so that I’ll become more like Your Son, Jesus. Teach me to submit to Your Spirit’s work of transforming me.

#### Insight

The potter-clay motif is an image used by the prophet Isaiah to depict the strained relationship God had with His people. This metaphor points to a sovereign Creator and submissive creature relationship. As clay, we’re the intricate work of the Father’s hand ([Isaiah 64:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2064.8)). Choosing to go our own way, we reject God’s authority over our lives and “turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay!” (29:16). It’s like the pot telling the Potter what to do. Isaiah warns, “Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker” (45:9). As our Maker, He has every right to do what He pleases (vv. 10–12). Some sixty years after these words from Isaiah were written, the prophet Jeremiah went to a potter’s house to give God’s people this same message: “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel” ([Jeremiah 18:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2018.6)).

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

# God Calling – 9/15/21

# 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 – 9/16/21

# 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 – 9/16/21

**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 – 9/16/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/16/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/16/21

# The Gospel of Resurrection

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+15)

### The Resurrection of Christ

15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28722a)]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28724b)] and then to the Twelve. 6After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

9For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. 11Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

### The Resurrection of the Dead

12But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27For he “has put everything under his feet.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28746c)] Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

29Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? 30And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? 31I face death every day—yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised,

“Let us eat and drink,  
    for tomorrow we die.”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28751d)]

33Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28752e)] 34Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

### The Resurrection Body

35But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” 36How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. 38But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. 39Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. 40There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. 41The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

42So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28764f)]; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. 46The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. 47The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. 48As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. 49And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28768g)] bear the image of the heavenly man.

50I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— 52in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 54When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28773h)]

55“Where, O death, is your victory?  
    Where, O death, is your sting?”[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-28774i" \o "See footnote i)]

56The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 15:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28722) Or you at the first
2. [1 Corinthians 15:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28724) That is, Peter
3. [1 Corinthians 15:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28746) Psalm 8:6
4. [1 Corinthians 15:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28751) Isaiah 22:13
5. [1 Corinthians 15:33](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28752) From the Greek poet Menander
6. [1 Corinthians 15:45](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28764) Gen. 2:7
7. [1 Corinthians 15:49](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28768) Some early manuscripts so let us
8. [1 Corinthians 15:54](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28773) Isaiah 25:8
9. [1 Corinthians 15:55](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015&version=NIV#en-NIV-28774) Hosea 13:14

Over the years, I have learned several methods of sharing the gospel. From the Romans Road to the Four Spiritual Laws to the outline used in the Evangelism Explosion presentation, these tools were intended to help me clearly articulate the gospel message’s facts.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:22

In today’s reading, Paul reviews the basic elements of the gospel message. The apostle’s summary makes three main assertions. First, Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Second, Christ was buried and arose on the third day, also according to the Scriptures. Third, after His resurrection, the living Christ appeared to many credible witnesses, one of whom was the apostle Paul himself! Jesus’ resurrection is the pattern for all believers. It is the antidote to the death that has passed onto mankind through Adam: “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive” (v. 22).

Some in the Corinthian church, influenced by Greek philosophical ideas, had trouble accepting the idea of a bodily resurrection (v. 12). Paul responded by pointing out that without the resurrection, the gospel is emptied of hope (vv. 16–19). In verses 35–54, the apostle goes on to describe some of the features of the believer’s resurrected body. He notes that there is continuity with the bodies that we now have but with a reconstitution of our nature. The resurrection body is a real body like the one we now possess, but it is also “changed” (v. 51). This change will take place at the last trumpet (v. 52) and will transform our earthly perishable body into a “spiritual” one (v. 45). All who are in Christ will exchange a mortal body for an immortal one.

**Apply the Word**

The gospel doctrine of the resurrection offers hope both in the present and in the life to come. This hope motivates us to stand firm in our faith and give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord, “because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (v. 58).

### Pray with Us

Some of us are weary, laboring in an unfruitful ministry, or aching over children who have left the church. Give us strength of conviction to push on, rejoicing in our certain hope of the coming resurrection.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/16/21

# From Mess to Message

 **Read:** [**Mark 5:1–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%205.1%E2%80%9320)

### Jesus Restores a Demon-Possessed Man

5 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+5%3A1%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24366a)] 2When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. 3This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

6When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture me!” 8For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you impure spirit!”

9Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” 10And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

11A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.” 13He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

14Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 15When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. 16Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. 17Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

18As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. 19Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” 20So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+5%3A1%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24385b)] how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

#### Footnotes

1. [Mark 5:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+5%3A1%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#en-NIV-24366) Some manuscripts Gadarenes; other manuscripts Gergesenes
2. [Mark 5:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+5%3A1%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#en-NIV-24385) That is, the Ten Cities

Tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you. [Mark 5:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%205.19)

Darryl was a baseball legend who nearly destroyed his life with drugs. But Jesus set him free, and he’s been clean for years. Today he helps others struggling with addiction and points them to faith. Looking back, he affirms that God turned his mess into a message.

Nothing is too hard for God. When Jesus came ashore near a cemetery after a stormy night on the Sea of Galilee with His disciples, a man possessed by darkness immediately approached Him. Jesus spoke to the demons inside him, drove them away, and set him free.

When Jesus left, the man begged to go along. But Jesus didn’t allow it, because He had work for him to do: “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you” ([Mark 5:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%205.19)).

We never see the man again, but Scripture shows us something intriguing. The people of that region had fearfully pleaded with Jesus “to leave” (v. 17), but the next time He returned there, a large crowd gathered (8:1). Could the crowd have resulted from Jesus sending the man home? Could it be that he, once dominated by darkness, became one of the first missionaries, effectively communicating Jesus’ power to save?

We’ll never know this side of heaven, but this much is clear. When God sets us free to serve Him, He can turn even a messy past into a message of hope and love.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What has Jesus set you free from? How can you share with others what He’s done for you?

Beautiful Savior, I praise You for Your amazing power! No darkness can stand against You! Help me to walk in Your light today.

#### Insight

Jesus has power over all creation, as is clear from today’s passage ([Mark 5:1–20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%205.1%E2%80%9320)). This includes the spiritual world as well. The owners of the pigs would have suffered a large loss when their herd was destroyed in an instant. But we might wonder how the Jewish observers reacted. Bible teacher D. A. Carson makes the point that Jesus’ Jewish audience would have seen the loss of the pigs as of little consequence. Pigs were considered unclean animals ([Leviticus 11:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2011.7)). In 167 bc, Syrian tyrant Antiochus IV (Antiochus Epiphanes) had even sacrificed a pig on the altar in the temple—a despicable act of sacrilege in Jewish eyes.

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

# God Calling – 9/16/21

# 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 – 9/17/21

# 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 – 9/17/21

**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 – 9/17/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/17/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/17/21

# Churches Serving Churches

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+16)

### The Collection for the Lord’s People

16 Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 3Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. 4If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

### Personal Requests

5After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. 6Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. 8But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

10When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. 11No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.

12Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was quite unwilling to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity.

13Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. 14Do everything in love.

15You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, 16to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. 17I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. 18For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.

### Final Greetings

19The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28796a)] greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. 20All the brothers and sisters here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

21I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.

22If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28799b)]!

23The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

24My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28801c)]

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Corinthians 16:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#en-NIV-28796) Greek Prisca, a variant of Priscilla
2. [1 Corinthians 16:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#en-NIV-28799) The Greek for Come, Lord reproduces an Aramaic expression (Marana tha) used by early Christians.
3. [1 Corinthians 16:24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2016&version=NIV#en-NIV-28801) Some manuscripts do not have Amen.

Many churches devote a portion of the worship service to announcements. Some place them at the beginning, while others wait until the end of the service. In a similar way, Paul closes this first letter with several announcements.

Do everything in love. 1 Corinthians 16:14

The first has to do with “the collection for the Lord’s people” (v. 1). This was not an internal collection of funds meant for distribution among the Corinthians but part of a larger effort by several churches to provide aid for the poor believers in Jerusalem (v. 3). Paul directed that the money be collected in advance each time the church met on “the first day of the week” (v. 2). The amount given by each participant was to be proportional to their income. The money would be carried to Jerusalem by chosen representatives from the Corinthian church, along with letters of introduction from the apostle Paul (v. 4).

Paul also closes this letter with tentative details about his future travel plans (vv. 5–8). He hoped to visit Corinth after passing through Macedonia both to spend time with the church and so that they could provide support for the next stage of his journey. Paul planned to send Timothy in advance of his visit but had some concerns about how his protégé would be received. Paul’s warning, “see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you” (v. 10), is evidence of a hostile disposition held by some that will resurface when we study 2 Corinthians.

Like many of Paul’s letters, this one concludes with personal greetings. Paul explains why an expected visit from Apollos, one of the Corinthians’ favorite preachers, will be delayed (v. 12). He also charges them to show respect to the household of Stephanas, an early Greek convert (v. 15).

**Apply the Word**

It can be hard to rejoice when the church down the street seems to be more successful. Paul’s closing remarks are a reminder that we are not in competition with each other.

### Pray with Us

Majestic God, we pray for humility grounded in an accurate grasp of who we are before You. Teach us to honor Your children, recognizing their inherent value—without inflated regard for our own.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/17/21

# Move Your Fence

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 43:18–21**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.18%E2%80%9321)

18“Forget the former things;  
    do not dwell on the past.  
19See, I am doing a new thing!  
    Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
    and streams in the wasteland.  
20The wild animals honor me,  
    the jackals and the owls,  
because I provide water in the wilderness  
    and streams in the wasteland,  
to give drink to my people, my chosen,  
21    the people I formed for myself  
    that they may proclaim my praise.

See, I am doing a new thing! [Isaiah 43:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.19)

The village vicar couldn’t sleep. As World War II raged, he’d told a small group of American soldiers they couldn’t bury their fallen comrade inside the fenced cemetery next to his church. Only burials for church members were allowed. So the men buried their beloved friend just outside the fence.

The next morning, however, the soldiers couldn’t find the grave. “What happened? The grave is gone,” one soldier told the reverend. “Oh, it’s still there,” he told him. The soldier was confused, but the churchman explained. “I regretted telling you no. So, last night, I got up—and I moved the fence.”

God may give fresh perspective for our life challenges too—if we look for it. That was the prophet Isaiah’s message to the downtrodden people of Israel. Instead of looking back with longing at their Red Sea rescue, they needed to shift their sight, seeing God doing new miracles, blazing new paths. “Do not dwell on the past,” He urged them. “See, I am doing a new thing!” ([Isaiah 43:18–19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.18%E2%80%9319)). He’s our source of hope during doubts and battles. “I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, [providing] drink to my people, my chosen [people]” (v. 20).

Refreshed with new vision, we too can see God’s fresh direction in our lives. May we look with new eyes to see His new paths. Then, with courage, may we step onto new ground, bravely following Him.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What new thing would God like to accomplish in your life? What new ground has God led you to and what will you do with it?

Merciful God, thank You for providing fresh perspective for my life in You. Refresh my sight to see new ground to walk with You.

#### Insight

God refers to Israel as “my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself” ([Isaiah 43:20–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.20%E2%80%9321)). But why would He select one family from all others, especially one so unworthy (vv. 22–28)? The answer, alluded to in verse 21, echoes God’s explanation to Abraham in Genesis. He chose one family for a special role in His plan to bless all ([Genesis 12:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2012.1%E2%80%933)). The story unfolds at Sinai where God tells His chosen people that as witnesses to His rescuing power, He’s making them into a “kingdom of priests” ([Exodus 19:4–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2019.4%E2%80%936)). Later, Peter would use similar words to explain how God is now choosing people of all nations to be a new kind of kingdom, priesthood, and witness to the One who calls us out of darkness into the light ([1 Peter 1:1–2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%201.1%E2%80%932); [2:9–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Peter%202.9%E2%80%9310)). We’re chosen to be witnesses to the living, all-powerful God of grace.

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

# God Calling – 9/17/21

# 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 – 9/18/21

# 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 – 9/18/21

**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 – 9/18/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/18/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/18/21

# The God of All Comfort

**Read:** [**2 Corinthians 1:1-2:4**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1%3a1-2%3a4)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia:

2Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Praise to the God of All Comfort

3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 5For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. 6If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

8We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28809a)] about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. 9Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 10He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, 11as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

### Paul’s Change of Plans

12Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28813b)] and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God’s grace. 13For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that, 14as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15Because I was confident of this, I wanted to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. 16I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea. 17Was I fickle when I intended to do this? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say both “Yes, yes” and “No, no”?

18But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” 19For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28820c)] and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” 20For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. 21Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

23I call God as my witness—and I stake my life on it—that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. 24Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm. 2 1So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. 2For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved? 3I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. 4For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

#### Footnotes

1. [2 Corinthians 1:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#en-NIV-28809) The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God’s family; also in 8:1; 13:11.
2. [2 Corinthians 1:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#en-NIV-28813) Many manuscripts holiness
3. [2 Corinthians 1:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+1-2%3A4&version=NIV#en-NIV-28820) Greek Silvanus, a variant of Silas

If this were a movie, the screen might show an image of seasons rapidly changing or a calendar with pages being torn from it. Time has passed since Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, and along with it, circumstances have changed. Between these two letters, opposition to Paul had arisen, sparked by the arrival of some who Paul ironically describes as “super-apostles” (2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11).

For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. 2 Corinthians 1:5

Paul begins this letter with an update that is also a kind of defense. His failure to follow through on a planned visit had sparked criticism from his opponents. They claimed his change of plans was proof that Paul did not keep his word. Instead, Paul had faced severe difficulties while ministering in the province of Asia. Their exact nature is unclear, but Paul states their effect on him in plain language: “We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself” (1:8). The situation was so dire that Paul saw it as a death sentence (v. 9). But the main reason Paul had delayed his visit was to give the church time to repent (1:23; 2:1). He chose to write to them instead, “out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears” (2:4). This probably refers not to 1 Corinthians but to another letter sent between 1 and 2 Corinthians that Paul’s detractors characterized as “forceful” (2 Cor. 10:10).

Paul will have some hard things to say to the Corinthians in this letter. But it is important to note that his criticism springs from love. This is one of the ways we can identify those who truly love us. They are the ones who care enough to tell us hard truths.

**Apply the Word**

This letter serves as a reality check for anyone who has romanticized church life and Christian ministry. But there is great encouragement in knowing that “just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ” (1:5).

### Pray with Us

There are many disheartening ways that the church has failed to live up to Christ’s character—and yet You have loved Your bride throughout history. Comfort us and remind us that our faith is in You, not each other.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/18/21

# The Sweet Aroma of Christ

 **Read:** [**2 Corinthians 2:14–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%202.14%E2%80%9317)

14But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? 17Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. [2 Corinthians 2:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%202.15)

I knew a rancher who lived near Lometa, Texas. His two grandsons were my best friends. We would go into town with him and follow him around while he shopped and chatted with the folks he knew. He knew them all by name and he knew their stories. He’d stop here and there and ask about a sick child or a difficult marriage, and he’d offer a word of encouragement or two. He would share Scripture and pray if it seemed the right thing to do. I’ll never forget the man. He was something special. He didn’t force his faith on anyone, but he always seemed to leave it behind.

The elderly rancher had about him what Paul would call the sweet “aroma of Christ” ([2 Corinthians 2:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%202.15)). God used him to “spread the aroma of the knowledge of [Christ]” (v. 14). He’s gone to be with God now, but his fragrance lingers on in Lometa.

C. S. Lewis wrote, “There are no ordinary people. You have never talked with a mere mortal.” Put another way, every human contact has eternal consequences. Every day we have opportunities to make a difference in the lives of people around us through the quiet witness of a faithful and gentle life or through encouraging words to a weary soul. Never underestimate the effect a Christlike life can have on others.

By:  [David H. Roper](https://odb.org/author/davidhroper/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What do you think about the statement, “There are no neutral contacts”? What difference could it make in the way you view every contact and conversation throughout the day?

Fill me, Holy Spirit, with love, gentleness, and kindness toward others.

Read [Compassion: Learning to Love Like Jesus](https://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0208).

#### Insight

Paul often used military metaphors in his letters to illustrate spiritual truths. He writes of our spiritual warfare and the weapons needed to secure victory ([2 Corinthians 10:3–5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2010.3%E2%80%935); [Ephesians 6:10–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%206.10%E2%80%9318)). He describes his coworkers using military terms: “fellow soldier” ([Philippians 2:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%202.25)); “good soldier of Christ Jesus” ([2 Timothy 2:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%202.3)). In [1 Timothy 1:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.18), he encourages Timothy to “fight the battle well.” In [2 Corinthians 2:14–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%202.14%E2%80%9317), Paul describes a Roman triumphal procession where the conquering general displays the captives and spoils of war in a victory parade through the city. Paul applied this image to himself in [1 Corinthians 4:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%204.9) and in Colossians used this triumphal metaphor to depict Christ as the victor over sin and Satan: “[Christ] canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross” (2:14–15 nlt).

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

# God Calling – 9/18/21

# 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 – 9/19/21

# 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 – 9/19/21

**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 – 9/19/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/19/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/19/21

# Led by God

**Read:** [**2 Corinthians 2:5–17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+2%3a5%e2%80%9317)

### Forgiveness for the Offender

5If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. 9Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, 11in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

### Ministers of the New Covenant

12Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, 13I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

14But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? 17Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.

A familiar saying goes: “I don’t get mad, I get even.” Unfortunately, some Christians adopt this attitude, not only when they are wronged but also when they perceive an injustice done to someone else. Those who talk about justice today often seem more interested in revenge.

But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 2 Corinthians 2:14

The fact that some in the Corinthian church opposed Paul did not mean that he had no supporters there. In verses 5–11, Paul encourages his supporters not to withhold forgiveness from an unnamed person who had grieved Paul and the whole church. He does not specify what this person had done, but the fact that some in the church viewed it as a personal affront to Paul suggests that it was not the erring brother mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:1.

Whatever the nature of his offense, the apostle urged the church to “forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow” (v. 7). This is the aim of church discipline. The goal is not to get even with those who have sinned but to restore them to fellowship with God and others. Reconciliation is the reason Jesus told His disciples to go to those who sinned against them and point out their sin in private. “If they listen to you,” He explained, “you have won them over” (Matt. 18:15). When we do not extend forgiveness and restoration to those who repent, we allow Satan to spread bitterness and sow discord (2 Cor. 2:11). We also act hypocritically by refusing to treat others as Christ has treated us.

Using the imagery of a conquering general who returns home in triumph, Paul declares that God “always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere” (v. 14).

**Apply the Word**

Too often, we want to punish those we should be persuading. Forgiveness isn’t a failure. It is a victory. Is there someone you need to confront about sin? Go to them today.

### Pray with Us

God of justice, forgive us for treasuring our hurts and grievances. Soften our hearts as we confront those who have sinned against us; soften their hearts to repent. Please restore our fellowship.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/19/21

# Unbreakable in Jesus

 **Read:** [**Jeremiah 1:4–10**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%201.4%E2%80%9310)

### The Call of Jeremiah

4The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

5“Before I formed you in the womb I knew[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18952a)] you,  
    before you were born I set you apart;  
    I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

6“Alas, Sovereign Lord,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.”

7But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. 8Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.

9Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth. 10See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”

#### Footnotes

1. [Jeremiah 1:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9310&version=NIV#en-NIV-18952) Or chose

“Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord. [Jeremiah 1:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%201.8)

Louis Zamperini’s military plane crashed at sea during the war, killing eight of eleven men onboard. “Louie” and two others clambered into life rafts. They drifted for two months, fending off sharks, riding out storms, ducking bullets from an enemy plane, and catching and eating raw fish and birds. They finally drifted onto an island and were immediately captured. For two years Louie was beaten, tortured, and worked mercilessly as a prisoner of war. His remarkable story is told in the book Unbroken.

Jeremiah is one of the Bible’s unbreakable characters. He endured enemy plots ([Jeremiah 11:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2011.18)), was whipped and put in stocks (20:2), flogged and bound in a dungeon (37:15–16), and lowered by ropes into the deep mire of a cistern (38:6). He survived because God had promised to stay with him and rescue him (1:8). God makes a similar promise to us: “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” ([Hebrews 13:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2013.5)). God didn’t promise to save Jeremiah or us from trouble, but He has promised to carry us through trouble.

Louie recognized God’s protection, and after the war he gave his life to Jesus. He forgave his captors and led some to Christ. Louie realized that while we can’t avoid all problems, we need not suffer them alone. When we face them with Jesus, we become unbreakable.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What problem is causing you stress? Tell Jesus that you believe His promise to stay with you through this trial. Let Him carry you.

Jesus, You’re stronger than any storm. Please carry me through the one I’m facing!

Learn more about the prophet [.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/OT225)

#### Insight

Of all the passages in Scripture showing us the sovereignty of God, this is one of the most direct. God says to Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (1:5), and He singles him out to be “a prophet to the nations” (v. 5). God spoke these words specifically to Jeremiah, and they had a special application for his particular mission. God would use him to “uproot and tear down” kingdoms as well as “to build and to plant” (v. 10). God may not use us to uproot kingdoms, but the principle of His sovereignty applies to us every bit as much as it did to Jeremiah. He knew each of us before we were even conceived, and He’s chosen us for His good purposes.

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

# God Calling – 9/19/21

# 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 – 9/20/21

# 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 – 9/20/21

**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 – 9/20/21

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

# Scripture Union – 9/20/21

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

# Today in the Word – 9/20/21

# Confident Through Christ

**Read:** [**2 Corinthians 3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+3)

3 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? 2You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

4Such confidence we have through Christ before God. 5Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. 6He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

### The Greater Glory of the New Covenant

7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, 8will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

12Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. 14But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28860a)] the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

#### Footnotes

1. [2 Corinthians 3:18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%203&version=NIV#en-NIV-28860) Or reflect

I occasionally get requests to provide recommendations for former students. I don’t mind as long as I can remember them. But sometimes, I get a request from a student who I can’t recall or who hardly spoke to me during their time in my class.

Our competence comes from God. 2 Corinthians 3:5

When questioned about his competence, Paul said that the church in Corinth would act as his letter of recommendation: “You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (v. 3). This language alludes to Jeremiah 31:33, where the Lord promises: “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” In effect, Paul offered his critics not only a testimony that came from their own experience but one that was ultimately from God Himself!

Paul is not conceited when he contrasts the glory of his ministry with the fading glory of “the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone” (v. 7). He does not attribute the difference to himself but to the Holy Spirit. This obvious reference to the law of Moses suggests that those who opposed Paul in Corinth wanted to place the Corinthians under the yoke of the law (see Acts 15:10; Gal. 5:1).

Paul’s mention of the veil over Moses’ face in verse 13 refers to an incident in Exodus 34 where Moses put a veil over his face after meeting with God. Paul saw this as a symbol of the gospel’s superiority. He also considered it to be a picture of the blindness of those who were under the law.

**Apply the Word**

Do you feel nervous when you share the gospel? Training helps, but it is not the key to success. God makes us competent to share the good news about Jesus.

### Pray with Us

We praise You for the glory of Your righteousness! We worship You for the glory of the Spirit’s work! We thank You for the glory of Your Son’s sacrifice! May all creation join us in glorifying Your name.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/20/21

# An Unexpected Guest

 **Read:** [**Luke 19:1–10**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.1%E2%80%9310)

### Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

8But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

9Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

[Jesus said], “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” [Luke 19:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.5)

Zach was a lonely guy. When he walked down the city streets, he could feel the hostile glares. But then his life took a turn. Clement of Alexandria, one of the church fathers, says that Zach became a very prominent Christian leader and a pastor of the church in Caesarea. Yes, we’re talking about Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector who climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus ([Luke 19:1–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.1%E2%80%9310)).

What prompted him to climb the tree? Tax collectors were perceived as traitors because they heavily taxed their own people to serve the Roman Empire. Yet Jesus had a reputation for accepting them. Zacchaeus might have wondered if Jesus would accept him too. Being short in stature, however, he couldn’t see over the crowd (v. 3). Perhaps he climbed a tree to seek Him out.

And Jesus was seeking Zacchaeus too. When Christ reached the tree where he was perched, He looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today” (v. 5). Jesus considered it absolutely necessary that He be a guest in this outcast’s home. Imagine that! The Savior of the world wanting to spend time with a social reject.

Whether it’s our hearts, relationships, or lives that need mending, like Zacchaeus we can have hope. Jesus will never reject us when we turn to Him. He can restore what’s been lost and broken and give our lives new meaning and purpose.

By:  [Poh Fang Chia](https://odb.org/author/pohfangchia/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What relationships in your life can Jesus help restore? What will it mean for you to be restored by Him?

Jesus, thank You for seeking me when I was lost in sin and for redeeming my messed-up life.

#### Insight

Tax collectors had a reputation for extorting money from others. Their position would make it easy for them to imprison others with false accusations, so people had no choice but to cooperate. Some would even initiate bribes with tax collectors in hopes of preventing higher fees.

It’s likely that the wealthy Zacchaeus was guilty of such behavior, something he seems to tacitly acknowledge in [Luke 19:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.8) (“if I have cheated anybody”). But Jesus’ willingness to be Zacchaeus’ guest prompted a response of repentance in Zacchaeus, who promises to give half of his possessions to the poor and make four-fold restitution for anyone defrauded by him. Paying “four times the amount” (v. 8) is likely an allusion to Old Testament law regarding retribution (see [Exodus 22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2022)). Zacchaeus’ words show he recognizes his behavior as theft requiring additional compensation.

To learn more about the gospel of Luke, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/NT219](https://ChristianUniversity.org/NT219).

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

# God Calling – 9/20/21

# 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