

# A Great While Before Day

PART ONE:  
January 1–June 30

A New Devotional from  
DON & PEARL ANDERSON

# Bible Teaching Resources

## Tools for Teaching the Word

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# ***A GREAT WHILE BEFORE DAY***

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*Daily Devotional*

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Scripture quotations are noted within the text.

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# Bible Teaching Resources

by Don Anderson Ministries

## What Do We Do?

Formed in 1972 as a nonprofit organization, the Ministries is dedicated to excellence in the communication of the Scripture, camping, and counseling. Our ministry verse is Colossians 3:11b: "*Christ is all and in all.*" This, perhaps more than any other verse, sums up the Ministries' philosophy.

Communicating God's Word accurately and clearly is our primary focus. Bible classes are held annually in more than 20 cities in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana. These classes – conducted in homes, businesses, banks, cafeterias, and public auditoriums – open and free of charge to anyone who is interested in learning more about the Scripture and its relevance to daily life. By design, class environments are warm, friendly, and non-threatening.

Believing that biblical principles can be effectively communicated in informal settings, the Ministries conducts fun-filled conferences and retreats throughout the year. Each event is intended to be an oasis of fun, fellowship, relaxation, and renewal – as well as a time of solid Christian growth.

Because our goal is to convey the Good News of Jesus Christ to as many people as possible, the Ministries' media division produces biblically-based messages on cassette and CD. Marriage video and CD series are also available. The Ministries' team also distributes Don's many books. These widely circulated resources for teaching, study, and spiritual enrichment are listed in our media catalog and are available at nominal cost from our office. A quarterly magazine, *The Grapevine*, is sent without cost to anyone requesting to be on our mailing list. Hundreds of copies of Don's series, *How to Become a Christian*, have been given out in classes, camps, and conferences, or mailed from the office through the years. There is never a charge for this timely series and our constant prayer is that it will be used to bring others into a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

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# A GREAT WHILE BEFORE DAY

**G**he gospel writer Mark records that Jesus “rising up a great while before day... went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (1:35 KJV). Whenever and wherever you spend your time with the Father each day, we hope that these devotional verses and thoughts will be encouraging. Each Scripture selection from the New Testament comes from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD and the Old Testament selections come from the NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.

## January 1—Endurance

**The word for today is *endurance*.**

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:1-2).

***Since they did it, so can we. Keep hanging in there. You’ll make it. Prayer:***

***Lord, I ask for three gifts: grit, guts, and gumption, so that I might finish with joy the race set before me.***

## January 2—Commitment

**The word for today is *commitment*.**

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be

disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

**Rules for the Road:**

- 1 ***Run to Win***
- 2 ***Discipline Produces Reward***
- 3 ***Find the Goal and Hit the Mark***
- 4 ***Extra Effort Produces Excellence***

**Prayer:** *Because the sovereign Lord helps me, I shall not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know I shall not be put to shame.*

**January 3—Fruitfulness**

**The word for today is fruitfulness.**

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you. ... By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples” (John 15:16, 8).

**Four Steps to a Bumper Crop:**

- 1 ***Brokenness***
- 2 ***Surrender***
- 3 ***Obedience***
- 4 ***Patience Prayer: Lord, You are the vine and I am a branch. I am abiding in You and asking You to be glorified in me with much fruit.***

**January 4—A Pearl for Today**

“Therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure” (2 Thess. 1:4).

**PERSEVERANCE**

When I think of perseverance in the midst of adversity I remember my dad. Death claimed his beautiful 31-year-old wife, Mabel. Grief-stricken, but with young children, he set out to work at any job he could find. He farmed the family homestead, raised cattle, sold groceries from a truck, worked at a service station and carried mail. He owned school buses and drove one himself. When I was a young child, our home even tragically burned to the ground.

My dad overcame many obstacles and heartaches. He willingly did whatever was necessary to take care of his family. He died on May 12, 1962, a Christian community leader respected by his peers and family. I have tried to emulate my dad in his work ethic and his fierce determination to keep his household together under difficult and painful circumstances.

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The apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9: “we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” When they were small, our children liked to play with Weebles. The advertising slogan for these roly-poly plastic toys ran something like this: “Weebles wobble but they don’t fall down!” The toys might bobble, sway, spin, and even bounce, but they would always land right side up. This is what the apostle Paul and my dad have demonstrated to me. They endured much difficulty, but they persevered. They landed right side up. Are you wobbling today? Tempted to give up and not persevere? Ask God for fresh strength. You never know how your legacy of persevering might help someone who is watching.

***The size of a man is measured by what it takes to stop him.***

### **January 5—Suffering**

**The word for today is *suffering*.**

“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you” (1 Pet. 5:10).

“Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right” (1 Pet. 4:19).

***Remember the 3 G’s:***

1       ***Grace: His grace will get you through it. This too shall pass.***

2       ***Growth: Right response leads to greater Christlikeness.***

3       ***Glory: Comes to God through victory.***

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that the suffering of this present time cannot be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.***

### **January 6—Growth**

**The word for today is *growth*.**

“Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord” (1 Pet. 2:2-3).

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (2 Peter 3:18).

***Growth takes place when STUDY, SERVICE, and SACRIFICE are a part of our lives.***

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*Prayer: Lord, I claim Your promise to the psalmist, “The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green.”*

### January 7—Compassion

**The word for today is compassion.**

““But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, **HE FELT COMPASSION**, and came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you”” (Luke 10:33-35 emphasis mine).

“And seeing the multitudes, **HE FELT COMPASSION** for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest’” (Matt. 9:36-38 emphasis mine).

*Compassion is the fruit of a deep hurt and a longing to help others. It is the fruit of a holy walk. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Prayer: Father, fill me with the compassion that caused Jesus to empty Himself, taking the form of a servant, and humbling Himself to the point of death on the cross for me.*

### January 8—Temptation

**The word for today is temptation.**

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Gen. 3:6).

“But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3).

“In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes” (2 Cor. 2:11).



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***Satan is continually studying our game films for tendencies, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities, so when the opportune time comes he will be successful.***

“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world.***

### **January 9—Satan**

**The word for today is *Satan*.**

“But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one” (2 Thess. 3:3).

“And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me—to keep me from exalting myself!” (2 Cor. 12:7).

“I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one” (John 17:15).

“Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land” (Job 1:10).

***Our ultimate victory has already been secured at Calvary’s cross. The fight will not cease until we are home in glory.***

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You will soon crush Satan under our feet.***

### **January 10—Warfare**

**The word for today is *warfare*.**

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses” (2 Cor. 10:3-4).

“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier” (2 Tim. 2:3-4).

“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

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“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world” (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

***We will win the war with the Lord’s PRESENCE, POWER, and PROTECTION.***

***Prayer: “...thank God! In the Messiah, in Christ, God leads us from place to place in one perpetual victory parade” (2 Cor. 2:13b-14 MSG).***

### **January 11—A Pearl for Today**

“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:18-20).

### **PURITY**

When we stand before the altar and exchange our single status for that of marriage, we make a lifetime vow of commitment, a covenant of fidelity and separation unto our mate.

At the office, at parties, or in other situations, do you “feel” married? Does your deportment with a person of the opposite sex say, “married,” in word and deed? Charles Swindoll says that when he travels and eats alone, he props a small picture of his family on the restaurant table. His actions say, “married, family man,” just as much as driving down the freeway with an infant strapped in a car seat.

In your social interactions and business contacts, do you maintain a level of propriety and integrity? Conducting yourself in this manner is like having an invisible sign around your neck stating: “Married ... Not for Sale ... No Hunting, Fishing, or Trespassing Allowed.”

When Don and I are on the beach, and a beautiful woman wearing only a patch of material here and there walks by, I tell him, “You keep your eyes on that book, Buster!” There is no need to test his commitment unnecessarily, and this way I help him to “feel” married.

If you are single, are you respectful and do you conduct yourself with purity in obedience to Christ and your commitment to Him? Are you loyal to your

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relationship with Him?

No matter our status, single or married, we are called to purity, whether we “feel” like it or not.

***Forbidden fruit is the cause of many a bad jam.***

### **January 12—The Word**

**The word for today is the word.**

“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty” (Jer. 15:16).

“And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God’s message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe” (1 Thess. 2:13).

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. ... I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Ps. 119:9, 11).

***The Word: KNOW it in your head, STOW it in your heart, SHOW it in your life, SOW it in the world.***

***Prayer: Lord, I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in Your word.***

### **January 13—Prayer**

**The word for today is prayer.**

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17).

“Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us” (Eph. 3:20).

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know” (Jer. 33:3).

“Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear” (Isa. 65:24).

***The key to close communion is clear communication.***

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***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You are near to all who call upon You in truth. You fulfill the desires of those who fear You.***

### **January 14—Surrender**

**The word for today is *surrender*.**

“And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’” (Luke 9:23).

“And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved” (Gen. 43:14).

***Peace will be your portion when your surrender is complete.***

***Prayer: Lord, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the ROCK that is higher than I.***

### **January 15—Perseverance**

**The word for today is *perseverance*.**

“And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5:3-5).

“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus” (Rom. 15:5).

“But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it” (Rom. 8:25).

“Rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer” (Rom. 12:12).

***I will not quit! I am determined to stay by the stuff! I will finish the race!***

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that Your strength is made perfect in my weakness and that, with You, I will persevere.***

### **January 16—The Spirit**

**The word for today is the *Spirit*.**

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“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).

“Who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge” (2 Cor. 1:22).

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh ... If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16, 25).

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

“Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thess. 5:19).

***The Spirit of God is grieved by sin and quenched by resistance. Please Father, purify my heart and accept my total yieldedness to Your will. Prayer: Spirit of the living God, come cleanse, fill, and use me in Your service.***

## **January 17—Witnessing**

**The word for today is *witnessing*.**

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pet. 3:15).

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world” (Phil. 2:14-15).

“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

***The longing of my heart is to live in such a Christlike way that people***



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*will be drawn to Him.*

*Prayer: Lord, I would not delay. Send me to join the savior in seeking those who are lost.*

### **January 18—A Pearl for Today**

“But holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9).

“... seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron” (1 Tim. 4:2).

#### **SEARED OR CLEAR CONSCIENCE**

Don and I have five children. They are all grown, married, and on their own now. When they were young, I could have used a referee shirt and whistle on some days! Sometimes I would only have to give warnings, but sometimes a paddling became necessary.

I do not know how it got started, but my choice of paddle was a kitchen spatula. When I heard the children arguing or misbehaving in the next room, all I usually needed to do was to open the kitchen drawer and rattle the utensils. Whatever was going on would generally stop, and the house would become very quiet. These warnings worked quite well most of the time. Other parents count to three when their kids act up, and the behavior usually corrects itself before “three” is uttered. But sometimes the misbehavior continues. Consequences follow as Dad or Mom makes it to three or grabs the spatula.

How healthy is your conscience toward our heavenly Father? Does a whisper from Him suffice or do you continue in disobedience until discipline is necessary? We have all seen cattle that have been branded. Their hides are tough and calloused. God warns us about keeping our hearts sensitive to Him, neither tough nor calloused.

Maybe your conscience is hardened and you do not quickly respond to God’s warnings. Ask Him for a fresh indwelling of His Spirit to “tenderize” your conscience. When you hear His instruction or correction, be quick to obey.

*Your conscience is e-mail from heaven.*

*Some people do not listen to their conscience because they do not want to take advice from a total stranger.*

### **January 19—Flesh**

**The word for today is *flesh*.**

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“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please” (Gal. 5:16-17).

“So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Rom. 8:12-13).

“For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5).

“The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:12-14).

“Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:24).

***The passion of my life is to be controlled completely by the Spirit and super sensitive to that still, small voice. Prayer: Lord, thank You that those who belong to You have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Please, Spirit of God, bear Your beautiful fruit in my life today.***

## **January 20—Finishing**

**The word for today is *finishing*.**

“I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do” (John 17:4).

“When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit” (John 19:30).

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who

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promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6).

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

***Prayer: Lord, my heart longs to hear You say one day, “You were focused, fruitful, faithful, and a finisher.”***

## **January 21—Rewards**

**The word for today is *rewards*.**

“Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

“In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8).

“For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?” (1 Thess. 2:19).

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done” (Rev. 22:12).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You are coming quickly. Strengthen us to hold fast to what we have, that no one might take our crown. Lord, just seeing You is going to be reward enough.***

## **January 22—Rapture**

**The word for today is *rapture*.**

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is

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written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (1 Cor. 15:51-54).

“Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3).

“But just as it is written, ‘Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him’” (1 Cor. 2:9).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:16-18).

“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

***Prayer: Lord, James tells us to be patient, to strengthen our hearts for Your coming is at hand. The judge is standing just at the door.***

## **January 23—Brokenness**

**The word for today is *brokenness*.**

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Ps. 34:18).

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise” (Ps. 51:17).

“‘Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?’ declares the Lord. ‘This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word’” (Isa. 66:2).

“For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: ‘I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite’” (Isa. 57:15).

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you” (Ps. 32:8-9).

***Life is a joy when you wake up every morning surrendered, broken,***

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*and ready to serve.*

*Prayer: Lord, the supreme desire of my heart is to be broken and spilled out and used up for Thee.*

## **January 24—Gifts**

**The word for today is gifts.**

“But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ... But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. ... But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired” (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18).

“For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (Rom. 12:4-5).

“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph. 4:7).

“And say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it’” (Col. 4:17).

“Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you” (1 Tim. 4:14-16).

“And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (2 Tim. 1:6).

***Shaped on His anvil we are tools prepared for His service.***

***Prayer: Lord, I want to be found by You to be fervent, faithful, and on fire. Help me to use the gifts You have given me to edify others.***

## **January 25— A Pearl for Today**

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know” (Jer. 33:3 NASB).

### **JESUS PAID IT ALL**

Four of our five children attended Biola, a Christian university in LaMirada, California, in the Los Angeles area. Don and I have lived more than 30 years in



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Texas, where we raised our family. It was a big adjustment for us when the kids left for college, especially with Biola so far away.

One day I laughed to myself recalling the day we put our middle child and oldest son, Bobby, on the plane for California and college life, I could imagine big sister Donna teaching little brother Bobby the ropes at Biola. “Now, Bobby, the first thing to learn is how to make a collect call home.” This was obviously well before the days of cell phones.

All of our kids learned the college lesson of collect calling very well!! Don and I actually did not mind paying the bill, because we loved hearing from the kids. This is the same way our heavenly Father feels. We can make collect calls to Him any time or anywhere, because He has paid the bill. The call does not cost us anything, but it was very costly for Him. It cost Him His only Son.

Just as Don and I enjoyed our calls from the kids, so our heavenly Father is listening for your call. There are many verses in the scriptures where God invites us to call. He is waiting for your call and will answer immediately. He does not have call waiting!!

“And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me” (Ps. 50:15 NASB).

“Then you will CALL upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you” (Jer. 29:12 NASB).

***Prayer: the next best thing to being there!***

## **January 26—Giving**

**The word for today is *giving*.**

“Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints” (2 Cor. 8:1-4).

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always

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having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed” (2 Cor. 9:6-8).

“And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins. And He said, ‘Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on’” (Luke 21:1-4).

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed” (Prov. 11:24-25).

***Prayer: Lord, You have said to test You with the tithe and see if You will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that we will not have room enough for it.***

## **January 27—Contentment**

**The word for today is *contentment*.**

“Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you’” (Heb. 13:5).

“But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content” (1 Tim. 6:6-8).

“For surely, O Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield” (Ps. 5:12).

“May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed” (Ps. 20:4).

“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?” (Ps. 42:1-2).

“For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Ps. 107:9).

***I feel like singing the chorus of “Satisfied”: “Hallelujah! I have found Him—Whom my soul so long has craved. Jesus satisfies my longings; Thro’ His blood I now am saved.”***

***Prayer: Lord, Your word tells me that the fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.***

## **January 28—Convictions**

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## **The word for today is *convictions*.**

Joseph said: "... My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9).

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.' In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing" (Job 1:20-22).

"But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way" (Dan. 1:8). "Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before" (Dan. 6:10).

"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward" (Heb. 11:24-26).

The culture says one thing and You, Lord, say another. Your Word says: "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of my mind, that I might demonstrate to everyone Your perfect will" (Rom. 12:2).

***Prayer: Lord, by Your strength, enable me to stand firm and steadfast against satanic opposition.***

## **January 29—Worry**

### **The word for today is *worry*.**

"Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matt. 6:31-34).

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in

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Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

“Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7).

“You are my portion, O Lord; I have promised to obey your words. I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise” (Ps. 119:57-58).

“O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you” (2 Chron. 20:12).

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal” (Isa. 26:3, 4).

***How about joining me in singing the third verse of “Day by Day”? “Help me then, in ev’ry tribulation, So to trust Thy promises, O Lord, That I lose not faith’s sweet consolation, Offered me within Thy holy Word. Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting, E’er to take, as from a Father’s hand, One by one, the days, the moments fleeting, Till I reach the promised land.”***

***Prayer: Lord, some trust in chariots and some in horses, but I am trusting in the name of the Lord our God.***

**January 30—Aging**

**The word for today is aging.**

“The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. ... Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Ps. 90:10, 12).

“When Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the Lord said to him, ‘You are very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over’” (Josh. 13:1).

“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him’” (Ps. 92:12-15).

“I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread” (Ps. 37:25).

“Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone” (Ps. 71:9).

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“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

***Lord, aging makes it better. Help me to keep saying: “Come along with me, the best is yet to be!”***

***Prayer: Lord, show me my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting are the days of my life.***

**January 31—Accountability**

**The word for today is *accountability*.**

“So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Rom. 14:19).

“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification” (Rom. 15:2).

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (Prov. 17:17).

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Eccles. 4:9-12).

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer” (Rom. 12:10-12).

“May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands” (Ps. 90:17).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for the future day of accountability scheduled in Your presence.***

**February 1—A Pearl for Today**

“But thou, O Lord art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head” (Ps. 3:3 KJV).

## **PERSONALIZING THE PROMISES OF GOD**



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One day my eldest daughter told me, “Mom when you die, I want your Bible as my inheritance.” Her husband Mark, our son-in-law, kiddingly quipped, “Forget the Bible; go for the house!” We had a good laugh, but it reminded me afresh of how precious God’s word is to us. In my Bible I have many notes scribbled, dates written, and verses underlined. Let me share a few of the promises I have claimed over the years and noted in my Bible:

FOR OUR MARRIED LIFE: Isaiah 26:3 “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (KJV).

FOR THE CHILDREN: Isaiah 54:13, “And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord: and great shall be the peace of thy children” (KJV).

FOR MY HUSAND: Ephesians 1:17-19, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power” (KJV).

In my Bible, alongside Psalm 3:3 (the verse at the top of this devotional), I have written “this is the will of God concerning you.” The second part of the verse—“and the lifter up of mine head”—is underlined with red pencil many times. How well I remember—even after the passing of many years—the agony, tears, and humiliation I felt when the Lord gave me this promise. Because of a very difficult situation, I was convinced I could never lift up my head again. As I searched the scriptures for comfort, the Lord showed me this verse. Friends, when the Lord lifts up your head, nothing or no one can put it down again! He did lift up my head. As you read God’s word, get a red pencil and read until you have a promise for today. Mark it well, for you never know who might inherit your Bible someday, and God will use those red marks in their lives as well.

***Mark your Bible and it will mark you.***

## **February 2—Death**

**The word for today is *death*.**

“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth” (Prov. 27:1).

“Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away” (James 4:14).

“You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man’s life is but a breath. Selah” (Ps. 39:5).

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“Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight—we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

“‘O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

“Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Ps. 90:12).

“According to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better” (Phil. 1:20-23).

***Prayer: Lord, what joy springs up in my heart as I know that soon I will be with You and be like You!***

### **February 3—Authenticity**

**The word for today is *authenticity*.**

“How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep me from deliberate sins! Don’t let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer”(Ps. 19:12-14 NLT).

“His eyes are on the ways of men; he sees their every step. ... Teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I will not do so again” (Job 34:21, 32).

“Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth” (Ps. 26:2-3).

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps. 139:23-24). “But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim. 1:5).

“In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men” (Acts 24:16).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for showing me the way of life, granting me the joy***

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*of Your presence, and promising me the pleasure of living with You forever.*

#### **February 4—Complacency**

**The word for today is *complacency*.**

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (Rev. 3:15-16).

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard” (Heb. 2:1-3).

“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones” (Prov. 14:30).

“And say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it’” (Col. 4:17).

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Prov. 4:23).

“Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you” (1 Tim. 4:15-16).

“Let us not allow slackness to spoil our work and let us keep the fires of the spirit burning, as we do our work for God” (Rom. 12:11 Phillips)

**Prayer: Lord, I trust in Your unfailing love. I will rejoice because You have rescued me. I will sing to You because You have been so good to me.**

#### **February 5—Stress**

**The word for today is *stress*.**

“For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead” (2 Cor. 1:8-9).

“But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.’ But the Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:40-42).

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“Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me” (Ps. 42:5-7).

“Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day’s journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, Lord,’ he said. ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors’” (1 Kings 19:3-4).

“I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint” (Jer. 31:25).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You are my God, and You teach me what is best for me, directing me in the way I should go.***

## **February 6—Sin**

### **The word for today is *sin*.**

“‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isa. 1:18).

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Ps. 51:10).

“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:11-13).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ

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Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

“My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you” (Isa. 44:22).

“Oh, what joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!” (Ps. 32:1-2 NLT).

I feel like singing the third verse of “It Is Well with My Soul”: “My sin— O the bliss of this glorious tho’t—My sin not in part, but the whole—Is nailed to His cross, and I bear it no more! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! It is well, with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.”

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You are the one who blots out my transgressions and remembers my sins no more.***

## **February 7—Failure**

**The word for today is *failure*.**

“Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope” (Ps. 130:1-5).

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death” (Prov. 14:12). “Righteousness guards the man of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner” (Prov. 13:6).

““Do not be afraid,” Samuel replied. ‘You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart’” (1 Sam. 12:20).

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland” (Isa. 43:18-19).

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea” (Mic. 7:18-19).

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“Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Ps. 51:2).

“Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him” (Ps. 32:10).

***Prayer: Lord, I want to sing to You this morning: “There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel’s veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose ALL their guilty stains.”***

### **February 8—A Pearl for Today**

“I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me?”

I will walk within my house with a perfect heart” (Ps. 101:2 KJV).

#### **WALK WITHIN THY HOUSE WITH A PERFECT HEART**

Lord, how I long to serve Thee upon some great mission field  
And have the world see how much I love Thee,  
By this, my sacrifice.  
“Nay”, came His voice so gentle, yet so firm.  
“Walk within thy house with a perfect heart  
“And do not for other things yearn.”  
Then Lord, make within these walls,  
A perfect sacrifice of Thy grace.  
A place where all who enter may see Thy face  
And rest and be renewed.  
May those who dwell here, Lord,  
Find always warm welcome,  
Peace and happy words.  
That when they go,  
Their own hearths to build,  
They will have a perfect pattern,  
And Thy perfect will fulfill.

**—Pearl Anderson**

Our attitude should always be, “speak Lord for thy servant heareth” (1 Sam. 3:10 KJV).

Quiet assurance comes when we have a listening ear turned to recognize the voice of God. Quick obedience guarantees further communication from God. When we acquiesce with alacrity to any instructions from God, He is pleased. He will continue to share His will and plans with us. God has “a wonderful plan

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for your life.” When He says jump our only question should be, “how high?” My heart has heard you say, “Come talk with me” and my heart responds, “Lord, I am coming” (Ps. 27:8 NLT).

## **February 9—Friendship**

**The word for today is *friendship*.**

“After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself” (1 Sam. 18:1).

“While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life. And Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. ‘Don’t be afraid,’ he said. ‘My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this.’ The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh” (1 Sam. 23:15-18).

“How the mighty have fallen in battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights. I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women” (2 Sam. 1:25-26).

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (Prov. 17:17).

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Prov. 18:24).

“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do what I command you” (John 15:13, 14).

“But Ruth replied, ‘Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me’” (Ruth 1:16-17).

***Prayer: Lord, what a friend we have in Jesus! He became like us so we could be made like Him. What a savior is Jesus!***

## **February 10—Judgment**

**The word for today is *judgment*.**

“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. 18:25b). “Because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

“Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes



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see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment” (Eccles. 11:9).

“On the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus” (Rom. 2:16).

“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:29).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

“Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (2 Thess. 1:8-9).

***“On Him almighty vengeance fell that would have sunk a world to hell. He bore it for a chosen race and thus becomes my hiding place.” Prayer: Lord, what comfort it is to know that Jesus was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him. Hallelujah for the cross!***

## **February 11—Sovereignty**

**The word for today is *sovereignty*.**

“I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please” (Isa. 46:10).

“Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails” (Prov. 19:21).

“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps” (Prov. 16:9).

“God’s voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding” (Job 37:5).

“But if it were I, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him. He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted” (Job 5:8-9).

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives” (Gen. 50:20).

“How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears” (2 Sam. 7:22).

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“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

***Prayer: Father, it is hard to wait for the day when our sovereign Lord will be crowned Lord of all. I am singing: Crown Him with Many Crowns today!***

## **February 12—Goals**

**The word today is goals.**

“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).

“We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

“But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim. 1:5).

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

“And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11).

“Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (2 Tim. 2:22).

“Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus

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Christ” (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to stay focused on the finish line. I want to accomplish every goal you have for my life.*

### **February 13—Marriage**

**The word for today is marriage.**

“The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called “woman,” for she was taken out of man.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen. 2:23-24).

“Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matt. 19:6).

“A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value” (Prov. 31:10-11).

“Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband” (1 Cor. 7:1-3).

“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. And let not your adornment be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God” (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

“Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband” (Eph. 5:33).

“Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned” (Song of Sol. 8:6-7).

**Prayer:** *Hallelujah! The Lord our God, the Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.*

### **February 14—Love**

**The word for today is love.**

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“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11).

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

“And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity” (Col. 3:14).

“Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

““He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him”” (John 14:21).

How about singing a prayer, “More Love to Thee”: “More love to Thee, O Christ, More love to Thee! Hear Thou the prayer I make On bended knee. This is my earnest plea: More love, O Christ, to Thee; More love to Thee, More love to Thee!”

***Prayer: “How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God. How vast is the sum of them” (Ps. 139:17).***

**February 15—A Pearl for Today**

“Hate evil, you who love the Lord” (Ps. 97:10 NASB).

### **HATRED OF EVIL**

One evening many years ago, I was reading about the life of King David with our two youngest children, Julea and Andy. Andy liked to read about King David and was very interested in his life.

When we had finished reading that night, Andy asked about the next story in the book on David. I read the title of the next chapter, “A Good King Sins.” In a disappointed tone, Andy sadly said, “Oh, I didn’t want him to sin.”

Do you feel joy when you hear that a fellow Christian has sinned? Or do Andy’s sentiments—“Oh, I didn’t want him to sin”—more closely reflect your feelings?

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Think back to the last time you heard of a Christian's falling or failing. How did you respond? Our response gives a glimpse into our heart. If we truly love the Lord, we will hate evil, whether it is our sin or the sin of another.

If we truly hate evil, how should we properly respond to news of sin? Three ideas come to mind, all starting with the letter G.

GRIEF: God's kingdom is harmed by sin; sin should grieve our hearts, as it does the heart of God.

GENTLENESS: Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted."

GRACE: In a collection of Puritan prayers, Valley of Vision, one saint is quoted thus: "Help me to be a dispenser as well as a partaker of grace" (12).

May God deliver us from the warped idea that the sins of others somehow make us look better. All who name the name of Christ must also bear the shame when a fellow Christian sins. May our words reflect that sorrow and shame. May we never gloat.

***When others fall, let us fall to our knees, for them.***

## **February 16—Tongue**

**The word for today is *tongue*.**

"A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction" (Prov. 16:23).

"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Prov. 12:18).

"The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit" (Prov. 15:4).

"This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger" (James 1:19).

"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear" (Eph. 4:29).

"But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth" (Col. 3:8).

"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person" (Col. 4:6).

"Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies" (Ps. 34:13).

"Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips" (Ps.

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141:3).

**Prayer:** *O Lord! May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.*

### **February 17—Lying**

**The word for today is lying.**

“There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers” (Prov. 6:16-19).

“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. ... and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. 21:8, 27).

“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies” (John 8:44).

“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free. ... A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will perish” (Prov. 19:5, 9).

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” (Eph. 4:25).

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices” (Col. 3:9).

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

**Prayer:** *Lord, thank You for the peace that comes to my heart in knowing it is impossible for You to lie.*

### **February 18—Honesty**

**The word for today is honesty.**

“Though you probe my heart and examine me at night, though you test me, you will find nothing; I have resolved that my mouth will not sin” (Ps. 17:3).

“And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance” (Luke 8:15).

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“Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. ... He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. ... May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you” (Ps. 25:4-5, 9, 21).  
“Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away” (Gen. 5:24).

“This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God” (Gen. 6:9).

“In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1).

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

**Prayer: Lord, my prayer this morning is recorded in Acts 24:16: “In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.”**

**February 19—Christlikeness**

**The word for today is *Christlikeness*.**

“My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you” (Gal. 4:19).

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2).

“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me” (Gal. 2:20).

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6).



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“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:1-2).

***Prayer: Father, it is thrilling to know that I am growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ and soon I will be like Him.***

## **February 20—Time**

### **The word for today is time.**

“And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:11-14).

“Show me, O Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man’s life is but a breath. Selah” (Ps. 39:4-5).

“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:15-17).

“Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Ps. 90:12).

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24).

“And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—for He says, ‘At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you;’ behold, now is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, now is ‘the day of salvation’” (2 Cor. 6:1-2).

***The third verse of “Softly and Tenderly” is meaningful: “Time is now fleeting; the moments are passing, passing from you and from me. Shadows are gathering; death’s night is coming, Coming for you and for me. Come home, come home, You who are weary, come home.” Prayer: Lord, knowing that my time is wholly in Your hands, I am trusting You fully with the arrival of each minute. Help me not to waste it.***

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## February 21—Kindness

**The word for today is *kindness*.**

“The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the simple-hearted; when I was in great need, he saved me” (Ps. 116:5-6).

“The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made” (Ps. 145:8-9).

“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Col. 3:12).

“In purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love” (2 Cor. 6:6).

“Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant” (1 Cor. 13:4).

“And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

“And the Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged” (2 Tim. 2:24).

***Prayer: Lord, because of Your great love we are not consumed. Your compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is Your faithfulness.***

## February 22—A Pearl for Today

“Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance. I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Phil. 4:11-12).

### CONTENTMENT

There is a bit of a generation gap between our three older children and our two younger ones. Here’s an example. When they were growing up, our three oldest children would ask at dinnertime, “Is there any butter for the baked potatoes?” Our younger children always took the butter for granted and asked, “Is there is any sour cream?”

The apostle Paul lived in times of prosperity and in times of humble means. When I reflect over our years in ministry, I recall the same: seasons of prosperity and times of humble means. I would not trade the years of God’s

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supplying our needs day to day for anything! I have seen the faithful hand of God provide for His work and His servants. Past experience has increased my present faith and trust. I have also been blessed by the times when we did not have stressful financial concerns. Some years, God has supplied funds in advance to allow us to concentrate our efforts in other areas.

The apostle Paul says twice he has “learned” contentment in his circumstances. Having contentment in whatever circumstances envelope us is not a natural response. IT IS LEARNED. How are your lessons going on contentment these days? Have you learned them well? Are you at peace with your present provision from God? If not, what must occur that you might say, along with Paul, “I have learned to be content.” Trust the Lord to provide what you need.

*Today’s extravagance becomes tomorrow’s necessity.*

## **February 23—Praise**

**The word for today is *praise*.**

“Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live” (Ps. 146:1-2).

“Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness” (Ps. 150:2).

“The heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones” (Ps. 89:5).

“For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods” (Ps. 96:4).

“Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name” (Ps. 103:1).

“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom” (Ps. 145:3).

“Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name” (Heb. 13:15).

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Col. 3:16).

***I’m singing the Doxology. Won’t you join me: “Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.” Prayer: Praise to the Lord, the almighty, the king of creation!***

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## February 24—Joy

### The word for today is *joy*.

“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17).

“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full” (John 15:11).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness” (Gal. 5:22).

“Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him” (Ps. 126:5-6).

“For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning” (Ps. 30:5).

“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!” (Phil. 4:4).

“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Ps. 16:11).

“He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart” (Eccles. 5:20).

“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty” (Jer. 15:16).

“And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:52).

***Prayer: Lord, Your joy is my strength as I face this new day!***

## February 25—Peace

### The word for today is *peace*.

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, a Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you” (Isa. 26:3).

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called

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in one body; and be thankful” (Col. 3:15).

“Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Ps. 34:14).

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7).

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful” (John 14:27).

“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen” (Rom. 15:33).

“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isa. 32:17).

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!” (2 Thess. 3:16).

***Join me in singing the first verse of “Wonderful Peace”: “Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight Rolls a melody sweeter than psalm; In celestial-like strains it unceasingly falls O’er my soul like an infinite calm. Peace! peace! wonderful peace, Coming down from the Father above! Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray, In fathomless billows of love.” Prayer: Lord, I cast all my cares upon You, knowing that You will sustain me and never let me fall.***

## **February 26—Patience**

**The word for today is *patience*.**

“Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (James 5:7-8).

“That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:12).

“Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously” (Col. 1:11).

“In purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love” (2 Cor. 6:6).

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love” (Eph. 4:1-2).

“Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near” (Phil. 4:5).

“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone;

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just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you” (Col. 3:12-13).

“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Tim. 4:2).

“Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant” (1 Cor. 13:4).

***Prayer: Lord, remind me of Peter’s commandment, “Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful creator in doing what is right.”***

## **February 27—Forgiveness**

**The word for today is *forgiveness*.**

“But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared” (Ps. 130:4).

“If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering” (Matt. 5:23-24).

“Then Peter came and said to Him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven’ (Matt. 18:21-22).

“But Jesus was saying, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing’” (Luke 23:34a).

“And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’ And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them!’ And having said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:59-60).

“And straightening up, Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?’ And she said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more’” (John 8:10-11).

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7).

***Prayer: Lord, I am letting the pot full of my grievances drop and I am starting the day free of this burden.***

## **February 28—Bitterness**

**The word for today is *bitterness*.**

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and

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light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight” (Isa. 5:20-21).

“In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord” (1 Sam. 1:10).

“I loathe my very life; therefore I will give free rein to my complaint and speak out in the bitterness of my soul” (Job 10:1).

“Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy” (Prov. 14:10).

“A foolish son brings grief to his father and bitterness to the one who bore him” (Prov. 17:25).

“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice” (Eph. 4:31).

“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled” (Heb. 12:15).

“Even today my complaint is bitter; his hand is heavy in spite of my groaning” (Job 23:2).

“Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness” (Rom. 3:14).

“Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them” (Col. 3:19).

“But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth” (James 3:14).

**Prayer: Lord, how sweet do Your promises taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.**

### **February 29—A Pearl for Today**

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Jer. 1:5 NASB).

#### **EWE’S AN EWE-NIQUE SHEEP**

“Who is happier,” a professor asked his class, “a person with five million dollars or someone with five children?”

One of the students quickly replied, “The person with five kids.”

“Why?” asked the professor.

“Because people who have five million always want more,” the student retorted.

That anecdote appeared in the newspaper years ago, and I still have the yellowed clipping. With our five kids, Don and I definitely identify with the sentiment.

I’ll never forget when our older children were teasing our youngest daughter, Julea, over her appearance. Julea has always had beautiful blonde hair, while the



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rest of the kids have dark hair like Don and me. One day, the older siblings informed Julea that she had been adopted because she had a different hair color from the rest of us. They teased her till she started crying and came running to me. She did not know what being adopted meant, but the way her brothers and sisters were saying it, she knew she was supposed to be hurt. After asking me if she was adopted, I reassuringly told her, “Honey, you do not adopt the fifth child.” That appeased her.

One of the marvels of God’s creation of His children is His creativity. He has made each of us unique. Jeremiah 1:5 speaks of this. We were on God’s mind before He created us, and He knew exactly how He wanted us to be formed. He had a blueprint and knew every detail about us in advance.

Thank God for your uniqueness. Then think about your friends and associates. What are their special God given features or abilities? Purpose to tell them how you thank God for creating them with (you fill in the blank) \_\_\_\_\_.

It honors God when we acknowledge and delight in His handiwork.

During one family get together, we jotted down characteristics we admired and appreciated about the others, beginning each brief descriptor with the letters of the person’s first name (for example, Don = D—dependable, O—organized, N—neat). Do the same with the letters of your name, thanking the Lord that, before you were formed, He knew you would be \_\_\_\_\_.

“And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31).

***Remember you are ewe-nique to the shepherd, the Lord of hosts.***

### **March 1—Pride**

**The word for today is *pride*.**

“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18).

“To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech” (Prov. 8:13).

“Though the Lord is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar” (Ps. 138:6).

“Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice” (Prov. 13:10).

“A man’s pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor” (Prov. 29:23).

“But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory” (Dan. 5:20).

“But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘God is opposed to the proud,

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but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

“You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time” (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

“Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:10).

***Prayer: Lord, crush me, break me and melt me in the furnace of affliction so that I become soft and pliable clay in Your hands. Worship with me this morning: “Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me.”***

### **March 2—Criticism**

**The word for today is criticism.**

“Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp” (Num. 11:1).

“Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer” (1 Cor. 10:9-10).

“Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye” (Matt. 7:1-5).

“Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction” (Isa. 29:24).

“‘No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me,’ declares the Lord” (Isa. 54:17).

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Col. 3:16).

***Prayer: Lord, Your word says: “The wisdom from above is first pure, then***

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*peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy” (James 3:17). Lord, control my speech this day so that I will be a blessing and encouragement to others.*

### **March 3—Work**

**The word for today is *work*.**

“All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty” (Prov. 14:23).

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men” (Col. 3:23).

“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows, and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor” (John 4:35-38).

“Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest’” (Matt. 9:37-38).

“We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

“Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord” (Rom. 16:12).

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

*Prayer: Lord, I want to be a sweating servant straining in Your service until the whistle blows. I am singing a verse of “Work for the Night Is Coming”: “Work, for the night is coming, Work through the sunny noon; Fill brightest hours with labor, Rest comes sure and soon: Give ev’ry flying minute Something to keep in store; Work, for the night is coming, When man works no more.”*

### **March 4—Selfishness**

**The word for today is *selfishness*.**

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely

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look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil. 2:3-4).

“Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said, ‘What are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?’ And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Him” (Matt. 26:14-16).

“I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and he forbids those who desire to do so, and puts them out of the church” (3 John 9, 10).

“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing” (James 3:13-16).

“But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:19-21).

“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord” (Lam. 3:40).

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal” (John 12:24-25).

***Prayer: Lord, according to my earnest expectation and hope, may I not be put to shame in anything, but may Christ even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.***

### **March 5—Relationship**

**The word for today is *relationship*.**

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

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“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again’” (John 3:6-7).

“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

“But whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away” (2 Cor. 3:16).

“‘Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you’” (2 Cor. 6:17).

“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matt. 7:22-23).

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you— unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor. 13:5).

***Prayer: Lord, will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? Show us Your unfailing love, O Lord, and grant us Your salvation.***

### **March 6—Race**

**The word for today is *race*.**

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:1-2).

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

“You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?” (Gal. 5:7).

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also

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I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:10-14).

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

***Prayer: Lord, I do not consider my life as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course and fulfill the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus: to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.***

### **March 7—A Pearl for Today**

“When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household” (John 19:26-27).

### **RESPECT**

Things have come full circle in our family. Don gave our grandson Ian Anderson the bottles, caps, and capper to make homemade root beer for the family at Christmas. Tradition lives on.

When we ministered at Hide-A-Way Lake Church, I loved watching Charlie and Marie Haas drive by with Miss Lucy. Miss Lucy—actually she was Mrs. Lucy, Marie’s mother—always sat in the front seat with Charlie while Marie rode in the back. It was a matter of respect. Out of respect for my wonderful mother-in-law, Rosalea Anderson, I also made sure she was seated comfortably in the front seat when she rode with us. Our daughters have observed this, and now guess who gets to sit in the front seat? It seemed strange at first, but now I feel cared for and special. From sowing a small kindness, I am reaping a threefold kindness in return, with my three daughters.

We have experienced another change in our relationship with our children. They are now the givers in many ways. Each has unique bents and abilities. Some do our Christmas shopping; others cook, set the tables, repair things, wash dishes, and entertain the children. When we are together, hopefully the grandchildren are watching and the next generation will learn to respect and take care of their

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parents. Then we truly will have come full circle.

It endears my heart even more toward our savior when I think of Him caring for His dear mother's needs while suffering on the cross. What love and respect He had for Mary! We need to follow our Lord's example. Whom has He called you to love and respect? Demonstrate your love and respect for Him by obeying His call. I am thankful for our children who are obeying their Lord's command to honor their father and mother. Can your parents or elderly relatives say the same? You never know who may be watching how you care for them. They may be the ones who will be your caregivers someday. Teach them well!!

***“Train up a child in the way that he should go and be sure to walk in it yourself sometime.”***

***—Dear Abby***

### **March 8—Potter and Clay**

**The words for today are *potter* and *clay*.**

“And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father” (Rev. 2:27).

“On the contrary, who are you, o man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?” (Rom. 9:20-21).

“This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ‘Go down to the potter’s house, and there I will give you my message.’ So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me: ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?’ declares the Lord. ‘Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel’” (Jer. 18:1-6).

“Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand” (Isa. 64:8).

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves” (2 Cor. 4:7).

“But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen [vessel] of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel’” (Acts 9:15).

“Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work” (2 Tim.



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2:20-21).

**Prayer:** *Lord, I feel like singing with the hymnist this morning: “Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the Potter, I am the clay. Mould me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still.”*

### **March 9—Legalism**

**The word for today is legalism.**

“The Lord says: ‘These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men’” (Isa. 29:13).

“Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ... For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them’” (Gal. 3:3, 10).

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:20).

“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all” (James 2:10).

“Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:19-20).

“For what does the Scripture say? ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.’ Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness” (Rom. 4:3-5).

**Prayer:** *Lord, thank You that Jesus entered the holy place once for all and obtained eternal redemption, having offered Himself without blemish to God. Now our consciences are freed and cleansed to serve the living God. Hallelujah for the lamb!*

### **March 10—Humility**

**The word for today is humility.**

“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way” (Ps. 25:9).

“The Lord sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground” (Ps. 147:6).

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of

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you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

“Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

“But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace” (Ps. 37:11).

“And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted” (Matt. 23:12).

“Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls” (Matt. 11:29).

“The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor” (Prov. 15:33).

“Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:10).

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).

***Prayer: Lord, You tell us that You live in a high and holy place, but You also dwell with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. Please Lord, live out Your life in me!***

### **March 11—Anger**

**The word for today is *anger*.**

“Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it’” (Gen. 4:6-7).

“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered” (Prov. 22:24).

“Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions” (Gal. 5:20).

“This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger” (James 1:19).

“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth” (Col. 3:8).

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. ... A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel” (Prov. 15:1, 18).

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“I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. ... If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve” (Lev. 26:19, 21).

“Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. ... Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice” (Eph. 4:26-27, 31).

**Prayer:** *Lord, Your word says that “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” Lord, I want to offer these sacrifices to You today.*

### **March 12—Communication**

**The word for today is *communication*.**

“And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words” (Matt. 6:7).

“How painful are honest words! But what do your arguments prove?” (Job 6:25).

“Does not the ear test words as the tongue tastes food?” (Job 12:11). “How long will you torment me and crush me with words?” (Job 19:2).

“I also could speak like you, if you were in my place; I could make fine speeches against you and shake my head at you. But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief” (Job 16:4-5).

“I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread” (Job 23:12).

“When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise” (Prov. 10:19).

“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer” (Ps. 19:14)

“My lover spoke and said to me, ‘Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me’” (Song of Sol. 2:10).

“Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones” (Prov. 16:24).

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to consider, with words of affirmation and encouragement, how to stimulate others to love and good deeds.*

### **March 13—Listening**

**The word for today is *listening*.**

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“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13).

“Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him” (Exod. 18:19).

“Listen carefully to my words; let your ears take in what I say” (Job 13:17).

“When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the Lord your God and obey him” (Deut. 4:30).

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).

“Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old” (Prov. 23:22).

“Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold is a wise man’s rebuke to a listening ear” (Prov. 25:12).

“Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few” (Eccles. 5:1-2).

“Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing” (Heb. 5:11).

“O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name” (Dan. 9:19).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your promise: “Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your eyes will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’”***

### **March 14—A Pearl for Today**

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

### **SERVANT’S HEART**

I frequently accompany Don when he travels to various cities to teach Bible studies. When we are on a teaching tour, a small army serves us. Because they love Jesus, their servant attitudes allow these precious ones to do whatever is

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necessary to make a class successful. The wife of a busy executive told me that he was the one who cleaned the bathroom we used while staying in their home. I was amazed that he would do that to serve us.

If it is hard to accept that an important business executive would clean a bathroom for us, then how much more difficult is it, by faith, to accept that the Son of God washed feet, served tables, healed the sick, and finally gave His life for us? He made the ultimate sacrifice—death on a cross—that we might be saved from our sins!

In light of this, how could we ever think we could please God except by emulating the servant attitude of His Son? Jesus spoke severely to the Pharisees because of their haughty spirits. Either a servant attitude or a haughty spirit will show itself when we are treated with disrespect or disdain by others. When our servant attitude is tested, we are sometimes dismayed at how quickly we revert to our old arrogant reactions.

Do not forget the ultimate goal of every child of God is to hear, “Well done, good and faithful SERVANT” (Matt. 25:21). If it truly is our desire to hear these words from our master, we must be faithful today. Servanthood does not just happen. It is the result of faithful daily service.

What are the excuses we use to deprive ourselves of the joy and fulfillment of serving Christ by serving others?

***Pick up your towel; there are dirty feet all around you!***

### **March 15—Abiding**

**The word for today is *abiding*.**

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full” (John 15:4-11).

“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not

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have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9).

“Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it” (Heb. 4:1).

“Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine’” (John 8:31)

“No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us” (1 John 4:12).

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you” (John 15:16).

“The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6).

***Prayer: Lord, my soul yearns for You in the night; in the morning, my spirit longs for You.***

***Worship with me and sing a verse of “Constantly Abiding”: “There’s a peace in my heart that the world never gave, A peace it cannot take away. Tho’ the trials of life may surround like a cloud, I’ve a peace that has come there to stay! Constantly abiding, Jesus is mine; Constantly abiding, rapture divine! He never leaves me lonely; whispers, O so kind, ‘I will never leave thee.’ Jesus is mine.”***

## **March 16—Trusting**

**The word for today is *trusting*.**

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6).

“Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this” (Ps. 37:3-5).

“My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken. ... Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. ... Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Selah” (Ps. 62:1-2).

5-6, 8).

“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal” (Isa. 26:4).

“In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name” (Ps. 33:21).

“For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers” (1 Tim. 4:10).

“Indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead” (2 Cor. 1:9).

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior” (Hab. 3:17-18).

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song” (Ps. 28:7).

*Prayer: Lord, I am learning to lean on You because You are all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-controlling and You will never leave nor forsake me.*

*A verse of “Trust and Obey” seems appropriate: “When we walk with the Lord In the light of His Word, What a glory He sheds on our way! While we do His good will, He abides with us still, And with all who will trust and obey. Trust and obey, For there’s no other way To be happy in Jesus But to trust and obey.”*

### **March 17—Attitude**

**The word for today is attitude.**

“For he is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. ‘Eat and drink,’ he says to you, but his heart is not with you” (Prov. 23:7).

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Prov. 4:23).

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:20-21).

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things”



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(Phil. 4:8).

“He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth” (Ruth 4:15).

“The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old” (Prov. 20:29).

“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green” (Ps. 92:12-14).

“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Col. 3:2).

***The attitude of gratitude is the key!***

***Prayer: Lord, I will sing to You all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. May my meditation be pleasing to You as I rejoice in You, my Lord and my God.***

**March 18—Profanity**

**The word for today is *profanity*.**

“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name” (Exod. 20:7).

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4:29).

“And there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks” (Eph. 5:4).

“A wise man’s heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction” (Prov. 16:23).

“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit” (Prov. 18:21).

“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person” (Col. 4:6).

“A man finds joy in giving an apt reply—and how good is a timely word!” (Prov. 15:23).

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

“Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it

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was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’ The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy” (Ps. 126:2-3).

“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer” (Ps. 19:14).

***Prayer: Lord, help me to be a person who is quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.***

### **March 19—Gossip**

**The word for today is *gossip*.**

“The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man’s inmost parts” (Prov. 18:8).

“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will perish” (Prov. 19:9).

“Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matt. 5:11-12).

“Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips” (Ps. 141:3).

“A false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers” (Prov. 6:19) “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise” (Prov. 10:19).

“With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape” (Prov. 11:9).

“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing” (Prov. 12:18).

“The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit” (Prov. 15:4).

“Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart. Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law” (Ps. 119:69-70).

“A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends” (Prov. 16:28).

***Prayer: Lord, Your warning comes to mind, “By your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.”***

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## March 20—Salvation

### The word for today is *salvation*.

“That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation” (Rom. 10:9-10).

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12).

“And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12).

“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Cor. 5:17).

“Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again’” (John 3:7).

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith’” (Rom. 1:16-17).

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

**Prayer:** *Lord, I am reminded of the Philippian jailer: “And after he brought them out, he said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ And they said: ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved, you and your household.’”*

## March 21—A Pearl for Today

“The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry” (Ps. 34:15 NASB).

### CRYING FOR HELP IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

A busy lifeguard was once asked how he could distinguish a cry for help from the playful noises of a crowded beach: screams of people getting dunked, kids playing volleyball, mothers yelling for lost children, and such. He replied that he had never failed to recognize a genuine cry for help. There is an urgency that is easily recognized, he explained. As parents we can tell when a child is just being boisterous, and when there is a sense of urgency or emergency. Our ears are

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attuned, and we rush to help.

Just as a lifeguard and parents can distinguish a genuine cry for help, so “the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and His ears are open to their cry.” Often when we cry for help, we cry to the wrong people. When you have a need, to whom, what, or where do you go first? Frequently we go to friends, pastors, family, or a mate before we go to our heavenly Father. We call, last of all, upon the One who can be of the most help. He just lovingly waits for our prayer for aid.

Peter, when he began to sink in the waves, cried out, “Lord, save me!” What would you think of Peter, if, even with the Lord standing right there, he had called to the disciples in the boat, “Hey guys, I’m sinking! Would you throw me a life preserver?”

This is what we must look like to the Lord. We seek help, and do not realize He is right there with us. He waits and listens until we express our dependence and need for His intervention and assistance.

We hear people in desperate situations say, “All we can do is pray.” Why is prayer our last resort? Why haven’t we prayed all along? The first thing we need to do when we face a crisis is to pray in a voice that God recognizes as a genuine cry for help.

***A prayer in need is a prayer in deed.***

### **March 22—Availability**

**The word for today is *availability*.**

“Now it came about that while the multitude were pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them, and were washing their nets. And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the multitudes from the boat. And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.’ And Simon answered and said, ‘Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your bidding I will let down the nets.’ And when they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish; and their nets began to break” (Luke 5:1-6).

“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most

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High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.” And Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her” (Luke 1:30-38).

“But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. ... Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly in order that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. Therefore receive him in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me” (Phil. 2:25-26, 28-30).

***Prayer: Lord, Peter had a boat, the lad had a lunch, a man had a donkey, a man had an upper room, Joseph had a tomb, and a good Samaritan had compassion so he was available to stop and minister at a time of need. I guess I'm saying, "I am available." "Here I am Lord, send me!"***

### **March 23—Choices**

**The word for today is *choices*.**

“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Josh. 24:15).

“In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king’s men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, ‘Isn’t this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?’ Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (She had purified herself from her

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uncleanness.) Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, ‘I am pregnant’” (2 Sam. 11:1-5).

“King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh’s daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, ‘You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods.’ Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love” (1 Kings 11:1-2).

“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live” (Deut. 30:19).

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up’” (Dan. 3:16-18).

“And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt’” (Matt. 26:39).

***Prayer: Lord, my words this morning are the words of the psalmist: “Who then is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him.”***

## **March 24—Wisdom**

**The word for today is *wisdom*.**

“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, ‘Ask for whatever you want me to give you.’ Solomon answered, ‘You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. Now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?’” (1 Kings 3:5-9).

“Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding”

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(Prov. 3:13).

“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Prov. 9:10).

“A man’s wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense” (Prov. 19:11).

“For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:21-22).

“He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul” (Prov. 2:7-10).

***Prayer: Lord, Oh! The depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! Lord, I want to walk in Your wisdom.***

## **March 25—Obedience**

**The word for today is *obedience*.**

“But Samuel replied: ‘Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams’” (1 Sam. 15:22).

“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (Josh. 1:8).

“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him” (John 14:21).

“For to this end also I wrote that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things” (2 Cor. 2:9).

“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude



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themselves” (James 1:22).

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered” (Heb. 5:8).

“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

***Prayer: Lord, Paul’s glorious words to the Romans fill my mind: “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.” How about another verse of “Trust and Obey”? “Then in fellowship sweet We will sit at His feet, Or we’ll walk by His side in the way. What He says we will do; Where He sends we will go; Never fear, only trust and obey. Trust and obey, For there’s no other way To be happy in Jesus But to trust and obey.”***

### **March 26—Faith**

**The word for today is faith.**

“For what does the Scripture say? ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness’” (Rom. 4:3).

“Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:16).

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ... And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Heb. 11:1, 6).

“And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom. 4:19-21).

“Who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Pet. 1:5).

“For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ” (Col. 2:5).

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

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“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance” (James 1:2-3).

**Prayer:** *Lord, I am living by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. How about a verse of “My Faith Looks Up to Thee”? “My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine! Now hear me while I pray; Take all my guilt away. O let me from this day Be wholly Thine.”*

**March 27—Waiting**

**The word for today is waiting.**

“He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul’s men began to scatter. So he said, ‘Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.’ And Saul offered up the burnt offering. Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him. ‘What have you done?’ asked Samuel. Saul replied, ‘When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, “Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord’s favor.” So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.’ ‘You acted foolishly,’ Samuel said. ‘You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command’” (1 Sam. 13:8-14).

“Wait for the Lord and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it” (Ps. 37:34).

“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!” (Isa. 30:18).

“I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Ps. 27:13-14).

“And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23).

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:20).

“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to

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end” (Eccles. 3:11).

**Prayer: Lord, I am claiming the promise of Proverbs: “Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.”**

### **March 28—A Pearl for Today**

“The Lord has made the heavens his throne; from there he rules over everything. Praise the Lord, you angels of his, you mighty creatures who carry out his plans, listening for each of his commands. Yes, praise the Lord, you armies of angels who serve him and do his will! Praise the Lord, everything he has created, everywhere in his kingdom ...” (Ps. 103:19-22 NLT).

### **SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

When Don was teaching a selection of Psalms on a Bible study tour, I decided to read the entire book of Psalms. The trouble is that I stop to feast on the richness of the passages, and at times I don’t move on for several days. For weeks, Psalm 103:19-22 kept me enthralled.

Do you ever wonder if this world is too much for God? The verses above help us understand just one resource God has in His arsenal. God sends His mighty angels to carry out His plans, listen for His commands, serve Him, do His will, and praise Him.

These verses in Psalm 103 have renewed my prayer time. God and I have smiled at how many angels it takes to answer my prayers. Washington, D.C., takes a myriad (innumerable host) of warrior angels on full-time duty! Thousands more are needed to protect our Christian missionaries, families, pastors, and ministries. In case you think I am being frivolous, read these verses:

“Then he [the angel] continued, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me [blocked my way] twenty-one days’” (Dan. 10:12-13).

“For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12 NLT).

Those verses should convince everyone that we are in a deadly serious spiritual battle continuing day and night. Prayer is not only a calling upon God, but also a confrontation with Satan.

***If you haven’t bumped into the devil lately, maybe you and he are going the***

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*same way.*

### **March 29—Grace**

**The word for today is *grace*.**

“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed” (2 Cor. 9:8).

“And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me” (2 Cor. 12:9).

“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16).

“But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble’” (James 4:6).

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless” (Ps. 84:11).

“And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5:20).

“And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Rom. 16:20).

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (2 Pet. 3:18).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that I am coming to One who is full of grace and truth. I am singing a verse of “Grace Greater Than All Our Sins”: “Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt, Yonder on Calvary’s mount outpoured, There where the blood of the Lamb was spilt! Grace, grace, God’s grace, Grace that will pardon and cleanse within! Grace, grace, God’s grace, Grace that is greater than all our sins.”***

### **March 30—Ambition**

**The word for today is *ambition*.**

“And to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own

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business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you” (1 Thess. 4:11).  
“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:5-8).

“But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth” (James 3:14).

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. ... In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps” (Prov. 16:3, 9).

“But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations” (Ps. 33:11).

“Trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord” (Eph. 5:10). “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Ps. 37:4).

“For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:32-33).

“Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth” (Ps. 108:5).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that You are teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and devoutly in this present world.***

### **March 31—Authority**

**The word for today is *authority*.**

“These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life’” (John 17:1-2).

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’” (Matt. 28:18-20).

“And especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise

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authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties” (2 Pet. 2:10).

“Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

“Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves” (Rom. 13:1-2).

“Who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him” (1 Pet. 3:22).

“Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24).

*Prayer: Lord, the longing of my heart is to live comfortably under divine authority. A verse of “Crown Him with Many Crowns” will make my day: “Crown Him with many crowns, The Lamb upon His throne. Hark! how the heav’nly anthem drowns All music but its own! Awake, my soul, and sing Of Him who died for thee, And hail Him as thy matchless King Thro’ all eternity.”*

## **April 1—Fellowship**

**The word for today is fellowship.**

“And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, the name which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are. ... that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. ... I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me” (John 17:11, 21, 23).

“And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common” (Acts 2:44).

“But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God” (Ps. 55:13-14).

“What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have

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fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).

“And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised” (Gal. 2:9).

“But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14).

***Prayer: Lord, how good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!***

***Paul’s words to the Philippians speak to my heart: “Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (Phil. 2:2).***

## **April 2—Assurance**

**The word for today is assurance.**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life” (John 5:24). “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end” (Heb. 6:11).

“Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22).

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1).

“All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out” (John 6:37).

“And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:28-29).

“For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2 Tim. 1:12).

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor



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any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

**Prayer:** *Lord, You are faithful! Faithful is He who calls us, and He also will bring it to pass.*

### **April 3—Church**

**The word for today is church.**

“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near” (Heb. 10:25).

“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18).

“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

“He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything” (Col. 1:18).

“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”’ And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God’” (Rev. 19:6-9).

Let’s sing a verse of “The Church’s One Foundation”: “The Church’s one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her Lord. She is His new creation By water and the Word. From heav’n He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.”

**Prayer:** *Lord, I am so thankful to be a part of Your bride, Your building, and Your body, the church.*

### **April 4—A Pearl for Today**

“No dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing; Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which

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God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven” (Phil. 3:13-14 NLT).

### REMEMBER TO FORGET

“When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the ones which open for us.”

—Alexander Graham Bell

When a dream, a job, or a marriage is snatched from us, we often ponder what we should have done, or could have done differently, to ensure its success. The healing begins when we move on to believe that another dream awaits—one that will make us even happier than the one taken away. It is necessary to leave the past behind so we can move on to a brighter future.

A friend wrote about the necessity of leaving the past behind:

Departure from Maui was only 14 hours away. ... The Holy Spirit had been working in the depths of my spirit long before I came to Maui. ... I went to the beach and walked awhile and found an area apart from other people.... I prayed ... thanking the Lord for His marvelous love ... for His grace and mercy ... for His patience and faithfulness ... that He had not given up on me. Then I knelt in the sand and waited for a wave to ebb. I wrote [in the sand]: “The past with all its pain and hurt.” I watched as a wave came and washed away my words. Other words followed in the sand: “anger—bitterness” ... another wave ... “guilt—failure” ... another wave ... “discontentment” ... another wave ... another wave ... another wave.

Is it done? It has begun! My journey toward healing and new freedom in Christ.

Ah, suffering, my painful friend;

You take the bubble of comfort

I have so carefully built around myself,

And, in a seemingly cruel fashion,

Snatch it from my clinging hands

And dash it to the ground,

Where it breaks into a hundred pieces

And leaves me exposed and trembling.

Again, I must make the choice

Do I retreat or do I move on?

—Pearl Anderson

### April 5—Conscience

**The word for today is *conscience*.**

“Though you probe my heart and examine me at night, though you test me, you

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will find nothing; I have resolved that my mouth will not sin” (Ps. 17:3).

“And Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, ‘Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day” (Acts 23:1).

“Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience’ sake” (Rom. 13:5).

“But holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9).

“By means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron” (1 Tim. 4:2).

“And keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame” (1 Pet. 3:16).

“In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men” (Acts 24:16).

“How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:14).

“Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things” (Heb. 13:18).

We need to sing a couple of verses of “Cleanse Me”: “Search me, O God, and know my heart today. Try me, O Savior; know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be some wicked way in me; Cleanse me from ev’ry sin, and set me free. Lord, take my life and make it wholly Thine; Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine. Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride. I now surrender; Lord, in me abide.”

***Prayer: O Lord almighty, You who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind—search me, O God!***

## **April 6—Cross**

**The word for today is cross.**

“But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Gal. 6:14).

“And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the

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Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God” (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

“But Jesus was saying, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’ And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves” (Luke 23:34).

“When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household” (John 19:26-27).

“And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit.’ And having said this, He breathed His last” (Luke 23:46).

“And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven” (Col. 1:20).

*A verse of “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” would be appropriate:*

*“When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of Glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.”*

*Prayer: Lord, my prayer this morning is found in Colossians 2:14 in Peterson’s Message: “Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant cancelled and nailed to Christ’s cross.”*

## **April 7—Redemption**

**The word for today is redemption.**

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

“O Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption” (Ps. 130:7).

“But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28).

“Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24).

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7).

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

“In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:14).

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold

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from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ” (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’” (Gal. 3:13).

“And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12).

***Prayer: Lord, the price You paid for my sin is overwhelming. Thank You for assuming the total debt.***

#### **April 8—Christ’s Intercession**

**The words for today are Christ’s *intercession*.**

“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time” (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’” (John 14:6).

“Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

“Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12).

“My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2).

“And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ... who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us” (Rom. 8:26-27, 34).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You that when my case comes up in court, You have already paid the ransom in full, for You have redeemed me not with silver and***

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*gold, but with Your own precious blood.*

#### **April 9—Depression**

**The word for today is *depression*.**

“Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day’s journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, Lord,’ he said. ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.’ Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, ‘Get up and eat’” (1 Kings 19:3-5).

“Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior” (Ps. 42:5).

“When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul” (Ps. 94:19).

“Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish” (Ps. 25:16-17).

“Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall” (Ps. 55:22).

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

“Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7).

***How about a verse of “Does Jesus Care?”: “Does Jesus care when my heart is pained Too deeply for mirth and song; As the burdens press and the cares distress, And the way grows weary and long? O yes, He cares; I know He cares, His heart is touched with my grief; When the days are weary, the long nights dreary, I know my Savior cares.” Prayer: Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to You. Do not hide Your face from me when I am in distress.***

#### **April 10—Fear**

**The word for today is *fear*.**

“For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you” (Isa. 41:13).

“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe” (Prov. 29:25).

“And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but

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rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28).  
“You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you” (2 Chron. 20:17).

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isa. 41:10).

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (Deut. 31:8).

“When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?” (Ps. 56:3-4).

“The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps. 27:1).

“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze” (Isa. 43:1b-2).

***Prayer: Lord, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, because You are with me.***

### **April 11—A Pearl for Today**

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7 NLT).

## **WORRYWART REMOVER COMPOUND “W” (THE WORD)**

Worry is a sin. We who have the tendency to worry explain that we are “very concerned” about a situation. This gets us off the hook with other believers, but not with God. To Him, our worry indicates a lack of trust. For several months, I have kept the following outline of Philippians 4:67 with my devotional material. It helps me to overcome the weakness of worry in my walk with the Lord:  
DON’T worry about anything—

Pray about everything.



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Tell God what you need.  
Thank Him for all He has done.

IF you do this— You will experience God’s peace. His peace will guard your heart. His peace will guard your mind.

Simply put, God has called us to— Be anxious for nothing. Be prayerful about everything. Be thankful for anything.

If you are “concerned” today, write down the Lord’s words to Martha in Luke 10:41-42. Replace Martha’s name with yours and place this reminder where you will often see it.

“But the Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:41-42).

*Let your anxieties be the springboard for prayer.*

#### **April 12—Discouragement**

**The word for today is *discouragement*.**

“David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God” (1 Sam. 30:6).

“How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me, when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness! Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God’s intimate friendship blessed my house, when the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me, when my path was drenched with cream and the rock poured out for me streams of olive oil. When I went to the gate of the city and took my seat in the public square, the young men saw me and stepped aside and the old men rose to their feet; the chief men refrained from speaking and covered their mouths with their hands; the voices of the nobles were hushed, and their tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths. Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me” (Job 29:2-11).

“And Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God” (1 Sam. 23:16).

“My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken” (Ps. 62:1-2).

“He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong

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for me. They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the Lord was my support. He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me” (2 Sam. 22:18-20).

***I find myself singing a verse of “Be Still, My Soul”: “Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side; Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain. Leave to thy God to order and provide; In ev’ry change He faithful will remain. Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend Thro’ thorny ways leads to a joyful end.”***

***Prayer: Lord, I want to be a blessing and encouragement to those who are having a tough time. May David’s words be on my lips this day: “Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what He has done for me.”***

#### **April 13—Encouragement**

**The word for today is encouragement.**

“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus” (Rom. 15:5).

“In order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us” (Heb. 6:18).

“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Rom. 12:10-11).

“And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you” (1 Thess. 3:12).

“If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (Phil. 2:12).

“So let’s do it—full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out. Let’s keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let’s see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching” (Heb. 10:22-25, MSG).

***Prayer: Lord, Your words to Moses are in my thoughts: “But commission Joshua and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across***

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*and will cause them to inherit the land that you will see.”*

#### **April 14—Excuses**

**The word for today is *excuses*.**

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

[Jesus said] “A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ And another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ And another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’ And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled’” (Luke 14:16-23).

“Moses said to the Lord, ‘O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.’ The Lord said to him, ‘Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.’ But Moses said, ‘O Lord, please send someone else to do it’” (Exod. 4:10-13).

“A few days later Felix and his wife, Drusilla, who was Jewish, sent for Paul and listened to him talk about a life of believing in Jesus Christ. As Paul continued to insist on right relations with God and his people, about a life of moral discipline and the coming Judgment, Felix felt things getting a little too close for comfort and dismissed him. ‘That’s enough for today. I’ll call you back when it’s convenient’” (Acts 24:24-25 MSG).

“‘You believe the prophets, don’t you, King Agrippa? Don’t answer that—I know you believe.’ But Agrippa did answer: ‘Keep this up much longer and you’ll make a Christian out of me!’” (Acts 26:27-28 MSG).

“And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of

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God in vain—for He says, ‘At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you;’ behold, now is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, now is ‘the day of salvation’” (2 Cor. 6:1-2).

***Prayer: Lord, I once again hear Your words to Isaiah this morning: “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”***

#### **April 15—Focus**

**The word for today is *focus*.**

“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together” (John 4:35-36).

“But the Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:41-42).

“We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win” (1 Cor. 9:24).

“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

“Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might” (Eph. 6:10).

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

***How about joining me in a verse of “Higher Ground”: “I’m pressing on the upward way, New heights I’m gaining ev’ry day; Still praying as I’m onward bound, Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. Lord, lift me up and let me***

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*stand, By faith, on Heaven's tableland, a higher plane that I have found; Lord, plant my feet on higher ground." Prayer: Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.*

#### **April 16—Freedom**

**The word for today is *freedom*.**

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. ... For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:1, 13).

"That the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

"Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God" (1 Pet. 2:16).

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners" (Isa. 61:1).

"I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts" (Ps. 119:45).

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).

*The fourth verse of "And Can It Be That I Should Gain" says it all: "Long my imprisoned spirit lay Fast bound in sin and nature's night; Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light; My chains fell off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth and followed Thee. Amazing love! How can it be That Thou my God, shouldst die for me. Amen."*

*Prayer: Paul's words to the Romans fill my heart today: "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"*

#### **April 17—Grief**

**The word for today is *grief*.**

"You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry" (Ps. 10:17).

"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you

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have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

“I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand” (Ps. 40:1-2).

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ... And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:18, 28).

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” (Ps. 147:3).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

***How about singing the third verse of “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”:***  
***“Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our Refuge! Take it to the Lord in prayer. Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer. In His arms He’ll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a solace there.” Prayer: The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.***

#### **April 18—A Pearl for Today**

“But do not recall former events, nor consider any longer the things of the past. Behold, I do a new thing; now it is springing forth; do you not recognize it?” (Isa. 43:18-9 Berkeley).

#### **YOU ARE SURROUNDED**

Change is hard. We resist anything that forces us out of a comfortable rut. God is known for stirring up our nests and moving us on to new ways and areas of ministry. As the verse in Isaiah 43 reminds us, He sometimes does a “new thing.” He did so often with the Old Testament patriarchs. Think of Abraham and Sarah. The first recorded change in their lives took place when Abram was 75 years old. It seems the more “mature” in years we are, the harder it is to embrace change.

During our 30-plus years of vocational Christian work, Don and I have

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experienced four major moves and changes in ministry. Each time involved a different set of circumstances, but every time it was difficult to say good-bye. The most difficult farewell necessitated a forced resignation. The other changes we planned and felt the Lord's leading in a new direction. However, with the forced resignation, we left our ministry position and home with no destination. During that difficult time of transition, I came to appreciate Abram and Sarai. When they left Ur as God commanded, He did not reveal their destination. They left in obedience, following God to an unknown place and uncertain future. Two phrases from Deuteronomy 31 can be a comfort as you face an uncertain future: "For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you" (Deut. 31:6 NASB). "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you" (Deut. 31:8 NASB). Because our Lord God is eternal and not bound by time, He not only walks beside us, but He also goes before us to prepare the way. What a comfort! "For the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard" (Isa. 52:12 NASB).

If circumstances require a change, let us remember the Lord is our "rear guard" as we step into the uncharted days ahead. As the kids would say, "He has our back." We have all heard the phrase, "Put up your hands, you are completely surrounded." God surrounds the Christian! We can lift our hands and our future in surrender to the Lord.

***"You can judge your age by the amount of pain you feel when you come in contact with a new idea." —Reader's Digest, December 1982***

## **April 19—Guidance**

### **The word for today is *guidance*.**

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it'" (Isa. 30:21).

"The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day" (Prov. 4:18).

"For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end" (Ps. 48:14).

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Ps. 23:1-3).

"Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me" (Ps. 31:3).

"Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to



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your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell” (Ps. 43:3).

“Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory” (Ps. 73:23-24).

“Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me” (Ps. 119:133).

“Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies—make straight your way before me” (Ps. 5:8). “I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them” (Isa. 42:16).

***Prayer: Lord, I am trusting in You with all my heart and leaning not on my own understanding. In all my ways I am acknowledging You and I know You will make my path straight.***

## **April 20—Heaven**

**The word for today is *heaven*.**

“And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven’” (Acts 1:9-11).

“And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 22:1-5).

“Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3).

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“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:20).

“And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (John 17:5). “But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55).

“When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ... As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, ‘My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!’ And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart” (2 Kings 2:1, 11-12).

***Prayer: Lord, the words of Paul to the Philippians bring such comfort today: “But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better.”***

## **April 21—Hell**

**The word for today is *hell*.**

“And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28).

“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’” (Matt. 25:41).

“And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:11-15).

“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

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“Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us’” (Luke 16:19-26).

***Prayer: Lord, Peter’s words give us the big picture: “You are not slow about Your promise, but You are patient with us, not wishing for any of us to perish but for all of us to come to repentance.”***

## **April 22—Hope**

**The word for today is *hope*.**

“But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you” (Ps. 39:7).

“Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him” (Ps. 62:5).

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:3-4).

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, in structing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”

(Titus 2:11-13).

“Rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer” (Rom. 12:12).

“Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech” (2 Cor.

3:12).

“For we through the Spirit, by faith, are awaiting for the hope of righteousness” (Gal. 5:5).

“To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

I am singing the first verse of “The Solid Rock”: “My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus’ name. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sad. All other ground is sinking sand.”

***Prayer: Lord, the apostle John tells us what we need to do: “Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”***

## **April 23—Hypocrisy**

**The word for today is *hypocrisy*.**

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

“You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?” (Luke 12:56).

“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye” (Matt. 7:5).

“And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, ‘Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him.’ And immediately he went to Jesus and said, ‘Hail, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, ‘Friend, do what you have come for.’ Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him” (Matt. 26:47,50).

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and

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self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt. 23:23-28).

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good" (Rom. 12:9). "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

***Prayer: Lord, I want to love without hypocrisy. Help me to abhor what is evil and to cling to what is good.***

#### **April 24—Immorality**

**The word for today is *immorality*.**

"And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts" (Rom. 13:11-14).

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3-7).

"Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:18-20).

"Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like

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these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21).

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

***Prayer: Lord, help me to say with Joseph, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”***

#### **April 25—A Pearl for Today**

“Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answered and said, ‘were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they?’” (Luke 17:15-17).

#### **NOW, WHAT DO YOU SAY?**

“Now, what do you say?” we mothers universally remind our children when someone has given them a gift or done something nice for them. The response we are trying to elicit from them is a thank you.

Quite often people write to advice columnists concerning children or grandchildren who never write thank you notes or acknowledge money or presents they receive. Ann Landers typically advises folks to stop sending gifts to those who are not appreciative or courteous enough to respond.

I am so thankful God does not react in that fashion. Psalm 23:6 states, “Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (NASB).

When I look back over my life, the reality of God’s protection and care startles me. How I thank God that He has firmly stopped me at times. I shudder to think of the consequences if I had disobediently walked forward in certain situations. Be thankful, with me, that God’s two provisions of goodness and lovingkindness are always with us. God gives us gifts every day. Even life is a gift from His hand. Praise Him! Honor Him! Glorify His name! Let’s be a thankful people.

It is too bad that the nine lepers in Luke 17 didn’t have a mother around to remind them, “Now what do you say?”

When it comes to being thankful, may the Lord not say of us, as He did the nine ungrateful lepers, “Where is \_\_\_\_\_?”

The ten lepers were cleansed of their leprosy as we have been cleansed of our sins. Begin your list by thanking God for your own cleansing:

**Thank**

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God  
I'm  
Forgiven

## April 26—Leisure

**The word for today is *leisure*.**

“Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work” (Gen. 2:1-2).

“In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious” (Isa. 11:10).

“Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to you” (Ps. 116:7).

“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes” (Ps. 37:7).

“This is what the Lord says: ‘Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, “We will not walk in it”’” (Jer. 6:16).

“Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it” (Heb. 4:1).

“And He said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while.’ (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)” (Mark 6:31).

**Prayer: Lord, I am reminded of what You said through Isaiah the prophet: “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength.”**

## April 27—Loneliness

**The word for today is *loneliness*.**

“I lie awake; I have become like a bird alone on a roof” (Ps. 102:7).

“At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion’s mouth” (2 Tim. 4:16-17).

“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him’” (Gen. 2:18).



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“Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish” (Ps. 25:16-17).

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent” (Ps. 22:1-2).

“I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing” (Isa. 63:3).

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (Deut. 31:8).

“The Lord replied, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest’” (Exod. 33:14).

***Prayer: Lord, a man of many companions may come to ruin, but You are a friend who sticks closer than a brother.***

## **April 28—Mediocrity**

**The word for today is *mediocrity*.**

“He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored” (Prov. 13:18).

“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!” (Jer. 48:10).

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (Rev. 3:15-16).

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

(1 Cor. 3:1-3).

“And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’”

(Luke 9:23). “Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme” (1 Tim. 1:19-20).

***Prayer: Lord, You remind us in the sermon on the mount that, “No one can***

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*serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Help me to serve only You.*

#### **April 29—Money**

**The word for today is money.**

“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold” (Prov. 22:1). “A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him” (Prov. 28:22).

“Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless” (Eccles. 5:10).

“Naked a man comes from his mother’s womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand” (Eccles. 5:15).

“Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf” (Prov. 11:28).

“Not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money” (1 Tim. 3:3).

“But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang” (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

**Prayer:** *Lord, Your story about the rich fool comes to mind—“And I will say to my soul, soul you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said to him, you fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?” Keep me focused not on gold but upon You, my God.*

#### **April 30—Priorities**

**The word for today is priorities.**

“Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless” (2 Pet. 3:14).

“Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things” (Heb. 13:18).

“In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests

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before you and wait in expectation” (Ps. 5:3).

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33).

“And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there” (Mark 1:35).

“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble” (2 Pet. 1:10).

***Prayer: Lord, Micah’s words are in my thoughts: “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”***

## **May 1—Revenge**

**The word for today is *revenge*.**

“O Lord Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause” (Jer. 20:12).

“O Lord, the God who avenges, O God who avenges, shine forth. Rise up, O Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve. How long will the wicked, O Lord, how long will the wicked be jubilant?” (Ps. 94:1-3).

“For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people’” (Heb. 10:30).

“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord” (Lev. 19:18).

“It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them” (Deut. 32:35).

“‘No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me,’ declares the Lord” (Isa. 54:17).

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.

‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good’” (Rom. 12:19-21).

Sing with me verse three of “Softly and Tenderly”: “Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing, Passing from you and from me; Shadows are gathering, death’s night is coming, Coming for you and for me. Come home, come home,

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Ye who are weary, come home; Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, Calling, O sinner, come home!”

***Prayer: Paul’s sobering words to the Thessalonians put everything into perspective: “Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”***

### **May 2—A Pearl for Today**

“... clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time” (1 Pet. 5:5, 6).

### **HUMILITY**

Several years ago, a friend of ours brought out a line of clothing called Get off Your High Horse. It was, of course, a spoof of the Polo brand. The logo depicted a man falling off a horse. This reminds me that God has His ways of “bringing us down a notch or two.” Just ask Saul of Tarsus. He left Jerusalem, dressed in fine clothes, breathing threats against the Christians in Damascus, UNTIL GOD INTERVENED. Then Saul found himself sitting in the middle of a dusty road, blind, and dependent upon people to take him by the hand and lead him into the city. The arrogant Saul became the apostle Paul, who later stated humbly, “I am the least of the apostles”(1 Cor. 15:9a NASB). His departure from the city of Damascus was just as humiliating as his entrance. He was let out of a window in a basket to escape the very individuals he had originally expected to help him persecute the Christians of that city.

Proverbs 6:16-19: “There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who puts out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among the brothers” (NIV). Saul manifested, and planned to continue demonstrating, every one of the qualities God says He hates. God stopped Saul in his tracks and taught him a difficult, costly lesson on the Damascus road.

May I softly and gently ask you: Is God in the process of pulling you off your high horse concerning the way you treat people? Do you try to control your husband, wife, children, mother, father, pastor, employees, or co-workers with an arrogant selfish attitude that tells them you can say or do anything you want,

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and they must put up with it?

The wisest man who ever lived, Solomon, wrote in Proverbs 10:13: “Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgment”(NIV).

The Lord has ways of getting us off our high horse. Yet He’d rather we recognize our haughtiness and take steps to humble ourselves, under His mighty hand.

***“Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord.”***

### **May 3—Repentance**

**The word for today is repentance.**

“I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).

“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).

“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

“For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Cor. 7:10).

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).

“Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6).

“I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’ And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ And

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they began to be merry” (Luke 15:18-24).

Sing with me verses 2 and 3 of “Just As I Am”: “Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot, To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O  
Lamb of God, I come! I come! Just as I am, tho’ tossed about With many a  
conflict, many a doubt, Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I  
come! I come!”

***Prayer: Lord, Your advice to the church in Ephesus comes to mind:  
“Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the  
deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your  
lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.”***

#### **May 4—Righteousness**

**The word for today is righteousness.**

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people” (Prov. 14:34).

“The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory” (Ps. 97:6).

“Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and his righteousness endures forever” (Ps. 111:3).

“Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness” (Gal. 3:6).

“In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness” (Jer. 23:6).

“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Rom. 5:18).

“Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers righteousness on you” (Hos. 10:12).

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matt. 5:6).

“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isa. 32:17).

How about singing the fourth verse of “The Solid Rock”: “When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found! Dressed in His righteousness alone; Faultless to stand before the throne! On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking

sand.”

**Prayer:** *Lord, I marvel at Your love—that You made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### **May 5—Security**

**The word for today is security.**

“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe” (Prov. 29:25).

“A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all” (Ps. 34:19).

“The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore” (Ps. 121:7-8).

“The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (Ps. 118:6).

“He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes” (Ps. 112:7-8).

“And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:28-29).

“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (Ps. 91:11).

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

Let’s sing verses 2 and 3 of “Praise the Saviour, Ye Who Know Him!”: “Jesus is the name that charms us; He for conflict fits and arms us; Nothing moves and nothing harms us While we trust in Him. Trust in Him, yesaints, forever; He is faithful, changing never; Neither force nor guile can sever Those He loves from Him.”

**Prayer:** *Lord, thank You that no one can snatch us from Your hand or separate us from Your love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### **May 6—Servanthood**

**The word for today is servanthood.**



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“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

“For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:5).

“In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following” (1 Tim. 4:6).

“But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul” (Josh. 22:5).

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve” (Col. 3:23-24).

“Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love” (Ps. 31:16).

“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master’” (Matt. 25:21).

“Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Rom. 12:11).

How about a couple verses of “The Servant Song”: “Brother, let me be your servant, Let me be as Christ to you; Pray that I may have the grace to Let you be my servant too. We are pilgrims on a journey; We are brothers on the road. We are here to help each other Walk the mile and bear the load.”

***Prayer: Lord, the desire of my heart is to serve You with gladness; I want to come before You with joyful songs.***

## **May 7—Sensitivity**

**The word for today is *sensitivity*.**

“But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these” (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

“Being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because

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of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness” (Eph. 4:18-19).

“Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent!” (2 Cor. 10:1).

“To malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men” (Titus 3:2).

“But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God” (1 Pet. 3:4).

“This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger” (James 1:19).

“The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing” (Zeph. 3:17).

How about the third verse of “Make Me a Blessing”: “Give as ‘twas given to you in your need, Love as the Master loved you; Be to the help less a helper in deed, Unto your mission be true. Make me a blessing, Make me a blessing, Out of my life may Jesus shine; Make me a blessing, O Saviour, I pray, Make me a blessing to someone today.”

***Prayer: Lord, what an example You are. The psalmist writes, “You are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.”***

## **May 8—Discipline**

**The word for today is *discipline*.**

“But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:7-8).

“But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27).

“If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?” (Jer. 12:5).

“And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary” (Gal. 6:9).

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not

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need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart” (Heb. 12:1-3).

“And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’” (Luke 9:23).

“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:7-10).

**Prayer: Lord, Mark tells us that in the early morning, while it was still dark, You arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and were praying there. May I join You?**

### **May 9—A Pearl for Today**

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15).

#### **A FRIEND FOR ALL SEASONS**

A person who seems to enjoy being the bearer of bad news does not have our best interest at heart. A person who softens the blow of bad news is a compassionate friend and worthy of our trust.

There are friends we seek when we need to weep. They are friends who hurt with us and our sadness is their sadness. They weep; they stand with us in prayer. They try to soften the blow of bad news and their hearts break with ours. There are friends we seek when we have a special blessing and want to have someone rejoice with us. Our happiness is their happiness and we know there is not a shred of envy or jealousy over the blessing received from God. Hearing our good news makes their day as well as ours. Stop and think for a minute. Which is easier for you, and for your friends, “To weep with those who weep or rejoice with those who rejoice”? It sometimes seems it is easier to share a trial and difficult time than it is to enter in and share joy.

God describes a true friend in Proverbs 17:17: “A friend loves at ALL times.” The Bible states that true friends will love at all times, in times of rejoicing and

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in times of weeping. Your tears are their tears and your smiles are their smiles. This is genuine love and friendship.

Thank God for your friends. Ask GOD to help you be a friend who loves at ALL times. Invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart and see if there is weakness in either weeping or rejoicing with your friends. A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out.

*When we share sunshine with someone, we are warmed ourselves.*

## **May 10—Solitude**

**The word for today is solitude.**

“This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: ‘In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it’” (Isa. 30:15).

“Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord’s word, seated at His feet. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.’ But the Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:38-42).

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before” (Dan. 6:10).

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Ps. 23:1-3).

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Ps. 46:10).

“Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to you” (Ps. 116:7).

“I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word” (Ps. 119:147).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and

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you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

How about a verse of “Tell It to Jesus”: “Are you weary, are you heavy hearted? Tell it to Jesus, Tell it to Jesus; Are you grieving over joys departed? Tell it to Jesus alone. Tell it to Jesus, Tell it to Jesus, He is a friend that’s well-known; You’ve no other such a friend or brother, Tell it to Jesus alone.”

***Prayer: Lord, Your invitation is to come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. To Jeremiah, You said: “I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint.” Lord, I am coming!***

### **May 11—Substitution**

**The word for today is substitution.**

“Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:46).

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

“For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18).

“Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:12-14).

“But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:12).

“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:6-8).

“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Rom. 5:18).

How about verse three of “The Old Rugged Cross”? “In the old rugged cross,

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stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see; For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, To pardon and sanctify me. So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, Till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it some day for a crown."

***Prayer: Lord, I am overwhelmed by Your love. Greater love has no one than this, that You are willing to lay down Your Son's life that we might be Your friends.***

## **May 12—Unity**

**The word for today is unity.**

"I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me" (John 17:20-23).

"Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting" (Rom. 16:17-18).

"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:1-6).

"If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose" (Phil. 2:1-2).

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life

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forevermore” (Ps. 133:1-3).

**Prayer:** *Lord, Paul’s words to the Romans are in my thoughts: “So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.”*

## **May 13—Victory**

**The word for today is victory.**

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, ‘For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us” (Rom. 8:35-37).

“But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’” (1 Cor. 15:54-55).

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5).

“And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Rom. 16:20).

“A battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He will not put out, Until He leads justice to victory” (Matt. 12:20).

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place” (2 Cor. 2:14).

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57).

“And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God” (Rev. 15:2).

I am singing the second verse of “Faith Is the Victory”: “His banner over us is love, Our sword the Word of God; We tread the road the saints above With shouts of triumph trod. By faith they, like a whirlwind’s breath, Swept on o’er ev’ry field; The faith by which they conquered death Is still our shining shield. Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory! O, glorious victory, That overcomes the world.”

**Prayer:** *Lord, Ezekiah’s words explain to us the path of victory— “With him*



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*is only the arm of the flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.”*

**May 14—Vision**

**The word for today is vision.**

“But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (1 John 2:11).

“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

“The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions” (1 Sam. 3:1).

“After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward’” (Gen. 15:1).

“And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest’” (Matt. 9:36-38).

“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together” (John 4:35-36).

“To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18).

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph. 1:18).

I am singing part of my prayer: “Open our eyes, Lord; We want to see Jesus, reach out and touch Him, and say that we love Him. Open our ears, Lord, And help us to listen. Open our eyes, Lord; We want to see Jesus.”

***Prayer: Lord, Paul’s testimony to King Agrippa is in my thoughts today—“Consequently, King Agrippa, I do not prove disobedient to the***

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*heavenly vision.”*

### **May 15—Parenting**

**The word for today is *parenting*.**

“A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish man despises his mother” (Prov. 15:20).

“A foolish son is his father’s ruin, and a quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping” (Prov. 19:13).

“Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death” (Prov. 19:18).

“He who robs his father and drives out his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace” (Prov. 19:26).

“If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness” (Prov. 20:20).

“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him” (Prov. 22:15).

“The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures” (Prov. 30:17).

“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart” (Col. 3:20-21).

“Children’s children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children. ... To have a fool for a son brings grief; there is no joy for the father of a fool” (Prov. 17:6, 21).

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right” (Eph. 6:1).

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it” (Prov. 22:6).

***Prayer: Lord, teach me to see what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, may I not do so again. I am trying to learn what is pleasing to You.***

### **May 16—A Pearl for Today**

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” (3 John 4 NIV).

### **GREAT JOY**

Every father and mother who reads this verse in 3 John knows the joy of which John speaks. We have great delight as Christian parents when we see our children following God and growing in their walk and relationship with the

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savior. Let me share my joy with you. Here are two prayers our second daughter, Becky, wrote years ago:

Oh Lord ...

Make me a mirror that reflects Your love.

Help me to love others as You love them.

Let me respond to others as You would respond to them.

Thank You for showing me that behind their hatefulness

Lies, hurt, frustration, loneliness ...

I can love them with Your love.

True love comes only from You.

Lord, I am so happy when I

Know that I have pleased You

My life is full of joy and

My heart overflows with love.

But, Lord, there are many times

When I fail You.

I let jealousy, pride, and selfishness creep in

And take control.

I become filled with self-pity

And bitterness.

Then, Lord, when I come to You,

Broken and ashamed,

You open Your loving arms and

Draw me to Yourself.

I am forgiven once again.

—Becky Anderson Devine

### **May 17—Compromise**

**The word for today is *compromise*.**

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:2).

“But I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (Rev. 2:4).

“But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality. Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of

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the Nicolaitans” (Rev. 2:14-15).

“But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way” (Dan. 1:8).

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up’” (Dan. 3:16-18).

“By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward” (Heb. 11:24-26).

“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown” (Rev. 3:11).

***Prayer: Lord, because You help me, I will not be disgraced. Thank You for the examples from Your word of saints who refused to compromise.***

## **May 18—Procrastination**

**The word for today is *procrastination*.**

“And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:11-12).

“While it is said, ‘Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me’” (Heb. 3:15).

“But some days later, Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. And as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, ‘Go away for the present, and when I find time, I will summon you’” (Acts 24:24-25).

“And Agrippa replied to Paul, ‘In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian’” (Acts 26:28).

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death” (Prov. 14:12). “Show me, O Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life” (Ps. 39:4).

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“He says, ‘At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you;’ behold, now is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, now is ‘the day of salvation’” (2 Cor. 6:2).

“Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Ps. 90:12).

“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest” (John 4:35).

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24).

***Prayer: Lord, James warns us that our lives are just a “vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.” Keep us cognizant of living for You in the short life we have on earth. Help us not to put off till tomorrow what You would have us do today.***

## **May 19—Enthusiasm**

**The word for today is *enthusiasm*.**

“Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let them say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns!’” (1 Chron. 16:31).

“Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs” (Ps. 100:1-2).

“He therefore answered, ‘Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see’” (John 9:25).

“And with a leap, he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God” (Acts 3:8).

“Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full” (John 16:24).

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men” (Col. 3:23).

“The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing” (Zeph. 3:17).

“Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds” (Ps. 149:5).

“Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!” (Ps. 147:1).

“And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing” (Acts 8:39).

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***Prayer: Lord, my lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to You—I, whom You have redeemed.***

**May 20—World**

**The word for today is world.**

“Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word” (Ps. 119:37).

“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Col. 3:2).

“Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

“In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4).

“For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia” (2 Tim. 4:10).

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

“And they were saying to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world’” (John 4:42).

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God” (1 Cor. 2:12).

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matt. 5:14).

Join me in singing “No Turning Back”: “I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, No turning back, no turning back. Tho’ none go with me, yet still I’ll follow, Tho’ none go with me, yet still I’ll follow, Tho’ none go with me, yet still I’ll follow, No turning back, no turning back. The world behind me, the cross before me, The world behind me, the hope before me, The world behind me, and heav’n before me. Not turning back, no turning back. O take this old world, but give me Jesus; O take this old world, but give me Jesus; O take this old world, but give me Jesus; No turning back, no turning back.”

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***Prayer: Father, I am setting my mind on the things above where Jesus is and not on things down here. Whom have I in heaven but you? And being with you, I desire nothing on earth.***

## **May 21—Passion**

**The word for today is *passion*.**

“Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work’” (John 4:34).

“His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Thy house will consume me’” (John 2:17).

“And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

“Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face” (Job 13:15).

“For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel” (Ezra 7:10).

“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

“Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway” (Prov. 8:34).

“According to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death” (Phil. 1:20).

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

I find myself singing a verse of “All for Jesus”: “All for Jesus! all for Jesus! All my being’s ransomed pow’rs: All my tho’ts and words and doings, All my days and all my hours. All for Jesus! all for Jesus! All my days and all my hours; All for Jesus! all for Jesus! All my days and all my hours.”

***Prayer: Lord, with the apostle Paul, this one thing I am doing—forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I am passionate about pressing toward the goal.***

## **May 22—Angels**

**The word for today is *angels*.**

“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am



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the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star” (Rev. 22:16).

“That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!” (2 Kings 19:35).

“Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him” (Luke 22:43).

“Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him” (Matt. 4:11).

“And she beheld two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying” (John 20:12).

“And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14).

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb. 13:2).

“And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?’” (Matt. 26:51-53).

It’s not Christmas but I’m singing “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”:  
“Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth. Ye who sang creation’s story, Now proclaim Messiah’s birth. Come and worship. Come and worship. Worship Christ, the newborn King.” Prayer: Lord, help me to never forget the angel’s message to Mary— “For nothing will be impossible with God.”

### **May 23—A Pearl for Today**

“Pray continually” (1 Thess. 5:17 NIV).

#### **PRAYER: THE POWER LINE**

“Satan trembles when even the weakest saint is on his knees,” so the old saying goes. The following quotation sits on my desk to remind me of the importance of prayer: “He who fails to pray, limits himself to his own ability.” Perhaps you’ve also heard, “A day hemmed in prayer is less likely to unravel.”

In Mark 9, the disciples’ day is unraveling. In verse 14 we are told that the disciples and the scribes are arguing. A father has brought his only son, who is demon possessed, to Jesus’ disciples. The disciples have tried and failed to cast out the demon from the son. Their failure results in a shouting match.

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Jesus comes on the scene and casts out the demon. The disciples later ask Jesus why they could not cast out this demon. Read Jesus' answer in Mark 9:29: "And He said to them, 'This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.'" Bulls-eye! Here is the problem. The disciples had tried to cast out this demon without prayer. In other words, they were trying to cast out the demon in their own strength. They limited themselves to their own ability.

First Thessalonians 5:17 commands us to continually pray. Throughout the day we should constantly have an attitude of prayer. We need to commit each task to the Lord and ask for His strength, will, direction, and enabling.

Jesus in John 15:5 tells the disciples, "Apart from Me you can do nothing." Let us heed His words.

***Do NO-thing apart from Him.***

### **May 24—Apostasy**

**The word for today is *apostasy*.**

"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds" (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

"As also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pet. 3:16-17). "But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ" (Col. 2:8).

"Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:19-20).

"For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is

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their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things” (Phil. 3:18, 19).

**Prayer:** *Lord, with Peter I want to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

### **May 25—Boldness**

**The word for today is *boldness*.**

“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up’” (Dan. 3:16-18).

“Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them” (Jer. 1:17).

“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7).

“The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion” (Prov. 28:1).

“For a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries” (1 Cor. 16:9).

“Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

**Prayer:** *Lord, You said in the sermon on the mount: “Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great.”*

*Make me bold for You!*

### **May 26—Busyness**

**The word for today is *busyness*.**

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“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. ... Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word” (Ps. 119:18, 37).

“Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord’s word, seated at His feet. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.’ But the Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:38-42).

“Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Gal. 3:3).

“Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it” (Heb. 4:1).

“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isa. 32:17).

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Ps. 46:10).

“I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint” (Jer. 31:25).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

Join me in singing “Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting”: “Jesus, I am resting, resting In the joy of what Thou art; I am finding out the greatness Of Thy loving heart. Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee, And Thy beauty fills my soul, For by Thy transforming power, Thou has made me whole. Jesus, I am resting, resting In the joy of what Thou art; I am finding out the greatness Of Thy loving heart.”

***Prayer: Jesus, with the hymnist, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art; I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.***

## **May 27—Change**

**The word for today is *change*.**

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you’” (Gen. 12:1).

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“Then the Lord said to Jacob, ‘Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you’” (Gen. 31:3).

“So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, ‘Jacob! Jacob!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. ‘I am God, the God of your father,’ he said. ‘Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph’s own hand will close your eyes’” (Gen 46:1-4).

“The path of the righteous is level; O upright One, you make the way of the righteous smooth” (Isa. 26:7).

“I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you” (Gen. 28:15).

“Then the Lord said to me, ‘You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north’” (Deut. 2:2-3).

“He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young” (Isa. 40:11).

“Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway” (Prov. 8:34).

“If the Lord delights in a man’s way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand” (Ps. 37:23, 24).

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jer. 29:11).

I am singing a verse of “Where He Leads Me”: “I can hear my Savior calling; I can hear my Savior calling; I can hear my Savior calling, ‘Take thy cross and follow, follow Me.’ Where He leads me I will follow; Where He leads me I will follow; Where He leads me I will follow; I’ll go with Him, with Him all the way.”

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for the promise to the Israelites as they prepared to cross the Jordan: “Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before.”***

**May 28—Comfort**

**The word for today is *comfort*.**

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“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

“My eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, ‘When will you comfort me?’” (Ps. 119:82).

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matt. 5:4).

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. ... Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life” (Isa. 43:2, 4).

“You will increase my honor and comfort me once again” (Ps. 71:21).

“My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life. ... May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant” (Ps. 119:50, 76).

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

“Comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word” (2 Thess. 2:17).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for the comforter, the helper, the Holy Spirit who comes and gives strength and encouragement in our pursuit of Your will.***

## **May 29—Confession**

**The word for today is *confession*.**

“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy” (Prov. 28:13).

“And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (John 3:19-21).

“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).

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“And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:5-8).

“Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth” (Ps. 26:2-3).

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps. 139:23, 24).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men” (Acts 24:16).

**Prayer: Lord, the word of Job is the prayer on my lips: “Teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I will not do so again!”**

### **May 30—A Pearl for Today**

“But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at bringing others to Christ. Complete the ministry God has given you” (2 Tim. 4:5 NLT).

### **T-T-T-TIMID?**

“For much of this century TIMIDITY disguised as HUMILITY has crouched in her corner while the spiritual quality of evangelical Christianity has become progressively worse year by year.”

—A.W. Tozer, *Renewed Day by Day*, May 13

This Tozer quotation caught my attention because, unfortunately, it is true of me. I am so afraid I will offend someone that I timidly draw back from many encounters. The world certainly has no compunction about exhibiting what is distasteful. Why should I hesitate to present a Christian message when there is an opportunity?

The groups of people I admire most are Christian businesspersons, students, and ministers.

The businessmen and women who seek to maintain a consistent testimony at the workplace have a truly awesome responsibility.



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The young person who can stay on track these days must have strong character. Junior high, high school, and college students face special challenges.

The minister, who is supposed to be the gentlest of souls, finds himself, like the apostle John in 3 John 9-10, squaring off with at least one Diotrephes, “who loves the preeminence, prating against us with malicious words.”

These are truly the heroes of the Christian faith who are worthy of our respect and admiration. By their lives and words, they present the Christian message in difficult places and situations.

It has been stated that those who will not make a stand will fall for anything. Is there some stand or Christian message the Lord wants you to make against an evil situation? Do so with boldness. “For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7). If we have a spirit of timidity, it is not from God but from Satan. Satan delights when we are timid, when we shrink away and do not speak the Christian message.

***All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.***

**May 31—Cleansing**

**The word for today is *cleansing*.**

“‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isa. 1:18).

“Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:22-23).

“That He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word” (Eph. 5:26).

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded” (James 4:8).

“I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me” (Jer. 33:8).

“But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live” (Ezek. 18:21-22).

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. ... I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Ps.

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119:9, 11). “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

**Prayer:** *Lord, I claim Your promise this day: “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for My own sake, and remembers Your sins no more.”*

### **June 1—Deception**

**The word for today is *deception*.**

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 5:6).

“And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev. 12:9).

“No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence” (Ps. 101:7).

“Do not testify against your neighbor without cause, or use your lips to deceive” (Prov. 24:28).

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jer. 17:9).

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ” (2 Cor. 11:13).

“Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they keep deceiving, The poison of asps is under their lips” (Rom. 3:13).

“There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace” (Prov. 12:20).

“But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3).

“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

“But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called ‘Today,’ lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13).

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to stay focused on the LIVING WORD and the WRITTEN WORD so I will not be deceived by Satan.*

### **June 2—Dissatisfaction**

**The word for today is *dissatisfaction*.**

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“Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless” (Eccles. 5:10).

“The leech has two daughters. ‘Give! Give!’ they cry. There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, ‘Enough!’ the grave, the barren womb, land, which is never satisfied with water, and fire, which never says, ‘Enough!’” (Prov. 30:15-16).

“All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him” (1 Sam. 22:2).

“For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Ps. 107:9).

“God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?” (Num. 23:19).

“Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Phil. 4:11-12).

“But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content” (1 Tim. 6:6-8).

*I am repeating a couple of verses of “Satisfied”: “Poor I was, and sought for riches, Something that would satisfy; But the dust I gathered round me Only mocked my soul’s sad cry. Hallelujah! I have found Him—Whom my soul so long has craved! Jesus satisfies my longings; Thro’ His blood I now am saved. Well of water, ever springing, Bread of Life, so rich and free, Untold wealth that never faileth, My Redeemer is to me. Hallelujah! I have found Him—Whom my soul so long has craved! Jesus satisfies my longings; Thro’ His blood I now am saved.”*

*Prayer: Lord, help me to never lose the attitude of gratitude, thanking You daily that I am NOT getting what I deserve.*

### **June 3—Doubt**

**The word for today is *doubt*.**

“But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he

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will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (James 1:6-8).

“But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23).

“Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with Him’” (John 11:16).

“And Peter answered Him and said, ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ And He said, ‘Come!’ And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’ And when they got into the boat, the wind stopped” (Matt. 14:28-32).

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore were saying to him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’ And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.’ Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed’” (John 20:24-29).

“For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2 Tim. 1:12).

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

***Prayer: Lord, I am trusting in You with all my heart and will not waver in doubt. My confidence is in You alone.***

#### **June 4—Persecution**

**The word for today is *persecution*.**

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“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:18-19).

“And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28).

“But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake’” (Acts 9:15-16).

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

“And Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1).

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matt. 5:10-12).

“Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right” (1 Pet. 4:19).

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom. 8:18).

***I am singing a verse of “Day by Day”: “Day by day, and with each passing moment, Strength I find to meet my trials here. Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment, I’ve no cause for worry or for fear. He whose heart is kind beyond all measure Gives unto each day what He deems best, Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure, Mingling toil with peace and rest.”***

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for Peter’s encouraging words: “And after you have suffered for a little, the God of all grace... will Himself, perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”***

***June 5—Envy***

**The word for today is envy.**

“Resentment kills a fool, and envy slays the simple” (Job 5:2).

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“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones” (Prov. 14:30).

“And I saw that all labor and all achievement spring from man’s envy of his neighbor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind” (Eccles. 4:4).

“Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong” (Ps. 37:1).

“Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?” (Prov. 27:4).

“Do not envy wicked men, do not desire their company; for their hearts plot violence, and their lips talk about making trouble” (Prov. 24:1-2).

“For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another” (Titus 3:3).

“He is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions” (1 Tim. 6:4).

“For he knew that because of envy they had delivered Him up” (Matt. 27:18).

“Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander” (1 Pet. 2:1).

“So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10).

***Prayer: Lord, I know if I walk by means of the Spirit, I will not be carrying out the desires of the flesh. Spirit of God cleanse me! Fill me! Keep me from envy!***

### ***June 6—A Pearl for Today***

“You are always righteous, O Lord, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease?” (Jer. 12:1).

### **THAT’S NOT FAIR!**

Parenting has helped me, in a small way, understand God as our Father. Mothers often hear those immortal words: “MOM, THAT’S NOT FAIR!” And what is our response? Usually it’s, “Life is not fair, honey!” Actually, this is true! Life is not fair here on earth. Unfairness abounds. Because we walk by faith, not by sight, we cannot see the rest of the story. Sometimes we question, wrongly, our heavenly Father’s fairness and justice.

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In Jeremiah 12:1, the prophet does not question God's righteousness, but rather indicates he cannot understand God's justice. Why do the wicked prosper?

Habakkuk also questions God's justice, wondering why God uses the unrighteous to punish the righteous. Habakkuk has been told by God that He would use the Chaldeans, Israel's enemies, to teach the Israelites a lesson they would not otherwise learn. This does not seem fair to the prophet. Habakkuk 1:13: "Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil" (NASB). He does not question God's righteousness, just His justice. Later in this same verse Habakkuk continues, "Why art Thou silent when the wicked swallow up those more righteous than they?" (NASB) Habakkuk reminds us in the next chapter of his book that the righteous must live by faith, not by sight.

Asaph, in Psalm 73, also struggles with the justice of God. Psalm 73:2-3: "But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling; My steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, as I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (NASB). He continues in Psalm 73 with a litany of items that seem to show God favors the wicked and does not bring about justice. Psalm 73:16: "When I pondered to understand this, It was troublesome in my SIGHT" (NASB). Here Asaph is walking by sight not by faith, yet we see in the next verse his response by faith. Psalm 73:17: "UNTIL I came into the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end" (NASB). In other words Asaph has learned, in the sanctuary, that today is not the end of the story. God's justice will prevail. There will be an "end" to the wicked.

Some of the hardest—and best—lessons we will ever learn will come from the hands of people who hate us or who do not want our best. What they mean for evil, God will use for good.

***We want justice from God when it concerns other people. We plead the mercy of God when it concerns ourselves.***

### **June 7—Experience**

**The word for today is experience.**

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended,



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and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall” (Matt. 7:24-27).

“I thought to myself, ‘Look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge.’ Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind” (Eccles. 1:16-17).

“I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word. ... Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. ... Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. ... Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me” (Ps. 119:16, 97, 105, 133).

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. ... I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Ps. 119:9, 11).

“And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God’s message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe” (1 Thess. 2:13).

“For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11).

***I am singing “The Solid Rock”: “My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus’ name. His oath, His covenant, His blood, Support me in the whelming flood. When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my Hope and stay. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand.”***

***Prayer: Lord, the rock I am building upon is not the rock of experience but the ROCK of the WRITTEN WORD and the LIVING WORD.***

***June 8—Flattery***

**The word for today is flattery.**

“You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matt. 12:34).

“But then they would flatter him with their mouths, lying to him with their tongues” (Ps. 78:36).

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“For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin” (Ps. 36:2).

“Whoever flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for his feet” (Prov. 29:5).

“A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much” (Prov. 20:19).

“A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin” (Prov. 26:28).

“Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit” (Ps. 5:9).

“With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk” (Prov. 7:21).

“He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue” (Prov. 28:23).

“For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God” (2 Cor. 2:17).

“For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness” (1 Thess. 2:5).

***Prayer: Spirit of God, fill my mouth with Your words, so that what I speak will be truth.***

### ***June 9—Goodness***

**The word for today is goodness.**

“Now arise, O Lord God, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. May your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, may your saints rejoice in your goodness” (2 Chron. 6:41).

“You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit” (Job 10:12).

“I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Ps. 27:13).

“They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness” (Ps. 145:7).

“I said to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing’” (Ps. 16:2).

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

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“How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you” (Ps. 31:19).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness” (Gal. 5:22).

“For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph. 5:9).

*I am singing a verse of “Surely Goodness and Mercy”: “A pilgrim was I and awand’ring. In the cold night of sin did I roam, When Jesus, the kind Shepherd, found me; And now I am on my way home. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days, all the days of my life. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days, all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever; And I shall feast at the table spread for me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days, all the days of my life.”*

*Prayer: Lord, Paul’s words to the Romans serve as my meditation: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

#### **June 10—Good Works**

**The words for today are good works.**

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matt. 7:21-23).

“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

“Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness” (Rom. 4:4-5).

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10).

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“There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins” (Eccles. 7:20).

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26).

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6).

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Rom. 8:29-30).

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:2, 3).

***Prayer: Lord, what a relief to know that You give eternal life as a gift, and that we shall never perish. Nor will anyone snatch us from Your hand.***

### ***June 11—Guilt***

#### **The word for today is guilt.**

“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy” (Prov. 28:13).

“They said to one another, ‘Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come upon us.’ Reuben replied, ‘Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood’” (Gen. 42:21-22).

“When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?’ So they sent word to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father left these instructions before he died: “This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.” Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.’ When their message came to him, Joseph wept. His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. ‘We are your slaves,’ they said. But Joseph said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of

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many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.' And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them" (Gen. 50:15-21).

"Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit" (Ps. 32:2).

"Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (Ps. 51:6-7).

"Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand" (Isa. 53:10).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

***How about a verse of "Whiter Than Snow": "Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole; I want Thee forever to live in my soul. Break down ev'ry idol, cast out ev'ry foe. Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow; Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.***

***Prayer: Lord, Your words through Isaiah comfort us—You are He who has blotted out our transgressions and who remembers our sins no more.***

***June 12—Hatred***

**The word for today is *hatred*.**

"Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt" (Lev. 19:17).

"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it'" (Gen. 4:6-7).

"Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar" (2 Sam. 13:22).

"But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (Luke 6:27).

"For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another" (Titus 3:3).

"The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. ... But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in

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the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (1 John 2:9, 11).

“Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15).

“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20).

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Prov. 4:23).

***Prayer: Lord, Your words in the sermon on the mount convict my heart—“You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”***

### ***June 13—A Pearl for Today***

“For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every FAMILY in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:14-19).

## **FAMILY**

The lovely Dunes Bible and missionary conference center is located on a pristine beach in Ocean Park, Washington. Don has frequently been the guest speaker at their family camp held over Labor Day weekend.

On one occasion at the Dunes, as we were visiting around the dinner table waiting to pick up our food, I noticed a young man sitting alone at another table. I went over and sat down beside him. We talked and began to get acquainted.

A short time later, our granddaughter Chelsea, then age five, came over and, as emphatically as she could while maintaining a whisper, said, “Grandmother, you are talking to a stranger.” She looked at me reprovingly, waiting for me to correct my mistake and get away from the “dangerous” man. What to say? Her parents had warned her, and rightly so, to stay away from strangers. I told her that he was a nice man and that I wanted to get to know him and be his friend. She looked unconvinced.

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Every time I think of that conversation, I am grieved but also angered. In our world today, five year olds must be on guard and aware of people who might have evil intentions toward them. It is not easy to raise children in our society. I pray every day for our grandchildren. I also pray daily for our children and their spouses. My comfort and peace is that the family is God's plan. Societal mores ebb and flow, but there will always be the family.

Chelsea may never be free to talk to strangers, but she will have a family. And she has a heavenly Father who knows and loves her deeply. Spend some time praying Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19 for your earthly family.

***Pray, that you and yours may avoid being Satan's prey.***

#### **June 14—Heart**

**The word for today is *heart*.**

"The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time" (Gen. 6:5).

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve" (Jer. 17:9-10).

"Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false" (Ps. 24:3-4).

"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life" (Prov. 4:23).

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

"Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer" (Ps. 19:14).

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts" (Ps. 139:23).

"Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth" (Ps. 26:2-3).

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Ps. 119:11).

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21).

"I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders" (Ps. 9:1).



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“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6).

***Prayer: Lord, please let the peace of Christ rule in my heart today.***

### ***June 15—Pleasure***

**The word for today is *pleasure*.**

“I thought in my heart, ‘Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.’ But that also proved to be meaningless. ‘Laughter,’ I said, ‘is foolish. And what does pleasure accomplish?’” (Eccles. 2:1-2).

“I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun” (Eccles. 2:10-11).

“But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives” (1 Tim. 5:6).

“Treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Tim. 3:4).

“‘Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and I will accept no offering from your hands’” (Mal. 1:10).

“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Ps. 16:11).

“Choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin” (Heb. 11:25).

“The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love” (Ps. 147:11).

“For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation” (Ps. 149:4).

“For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

***Prayer: All my longings lie open before You, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from You. My highest pleasure is spending time with you.***

### ***June 16—Holiness***

**The word for today is *holiness*.**

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“I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves about on the ground. I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy” (Lev. 11:44-45).

“Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness” (Ps. 29:2).

“For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness” (Heb. 12:10).

“And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory’” (Isa. 6:3).

“‘Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,’ Says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

“Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name. Bring an offering and come before him; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness” (1 Chron. 16:29).

“So that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints” (1 Thess. 3:13).

***I am singing a couple of verses of “Holy, Holy, Holy”: “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee: Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty! God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity! Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee, Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea; Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee, Who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.”***

***Prayer: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.***

### ***June 17—Isolation***

**The word for today is isolation.**

“I lie awake; I have become like a bird alone on a roof” (Ps. 102:7).

“I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing” (Isa. 63:3).

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“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘ELI, ELI LAMA SABACHTHANI?’ that is, ‘MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?’” (Matt. 27:46).

“Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me” (John 16:32).

“At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion’s mouth” (2 Tim. 4:16-17).

“Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you’” (Heb. 13:5).

“If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (Phil. 2:1-2).

“Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near” (Heb. 10:22-25).

***Join me in a verse of “Constantly Abiding”: “There’s a peace in my heart that the world never gave, A peace it cannot take away; Tho’ the trials of life may surround like a cloud, I’ve a peace that has come there to stay! Constantly abiding, Jesus is mine; Constantly abiding, rapture divine; He never leaves me lonely, whispers, O so kind: ‘I will never leave thee,’ Jesus is mine.”***

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for the wonderful promise that You will never forsake us or leave us alone.***

***June 18—Leadership***

***The word for today is leadership.***

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“But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart’” (1 Sam. 16:7).

“Moses said to the Lord, ‘May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd’” (Num. 27:15-17).

“Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit” (Matt. 15:14).

“Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies—make straight your way before me” (Ps. 5:8).

“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them” (Isa. 42:16).

“Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long” (Ps. 25:4, 5).

“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Ps. 23:2-3).

“He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young” (Isa. 40:11).

“For the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes” (Rev. 7:17).

***Let’s sing a couple of verses of “Rise Up, O Men of God!”: “Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things; Give heart and soul and mind and strength To serve the King of kings. Rise up, O men of God! The Church for you doth wait, Her strength unequal to her task: Rise up, and make her great!”***

***Prayer: Lord, give Your servant a discerning heart to govern Your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.***

***June 19—Loyalty***

**The word for today is *loyalty*.**

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“‘The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.’ And Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, ‘Surely it is not I, Rabbi?’ He said to him, ‘You have said it yourself’” (Matt. 26:24-25).

“Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me” (Ps. 41:9).

“But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always” (Hos. 12:6).

“‘But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.’ Then all the disciples left Him and fled” (Matt. 26:56).

“After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father’s house. And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt” (1 Sam. 18:1-4).

“But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me” (Ps. 13:5-6).

“Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned” (Song of Sol. 8:6-7).

***Prayer: Lord, Stephen’s words and deeds are in my thoughts: “And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’ And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them!’ And having said this, he fell asleep.” Help me to demonstrate faithfulness and forgiveness.***

### ***June 20—A Pearl for Today***

“Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other” (Rom. 12:10 NLT).

### **DELIGHT IN DELIGHTING**

When I was two my mother, Mabel Combs, died a few days after giving birth to my younger brother. My maternal grandparents took the newborn baby and raised him. Our paternal grandmother, a widow, took in her heartbroken son and

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his other three small children. About two and a half years later, Dad married again. His bride was Lillie Ford Combs. She was nineteen years old—not much older than my ten year old sister. I cannot imagine what it was like for a woman so young to take on a ready-made family.

Following is a letter of honor I wrote to Lillie. At the time, she was 79. She lived in Tahlequah, Oklahoma until her death in 2009.

Dear Lillie,

I admire and respect you for the full life you have led. I watched as you cared for your mother. Every day you went to the nursing home to feed and comfort her. You fetched her laundry to be carefully done at home.

My father's life was extended, after his first heart attack, because of your excellent, untiring care for him. Thanks for making Dad's life so happy. During my years as a child, I can truthfully say I never heard a cross word pass between the two of you.

What a terrific job you did raising your two grandchildren. They were just about the same age as your first ready-made family when they came to you.

Thanks for making me the beautiful red dress at Christmas when I was 10 or 12. You had an incredible talent for cutting a pattern out of newspaper and then sewing a perfectly fitted dress.

Thanks, also for the rows and rows of home-canned jars of vegetables, fruit, pickles, and kraut that tasted so good through the winter. I remember what a reluctant helper I was. Now I sort of like snapping beans and shelling peas.

I salute you and I love you. You will always have a special place in my heart.

Love, Pearl (Sissie)

What a delight it was to honor Lillie. Who needs to be honored by you today?

***Don't miss the delight found in delighting others!***

**June 21—Lust**

**The word for today is *lust*.**

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (James 1:14-15).

“But I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:28).

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“Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life” (Prov. 6:25-26).

“Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved” (1 Cor. 10:6).

“And in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error” (Rom. 1:27).

“Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

“Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge” (Ps. 51:4).

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Ps. 51:10).

“I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl” (Job 31:1).

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22-25).

***Prayer: Lord, I am setting my mind on things above and not on the things that are on earth.***

## **June 22—Materialism**

**The word for today is *materialism*.**

“And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’” (Luke 12:19-20).

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in



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or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:19-21).

“But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Tim. 6:6-12).

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33).

“Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you’” (Heb. 13:5).

“Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am” (Phil. 4:11).

***Prayer: Lord, thank You for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich.***

***June 23—Meekness***

**The word for today is meekness.**

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pet. 3:15).

“Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent!” (2 Cor. 10:1).

“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way” (Ps. 25:9).

“But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace” (Ps. 37:11).

“But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness” (1 Tim. 6:11).

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“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom” (James 3:13).

“With all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love” (Eph. 4:2).

“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Col. 3:12).

“But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God” (1 Pet. 3:4).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

***Prayer: Lord, How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, which You bestow in the sight of men upon those who take refuge in You.***

***June 24—Mercy***

**The word for today is mercy.**

“And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved” (Gen. 43:14).

“And His mercy is upon generation after generation Towards those who fear Him” (Luke 1:50).

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us” (Eph. 2:4).

“Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer” (Ps. 4:1).

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy” (Matt. 5:7).

“Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

“But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’” (Luke 18:13).

“Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony” (Ps. 6:2).

“Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me” (Ps. 27:7).

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“Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me; O Lord, be my help” (Ps. 30:10).

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

“Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers righteousness on you” (Hos. 10:12).

***Prayer: Lord, I am singing with the hymnist—“Mercy there was great, and grace was free; pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary.”***

***June 25—Mind***

**The word for today is *mind*.**

“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper” (Rom. 1:28).

“Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so” (Rom. 8:7).

“And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Eph. 4:23).

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5).

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you” (Isa. 26:3).

“Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you” (2 Cor. 13:11).

“And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind’” (Matt. 22:37).

“Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope” (Lam. 3:21).

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

“Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13).

“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?” (Rom. 11:34).

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“To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled” (Titus 1:15).

***I am singing a verse of “May the Mind of Christ, My Savior”: “May the mind of Christ, my Savior, Live in me from day to day, By His love and pow’r controlling All I do and say.”***

***Prayer: Lord, I am taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.***

**June 26—Pessimism**

**The word for today is *pessimism*.**

“Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with Him’” (John 11:16).

“The other disciples therefore were saying to him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe’” (John 20:25).

“Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, ‘Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?’ And Abraham said to God, ‘If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!’” (Gen. 17:17-18).

“But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. For I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon” (Gen. 40:14-15).

“There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’ He replied, ‘I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too’” (1 Kings 19:9-10).

“‘Don’t call me Naomi,’ she told them. ‘Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me’” (Ruth 1:20-21).

“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?” (Jer. 32:27).

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know” (Jer. 33:3).

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***Prayer: Lord, keep me positive as I pursue Your will and Your way.***

**June 27—A Pearl for Today**

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” (Ps. 147:3).

### **PERMANENT v. TEMPORARY**

Some things in life we have no choice but to accept. Permanent things include a loved one’s death, an unwanted divorce, or injuries from a debilitating accident. Temporary setbacks might include other physical maladies, kid problems, alcohol or drug dependency, or strained relationships.

As we seek wholeness again, our recovery often involves certain stages. We may first struggle with simply accepting the situation. Eventually, we proceed to forgiving, forgetting, and moving on. Counseling—perhaps even medical or psychiatric help—may be needed in the process. We must seek help. We need support. Generally speaking, though, healing will involve the following steps.

#### **Stage One: ACCEPTING**

Here we wonder, how this could happen to us. What did we do to deserve it? We are angry at God for letting it happen. We think God is not answering our prayers. We are dismayed that God is not working out the situation the way we think He should. We may even think life is over. Then comes a time when we realize the ball (sometimes spelled B-A-W-L) is over. We take off the dancing shoes and put on our working shoes. Real acceptance begins when we admit the truth, whatever it may be: (1) I am divorced; (2) I do have cancer (3) My loved one is dead; (4) I made a bad choice; (5) I cannot change the past. Then we are ready to begin moving on.

#### **Stage Two: FORGIVING**

We have not forgiven if we find ourselves (1) still angry every time we think about the situation, (2) still bitter, (3) still trying to find a way to get even, or (4) still seeking the harm of another.

#### **Stage Three: FORGETTING**

This can only occur when (1) our emotions are not as dramatically involved; (2) we no longer get depressed often or stay depressed long; (3) we can think of the good times; (4) we no longer dwell on the “what ifs,” and (5) we can be thankful for the time or experiences we did have together.

#### **Stage Four: MOVING ON**

At last we find we (1) are interested in life again, (2) feel good about ourselves, (3) can look back and say God is good!

Each stage is important and necessary in the healing process.

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***“There is a strange foreboding in the sea. It crashes hard upon our hearts and wakens memories of shipwrecked dreams.”***

***—Eileen Lynch***

### **June 28—Prejudice**

**The word for today is *prejudice*.**

“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy” (Gal. 2:11-13).

“And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get’” (Luke 18:9-12).

“But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (Jam. 2:9).

“They served him by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians” (Gen. 43:32).

“Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite” (Num. 12:1).

“And he said to them, ‘You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean’” (Acts 10:28).

“When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, ‘What is your occupation?’ you should answer, ‘Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.’ Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians” (Gen. 46:33-34).

***Prayer: Lord, my prayer is for a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.***

### **June 29—Quiet**

**The word for today is *quiet*.**

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“It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord” (Lam. 3:26).

“Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife” (Prov. 17:1).

“But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm” (Prov. 1:33).

“The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools” (Eccles. 9:17).

“But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God” (1 Pet. 3:4).

“They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven” (Ps. 107:30).

“But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me” (Ps. 131:2).

“Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread” (2 Thess. 3:12).

“And to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you” (1 Thess. 4:11).

“For kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Tim. 2:2).

“This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: ‘In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it’” (Isa. 30:15).

“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isa. 32:17).

***I’m singing a verse of “Blessed Quietness”: “What a wonderful salvation, Where we always see His face! What a peaceful habitation! What a quiet resting place! Blessed quietness! Holy quietness! What assurance in my soul! On the stormy sea Jesus speaks to me, And the billows cease to roll.”***

***Prayer: Lord, Your word commands me, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”***

***June 30—Reality***

**The word for today is reality.**

“It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).



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“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’” (John 14:6).

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

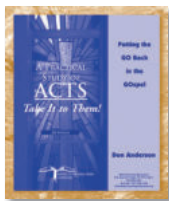
“Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (2 Thess. 1:8-9).

“And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12).

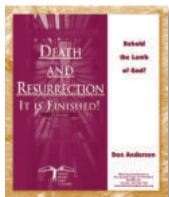
***Please join me in a verse of “Pass Me Not”: “Pass me not, O gentle Savior; Hear my humble cry. While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by. Savior, Savior, Hear my humble cry. While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.”***

***Prayer: Lord, as You say in Your Word, “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”***

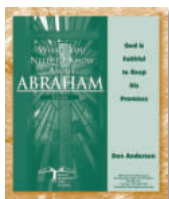
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*Jeremiah 15:16*



**DON ANDERSON** is a popular guest speaker at churches, para-church organizations, conferences, and retreats. His refreshing style and unique insights, captured on CD, VHS and DVD and published in his many books, effectively communicate timeless truths from Scripture and their application to everyday life. Don currently serves as the pastor of Hide-A-Way Lake Community Church in Hide-A-Way, Texas.



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