

# **Search Me, O God**

by Gilbert V. Growcott



## PREFACE

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Paul exhorted the Corinthian believers, "examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5). Self examination is the theme of all the exhortations of Scripture, for it is closely related to our eventual spiritual health. The Greek word for examine implies "assaying", as in regard to gold or silver to determine their worth. It comes from the root word meaning "to pierce." In close physical examination, various instruments are used to scan the intricate structure of the human frame or body, either by scalpel, radiation, or light. Such examinations are essential at times to determine and maintain our bodily health. Paul, however, is speaking of the spiritual aspect of personal examination. Bodily health is transitory and terminal. Spiritual health is, if well maintained, for eternity. How much more essential is the latter if we have the wisdom to make the application now.

How appropriate then to take the medical instrument provided by the Spirit. "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 4:17), for "it is quick (alive) and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

Such an examination, with God's word, is the design of the following pages. They contain a collection of meditations of brother Growcott; prepared when the labors of the day were over, and the needed rest in sleep drew on. The analyses of the day's events and the putting of trials into true perspective, as guided by the divine hand, were condensed in short stanzas to express the inner reaches of the heart, to cleanse and purify the heart, by the washings of the word.

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness:  
and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:

"When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on  
thee in the night watches" (Psa. 63:5-6).

Many of the following verses have been extracted from the Berean pages of past years. Others have been prepared from unpublished notes found at brother Growcott's bedside, after rest in the Lord came upon him. These articles have been collated to continue the exhortations which our brother has composed. They are set out in a manner whereby the thoughtful soul, seeking for comfort, encouragement and spiritual strength, may have them readily at hand; either at bedside, when trials or distress of mind disturb the thoughts, when life's cares

press in upon the saints, or perhaps when travels take one abroad and the quietness of solitude is desired to be broken with the "still small voice of the spirit."

In most cases these paragraphs have been titled, to permit ready reference for those specific matters mentioned to be relocated.

They are sent forth with the desire that the value of our brother's words of wisdom, drawn from the well-spring of life, will lift the hearts and minds of those who put their trust in Him Who knows all our needs. The day is at hand when the Psalmist's prayer is essential for all,

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).

E. FRED HIGHAM

## **Do All To The Glory Of God (1 Cor. 10:31)**

WE must unify our lives with one central motive: the glory of God. Everything we think, say or do must be for this purpose. Everything that does not contribute to it, or that detracts from it, must be put away. This alone is joy and peace.

## **Making Mention Of You In Our Prayers (Eph. 1:16)**

WE have a great and continuing duty to our brethren and sisters, and that is the duty of fervent prayer for them—not meaninglessly by habit and rote as a group, but thoughtfully and individually, one by one, entering into the joys and sorrows of each. Paul said to several ecclesias—

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.”

And his greetings show personal remembrance and care for individuals as such. His mind was ALWAYS filled with the things of God and of God’s people. Until we have achieved the same “mind of Christ,” we are not fully on the Way of Life.

## **Be Blameless As The Steward Of God (Titus 1:7)**

WHENEVER you spend money, remember this: it is God’s, not yours: you are but a steward—under surveillance, handling that which belongs to another. Do you “consume it on your lusts,” or are you using it in His service? There will be a day of reckoning. You will have to give an account of your stewardship. For some, there will be “Well done!” For many there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. In that day, all the precious passing rubbish acquired by unfaithful stewardship will rise to mock us with the grin of death.

## **Through The Valley Of The Shadow Of Death (Psa. 23:4)**

WE must always stand consciously in the presence of death: not morbidly, but soberly and realistically: the death of those we have known and loved (and inadequately appreciated), the death of Christ, our own inevitable death if the Lord remain away. Sin and death are the present inescapable REALITY, and we cope with reality by facing it maturely and intelligently. The empty, giddy, unreal mirth of fools that fills the world is an abomination to our holy God. We are always in His presence. Let us ever remember to behave in keeping with that fact.

### **Pure Religion And undefiled (James 1:27)**

IF our “religion” does not move us powerfully to put away all selfishness, and create in us a great desire to “do good to all men,” then it is not “pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father” (James 1:27). Truly, our conception of what constitutes “doing good” must be enlightened and guided by spiritual wisdom and scriptural instruction; but the underlying motive force for all we do must be a zealous love for all, and a desire to help all, rooted in the love of God Who points this out to us as the only possible Way of Life.

### **Offer Unto God Thanksgiving (Psa. 50:14)**

WHAT God requires of us is thanksgiving and worship and joy and love for Him and intense desire to get closer to Him and to know more about Him, and please Him and serve Him with all our heart and strength. These things do not come naturally to the natural man. These are the things we must earnestly pray for.

### **I Said, Thou Art My God (Psa. 31:14)**

ALL our happiness and pleasure and satisfaction must be centered in God. Any seeming “happiness” or “pleasure” or “satisfaction” that is not centered in God is a sham and a delusion that will turn to sorrow at last. God is the only reality. All things and all beings exist only as He wills that they exist. Whatever is built on God is real, and will last. Whatever is not built on God is not real, and will not last. Only a few learn this. Only a few find eternal happiness and peace.

### **Try Me And Know My Thoughts (Psa. 139:23)**

WHAT we are putting in our minds from day to day is what we are making of ourselves, our lives, and our eternal destiny. God requires that to the fullest of our abilities and opportunities we build our minds spiritually by filling them with His Word. Each spiritual thought adds to the spiritual man; each fleshly thought adds to the fleshly man. Each thought leaves permanent physical imprint for good or ill.

### **Love Never Faileth (1 Cor. 13:8)**

WE should study 1 Cor. 13 repeatedly—not as a beautiful and inspiring poem, but as a practical, down-to-earth workbook. This is the way ALL true children of God act and react: the only way of life and divine fellowship. Those who do not are NOT children of God, whatever their profession or “piety” may be.

## **The Flesh Lusteth Against The Spirit (Gal. 5:17)**

WE must be constantly aware of flesh and spirit, and of the death and life distinction between them. Whatever we do naturally and thoughtlessly is of the flesh, and is not pleasing to God, even though it may be “good” in itself—for it is not of faith, nor done unto Him. All we do must be done unto Him, for spiritual purposes, and in some way contributing to His glory, and His people’s eternal welfare.

## **Work Out Your Own Salvation (Philip. 2:12)**

ANY circumstance or experience—no matter how tiresome or humdrum, no matter how disappointing or saddening, no matter how burdensome or frustrating or seemingly unsuccessful—that enables us to humbly and patiently “work out our salvation,” and increase our understanding, and develop our character and the mind of Christ within us, are all, by that fact, transformed to joyful ingredients of glorious eternal success: and we MUST view them so.

## **When Ye Have Done All . . . Are Unprofitable Servants (Luke 17:10)**

“WHEN ye shall have done ALL those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.” Let us ever keep that saying of Christ in mind. It is a healthy and wholesome view. ALL that we have and are belongs to God, by right. It is no special virtue to use everything in His service: it’s our common duty. We are very deeply PRIVILEGED to be allowed to use God’s goods in His service and to be “fellow-workers” with Him. We can never give God an infinitesimal fraction of what He has given and has promised us. Stamp your heel promptly and decisively on any stupid stirring of self-glory or self-satisfaction: God hates such folly. If doing ALL is still unprofitable, what is God’s judgment of those who do even less?

## **They That Seek The Lord Shall Not Want (Psa. 134:10)**

WE are not to seek God for selfish ends, but in the self-effacing power of divine love. But the glorious paradox is that the more we selflessly seek God’s pleasure and glory, and the less we seek our own, the more inevitably and inexorably will pleasure and glory pursue us, and force themselves upon us.

## **I Saw That Wisdom Excelleth Folly (Ecc. 2:13)**

THE Proverbs are all about wisdom and folly: the infinite beauty of wisdom, and the tragic foolishness of folly. Perhaps this is one of the

biggest lessons we have to learn, and self-changes we have to make. Once “in the Truth,” few of us are in great danger of what we would call “wickedness”; but ALL of us are naturally very, very prone to folly. It takes many forms. All natural thinking is folly.

Anything light or childish or silly or “funny” or selfish or unkind or fleshly or worldly—in short, anything below the ideal level to which we strive, of perfect unity and harmony with the Divine Mind—is folly. May God in His love grant us the inestimable blessing of increasingly perceiving and overcoming our follies and growing out of them—up and into full spiritual wisdom and maturity.

### **In The Day Of Adversity, Consider (Ecc. 7:14)**

WE must not worry about criticism, or be deterred by it, or be afraid of it. But we must be deeply concerned about it, and consider it all very carefully. Our critics are often our best friends: there is always SOME truth in every criticism, however distorted or unfair. We must thankfully extract the truth, and benefit by it, and discard the residue with compassion and without bitterness. If we are wise, the criticisms of our adversaries can be stepping-stones to the Kingdom, and God’s way of opening our eyes to many blindnesses our friends hesitate to mention.

### **Without Counsel Purposes Are Disappointed (Ecc. 12:22)**

LET us not mistake mere planning for true Purpose, nor mere organization for vital Efficiency. Truly, planning and organization CAN be the essential skeleton of living Purpose and Efficiency, but they can also be a skeleton—and no more.

### **Ye Ask And Receive Not Because Ye Ask Amiss (James 4:3)**

WE create our own unhappiness by desiring what it would not be good for us to have, or what God in His love and wisdom does not see fit to give. If we truly believed that “ALL things work together for good to them that love God,” we could not be unhappy. Happiness is contentment with reality, and harmony with God.

### **I Rejoice In Thy Salvation (1 Sam. 2:1)**

SALVATION is so wonderful and marvelous and glorious a thing that—if the whole mind is set on it, and the whole life directed toward it, and everything else is put resolutely aside—there can be no unhappiness. Unhappiness is vision-failure.

## **Be Not Faithless, But Believing (John 20:27)**

WE sing "None have such reason to be glad"; and we read "Great peace have they that love Thy law"; and we recognize the wisdom of the exhortation and command "Rejoice always, and again, Rejoice!" We "believe" these things: why then do we not manifest our faith more consistently? Why are we ever troubled and worried and fearful and dissatisfied and unhappy?

Truly there will be trouble and sorrow and disappointments and discouraging circumstances. These are recognized, necessary ingredients in the present training and disciplining and purifying and perfecting of God's eternal family.

The training is rigorous, but the purpose is known, and the necessity is realized, and the result is glorious. Why are we not then in constant transports of joy? Is it that we don't really believe what we say we "believe"? Is the present a little more glamorous to us, and the future a little more hazy, than we care to admit?

If we believe what we say we believe, and are doing what we know we should be doing, then the only possible result and reaction must be deep, constant, spiritual joy. If it isn't, let us adjust our way of life and way of thinking until it is.

## **Holiness Becometh Thine House, O Lord (Psa. 93:5)**

WE must be solid and consistent from outer surface to inner core. If we relax into foolishness or fleshiness in our non-ecclesial activities, our "holiness" is a sham and a delusion. True saints are saints at all times, under all circumstances, or they are not saints at all. Holiness cannot be donned or shed at whim or convenience.

## **Let Us Put On the Armour Of Light (Rom. 13:12)**

ARE we self-centered, or God-centered? If we are self-centered, the only light and joy we can generate—for ourselves or others—is our own miserable, flickering, brief candle. If we are God-centered, the only limit to the joy and light we can generate is the illimitable eternal limits of God.

## **Serve The Living And True God (1 Thess. 1:9)**

THE greatest blessing possible is to be used by God in His service—used as part of the glorious Divine Plan of Salvation—"workers together with God." We shall be used IF WE ARE USEFUL. Our life's ambition should be to make ourselves useful and suitable. By nature

and natural condition, we are absolutely useless; and there must be a very great change to become useful.

There is a way to become useful: by constant application of the mind to the Word of God and the Spirit of Christ. The “wise” of the world tell us man’s greatest need is to be needed. There is considerable truth in this, though it’s not the whole truth. For God’s eternal purpose, He “needs” a certain kind of people. He searches for them, as for rare living jewels in the vast dead stone pile of humanity. What a glorious ambition to give our lives to preparing, with His help, to fill that need!

### **With My Whole Heart Have I Sought Thee (Psa. 119:10)**

LOVE is life, and love of God is the highest and holiest and happiest form of life. But, because He is so great and high, and we are so small and low, love of God—to be anything—must be everything, or else it is nothing. Many have “love of God” as a part-time hobby, a pleasant palliative on the shelf, with the iodine and aspirins, to use as needed. What the love God demands is the whole heart, life, strength and mind—at all times and in all things. Anything less is a mockery—an indication that we are cruelly deceiving ourselves, and have not really made contact with God at all. If and when we truly do, the magnetism and attraction will be irresistible, and mere part-time service will be impossible and unthinkable.

### **Love Ye Your Enemies And Do Good (Luke 6:35)**

LAY your foundation in love and service and kindness. We are never going to help anyone to make a hard decision against the pull of their own animal desires, if we have already embittered them against us by criticism and unconcern: rather in such a case we re-enforce their resistance. We may have gratified our ego by condemning them, and achieved cheap self-satisfaction, but we have done no service for God.

### **Esteem Them Very Highly In Love For Their Works Sake (1 Thess. 5:13)**

THERE are two kinds of Christadelphians: those who recognize and appreciate the value and soundness and stability afforded by the writings and labors of brethren Thomas and Roberts—and those who do not. Not much can be done to help the latter kind. They are on their way back to the old Apostasy. Resuscitations of the Gospel Truth have

run this pattern over and over: a period of soundness; then a drifting of the majority back to the main orthodox stream.

Brother Thomas assembled the total Truth. Admittedly, others had disjointed parts, some this, some that. He revealed a beautiful, harmonious, living whole. His critics and scorners owe what knowledge they have of it to him, squirm as they may under this embarrassing fact. Intelligent men will recognize their debt and dependency, and will be humbly thankful. Intelligent, mature believers will not feel they have to devise anti-brother Thomas theories, to demonstrate their independence, but will be anxious to stand with the sound Truth as he revealed it—and that includes a true conception of the book of Revelation.

### **Rejoicing In Hope; Patient In Tribulation (Rom. 12:12)**

IN all our troubles and problems and disappointments, let us never for a moment forget our blessings—and our obligation of constant thanksgiving for them. This is what troubles are for: to drive us ever more deeply into the comfort of our blessings, and to make us all the more diligent to lay secure hold upon them by righteousness and loving service to God. Our blessings are always infinitely greater than our troubles ever could be. If we cannot see this, we are blind indeed. We have seen people calling themselves Christadelphians reproaching God for their “undeserved” troubles. It is very easy, and very natural to the flesh. But what folly! What tragedy! We are not ready for the Kingdom, or God would terminate our probation, and give us sweet sleep. We have yet labors to accomplish, and lessons to learn. Let us glory in and profit by the tribulations that are of the loving hand of God to PREPARE us frail, erring mortals for eternal joy.

### **For Thy Name’s Sake, Lead Me And Guide Me (Psa. 31:13)**

IN the matter of the Gibeonites, Joshua reacted according to his own best judgment, without seeking the guidance of God. We see this SO clearly: unwise Joshua! But it is a rare person who does not do exactly the same thing many times a day. How many of us turn instinctively and consistently in prayer to God for guidance in every decision of life, great and small? Yet it is only such as have trained themselves to do this who can be safely on the path of life. Remember Joshua!

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NEVER be satisfied with yourself until you are perfect.

### **My Soul Thirsteth For God (Psa. 42:2)**

THE essence of living success is to keep the mind focused on God Himself—not merely, be it noted, on His works or purpose or service. It is possible to miserably fail by allowing the means to obscure the end—or even become the end.

It is possible to work intensely all day with great enthusiasm in the “service” of God, without even thinking of God Himself at all. That “service” is as useless as a papist’s beads, or blind Israel’s dead, wooden rituals. All that we do must be consciously centered upon and directed toward God Himself, as a Person, in intense love—just as the natural mind, amid all changing circumstances and activities, will gravitate irresistibly and obsessively toward the one person upon whom its affection is fixed. What we think and say and do in a few moments of relaxation at the end of the day may be a much more accurate revelation of our character and personality than the whole day’s virtuous and laborious but pervertedly self-satisfying “service” to God. God seeks—not great works—but our simple faith in and all-absorbing love of Him. These will, if real and true, inevitably bring forth the greatest works we are capable of: but the works are the by-product—the central essence is personal, conscious, love and remembrance of God.

### **He Had Wasted His Goods (Luke 16:1)**

BLESSED are the poor, for their circumstances restrict their capacity to indulge in the natural, universal, fleshly tendency to make unfaithful fools of themselves. But, alas, with “easy” (!) credit, even the poor can play this fatal game. And waste of our (God’s) time can be even more wicked than waste of our (God’s) money.

### **Buy The Truth, And Sell It Not (Prov. 23:23)**

DOES it really matter? Are “Eureka and Elpis Israel back numbers”? Do we now just need a “few simple facts” (like the churches)? How sad that such questions should have to be asked! Christadelphians used to believe that this central foundation truth that distinguishes the Gospel of God on this subject from the Apostasy matters very, very much. What do YOU think?

### **Lead Me In The Way Everlasting (Psa. 139:24)**

A great mistake—perhaps our greatest mistake—is not to seek the guidance of God enough. We seek it generally, and formally, and ritually, but we do not seek it specifically enough nor frequently

enough. We tend to reserve God's direct guidance for "emergencies": we feel we can handle all ordinary affairs with our own unerring understanding and commonsense. We wouldn't say so, but we act that way. We know nothing, and have no sense, common or otherwise. Seeking God's guidance must be a continuous, conscious, moment-to-moment operation, in all things, great and small. It must, as much as possible, by constant effort and remembrance, become second nature. This is how those of old who succeeded, did succeed, and how those who failed, failed. Of ourselves, we are ignorant and foolish, and no amount of worldly education or knowledge can change this basic fact, although it can mask and obscure it, and deceive us concerning it. Only in the sought-for guidance of God moment to moment is there any possibility of "directing the steps aright." It's a fatal error to leave God's guidance to the "big" things. It is the constant "little" things that are shaping our character and our destiny. God is not a compass to be glanced at occasionally and briefly, to see that we are moving generally in the right direction. He is the balancing-pole on the tightrope of life: essential for safety every moment.

### **Lord . . . Hath Redeemed My Soul Out Of All Adversity (2 Sam. 4:9)**

THE more things collapse around us, and in our affairs, the more important closeness to God is, and the more important it is realized to be, if we are of the right mind. This is the blessing of adversity. This is why Paul "rejoiced in tribulation," and James "counted it all joy when he fell into divers temptations."

### **Teaching Every Man In All Wisdom (Col. 1:28)**

IT is not possible to persuade people to be wise. Wisdom is not a POSITION we take: it is a CONDITION we are in. But it is possible to persuade people to take the course that will make them wise: prayer, and study, and meditation on the Word.

### **Who Art Thou That Judgest Another? (James 4:12)**

DON'T criticize: help! Leave the judging to God, where it belongs. Anybody can criticize, and most do. It takes no brains, ability, preparation or effort: just a small mind and a loose tongue. Critics are always in oversupply. Helpers and doers and builders are always scarce, for that takes effort and self-sacrifice and intelligence and patience and love, which are not natural, animal, human characteristics, like criticism is. Criticism comes built-in and ready-made: part of

the universal diabolos. Every unnecessary critical word is a mark against us at the judgment seat. We may be thoughtlessly compiling quite a formidable record for that dread day.

### **Commit Thy Works Unto The Lord, And Thy Thoughts Shall Be Established (Prov. 16:3)**

KEEP your mind on God, and keep busy at something useful and profitable for others. You will then always be happy and at peace. You'll have no time for fancied offenses, or self-pity, or criticism of others, or catering to your own lusts and desires. Wasted time or self-indulgent time is unfaithful stewardship and self-destruction. God has set it up this way, and it is wisdom, and we are very foolish to think we can outwit Him, and find happiness and satisfaction any other way.

### **Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts (Titus 2:12)**

USE your mind. Don't waste it. Fill it with the right stuff, and keep it working on the right stuff. Keep out the rubbish. Whatever we deliberately put in our minds, or allow to enter, becomes part of us for ever. If it's worldly rubbish, then we are contaminating and criminally wasting the capacities of the most marvelous computer known, that we have been given for holy and eternal purposes. Keep worldly "entertainment" out of your mind as much as possible: sports, foolishness, fleshly amusements and diversions. Certainly do not deliberately seek such. These things are not "harmless relaxation": they are dangerous, poisonous pollutants of the mind of Christ that we MUST develop. We have tremendous capabilities: few ever begin to put them to use for their sole intended purpose: preparing for eternity with God. We ARE whatever we put in our minds. That becomes US. What do we really WANT to be? Computer men have a saying: "Garbage in, garbage out." That is, nothing that comes out of a computer is better than what's put in. So with the human mind. Christ has a receptacle for the world's garbage, and he'll soon be putting it there.

### **Give None Offence (1 Cor. 10:32)**

REGARDLESS of how "lawful" a thing may be for us, if it is not a necessity but just a matter of our pleasure and desire, and if we know that it will distress our brethren and sisters, and weaken the ecclesia, and perhaps even divide it; and if we ignore the tears and pleadings of those who implore us to put the love of God and the peace and welfare of the ecclesia ahead of our own selfishness—and if we still go ahead

with our willful course, then we have committed a serious sin before God. We have brazenly declared that our own present pleasure and satisfaction is more important to us than the love of God or the ecclesia's well-being. We have declared that we neither have nor understand the beautiful, self-sacrificing spirit of Christ, and that we are, therefore, none of his. We may argue all too truly that few indeed have this. That's beside the point. The point is: do WE have it? Can we face Christ without it?

### **The Fullness Of Him That Filleth All In All (Eph. 1:23)**

WE must FILL our mind with God's Word, and FILL our life with His character and actions. If we are content in our low animal way to do less than this, then we do not really care very much about Him, and we can hardly expect Him to care very much about us. His conception of love is totality: He is willing to give it—and He requires it of all who would be associated with Him.

### **Grace Unto You, And Peace From God (2 Thess. 1:2)**

AT the heart-center of our life, deep below all problems and weaknesses and failures, must be peace with God. It must be the real thing: God must really be a party to it. It must not be self-delusion: self-delusion is very easy. Peace with God can only be based on the Truth, and on total effort that springs irresistibly from total love.

We must be able to retire here, away from everything, and for the time shut everything else out. Not as a mere escape. Not dreamily and lazily. But to renew our strength and our vision, that we may go forth again in total joy and total service.

### **Behold, Now Is The Day Of Salvation (2 Cor. 6:2)**

TAKE just one day at a time, and enjoy it to the very limit. When you get up in the morning, make up your mind you are going to enjoy the day to the fullest—every moment of it: not a moment wasted in non-enjoyment, just as if it were the only day you ever had or ever will have. Determine that it will be the best day of your life: in joy and in service. Do not confuse enjoyment with entertainment. Entertainment—self-pleasing, selfish "pleasure"—is but pitiful dancing on the deck of the Titanic: stupidity: wicked, criminal waste of precious time that could profitably be devoted to true enjoyment. Enjoyment is keeping God—goodness, love, holiness, wisdom, power—continually before the mind's eye: and doing—at every moment—the best thing to be done at that moment, to the very best of the ability: every

effort: nothing held back: all the care: all the attention. Sometimes the "best" thing for the present moment is a most common and mundane thing, like shining shoes or taking out the garbage. But if it is a necessary part of a life totally devoted to God, then it is done unto God, just as much as is the highest and noblest activity possible, and thereby it is glorified, gilded with eternal beauty and meaning. That is true living. All else is death, in various degrees and percentages.

### **If Ye Have Faith And Doubt Not (Matt. 21:21)**

NEVER worry. Worry has sent more people to asylums and hospitals than anything else. Worry is stupid, juvenile, faithless, non-productive, round-and-round-in-a-circle thinking. If something calls for concern, be concerned. But be concerned in a constructive, productive way. Think in a straight line—from problem to solution. Or if there is no solution, to acceptance. If there is no solution, there is always prayer: though that should be the first resort, not the last. God can make anything happen or not happen. If He doesn't choose to, then it is not to be; or we have not prayed long enough, or sincerely enough. Or we have something to learn that denying our prayers helps to teach us. Everything related to God's affairs and God's people has a good purpose. Folly frets and worries and rebels. Wisdom knows there is a reason, and accepts, and adjusts, and is thankful, whether God gives, or takes away.

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TWO things are essential for true marriage: total devotion of both to God, and total devotion to each other. These things guarantee its success. All else is tragic failure.

### **Abound To Every Good Work (2 Cor. 9:8)**

SURELY there is nothing sadder or more tragic than individuals claiming to be brethren and sisters of Christ who "do not know what to do with their time": who "have nothing to do." There is enough to do to fill one hundred lifetimes, if people would open their eyes, and get their little minds off themselves. NO ONE does enough for others, in service and kindness and remembrance. NO ONE studies enough. NO ONE writes enough letters. NO ONE preaches the Truth enough.

True brethren and sisters of Christ will be perpetually thankful for every precious moment of time that God gives them, and will eagerly fill every moment with joyful usefulness in His glorious service. Many worldly organizations are crying for volunteers to do urgently needed humanitarian work. This is truly a waste of time for Christ's brethren and sisters, who have a multitude of far higher and more eternally-

useful things pressing to be done; but at least this fact is a standing condemnation of any who do not FILL their lives with SOME useful and helpful activity. The empty-headed, infantile world more and more seeks baby-toys and games and vacuous, spoon-fed, Disney "entertainment." Let the children of wisdom be far, far above this pitiful life-wasting folly! "Always abound in the work of the Lord."

The more we devote our lives to constructively and actively doing the work of God, the less likely we are to sin. This is not a guarantee, for the flesh is very deceptive, but it is a great help. The more we keep God in mind, the more He will strengthen us against weakness and folly. We are much more likely to sink into sin when our guard is down, and our minds are on present things. Knowing this, we are responsible for our failures if we put ourselves in the channel of failure.

### **Tribulation Worketh Patience (Rom. 5:3)**

THE human mind is naturally given to shallowness and folly and the infantile, characterless pursuit of pleasure and excitement. Very few ever get beyond this stunted stage. Tribulation, if we are rightly exercised by it, forces us to come face to face with the sober realities of life, and intelligently adjust our purposes and characters to them. This is the teaching of Scripture, and the wholesome experience of any with any sense and maturity. Some run away crying, vainly seeking solace in animal emptiness, and gain nothing from their sorrows. This is tragic.

### **God Resisteth The Proud, And Giveth Grace To The Humble (1 Pet. 5:5)**

PRIDE desires to do great things publicly: love is happy to do little things privately. Man can only do little things. Only God can do great things. Even Christ said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Man, if he is wise and faithful, and humbles himself truly (not just pridefully), may be used as an instrument for God's great things.

### **A Workman That Needeth Not To Be Ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)**

THERE is no retirement age in the Truth. This is a fatal folly. "Retirement" is such an obsession in this indulgent and decadent age that it can infect our thinking in the Truth. We do not mention names very often, but we feel we must here. Brother Gibson has never retired, though he is now ninety years old. He still carries on his ecclesial duties each week, and his considerable correspondence, and his work

in the magazine to the best of his ability. He finds he can do frustratingly less now than in former years, and the effort is harder, and the joy of vigorous activity has gone, but other and deeper joys take its place. "Occupy (pragmateuomai: work, keep busy—from pragma, work) until I come" . . . "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Don't be trapped and deceived into the lazy, selfish, worldly "retirement" complex. The Truth needs faithful workers unto the end. Let us be among them.

### **Fervent In Spirit, Serving The Lord (Rom. 12:11)**

THERE is nothing more beautiful or more rare than selflessness, the quality of self-forgetfulness in the joy of service to others. "All men seek their own"—in the busy, self-centered, misguided "pursuit of happiness." And yet the pitiful, strange, wonderful, glorious fact is that only the totally unselfish are totally happy, totally content, totally enraptured in the constant ecstasy of true divine love.

THOUGHTS of wisdom. Thoughts of love. Fill your mind with them. Crowd all else out. They are wholesome and healthy. They are joyful, purifying, upbuilding.

### **Be Thankful Unto Him (Psa. 100:4)**

"THANK God!" That should be the most frequent expression on our lips (mostly silently) and in our hearts. It should come spontaneously, frequently, yea, continuously. Every flower, every star, every cloud, every sunset, should evoke our awe and wonder and thrilling joy of divinely-contrived beauty. Every word of Holy Writ. Every incident in our lives, "good" or "bad"—for faith and love can see the marvel and the wisdom and the purpose of it all. "Thank God!" should be the constant heart-beat of our lives, from which all love and peace and grateful, never-enough service springs. Sad indeed are those who crawl and stumble through an empty life in the cold and in the shadows never knowing the warmth and light and sunshine and perpetual happiness of living in and unto God our Father!

### **Him Only Shalt Thou Serve (Matt. 4:10)**

TO serve God and be a useful, active part of His eternal purpose is man's greatest privilege and wisdom, and should be his greatest joy. God's work alone has any permanence or meaning or value or satisfaction. Everything else is silly little baby games—fine indeed for babies, but pitiful for supposedly mature adults.

### **The Lord Is My Helper (Heb. 13:6)**

YOU are never going to make it alone. You might as well face the fact. Either you are going to get God's total help, or your life at the end will prove to be just one more tragic failure in the countless, faceless passing billions of mortal flesh. The only way to get God's help is to give Him everything you have: life, heart, mind, strength, and goods. That's His price, and He does not haggle. Take it or leave it. It would still be a bargain at a million times the price. What you give at very best is actually nothing. It is just a poor little token of your love and thanksgiving, worthless in itself, like the crumpled love-offering of a small child, but it has great value and meaning to God. As long as it is everything you have, He will accept it in love. You might as well give it, and reap eternally for it. In a few brief years it will all be gone anyway, and so will you with it.

### **But In Understanding Be Men (1 Cor. 14:20)**

GOD'S professed people—presumed heirs and rulers of the world to come—wasting their precious time and attention on the world's baby-toys is like a pitiful lunatic millionaire picking through the garbage, mentally incapable of comprehending or enjoying his vast riches. "In malice be children, but in understanding be MEN."

### **I Beseech Thee, Show Me Thy Glory (Ex. 33:18)**

"SHOW me Thy glory!" This should be our constant prayer. This is the power of redemption and transformation. God is glorious to behold, glorious to contemplate, glorious in fellowship and comfort and beauty and hope and joy. How dimly our dull flesh perceives His infinite gloriousness! But to perceive it, and to be drawn to it, and transformed by it, is Life Eternal. What has anything in this poor life to compare with the joy of that glory? Look up, and let it transform you.

### **Take Heed That Ye Be Not Deceived (Luke 21:8)**

WE must fervently pray God to free us from our illusions and delusions. He sometimes does it roughly, but it is wholesome and beneficial. How we tend to make special rules and exceptions for ourselves, and give new, excusing definitions to sin and folly! But God's holy laws are impartial for all, and wisdom will not seek to bend them for personal gratification or self-justification. We must seek the divine blessing of the ability of searching impartiality and honesty in our necessary, constant self-examination. It is grimly interesting and

amusing to see how deceptive our minds can be, and how contrary to our true and larger well-being.

### **All Their Heart And All Their Soul (2 Kings 23:3)**

WE shall not be judged, at the judgment seat of Christ, for how much we know, or how much we have done. But we SHALL be judged for how much effort and interest and desire we have put into knowing, and how faithfully and wholeheartedly we have tried to do. The widow's mite is equal to the rich man's abundance. The mite's value lay in the fact that it was her all. So it must be with us. Anything less than our all is a mockery and a dishonoring of God, Who freely and lovingly promises us all. But how few really respond with ALL their heart! They are His jewels among the common clay: today unknown, tomorrow, resplendent forever.

### **Wisdom Is Profitable To Direct (Ecc. 10:10)**

THE lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life: the desire to HAVE something, to ENJOY something, to BE something: possession, gratification, accomplishment. We all have these lusts. Adam and Eve had them in their innocency.

In themselves, they are not wrong: they are "very good": they are the creation and blessing of God. It is their MISDIRECTION that is evil. "Thou shalt not covet" (Rm. 7:7) is exactly the same word in the original as "with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you" (Lk. 22:15).

Desire and affection are of themselves neutral, and potentially good, as the gifts of God. It is where we set them that makes the difference between sin and sainthood, between sorrow and salvation, tragedy and triumph. Wisdom perceives this, and directs all its desires in the way of wholesomeness, godliness, spiritual productiveness, eternal worthwhileness. Folly does not. Folly lets desire run its natural blind animal course which—since Adam's transgression and sentence—has been downward and corrupt and abominably perverted. "Wisdom is profitable to direct" (Eccl. 10:10).

### **All Nations Before Him Are As Nothing (Isa. 40:17)**

WE are nothing: absolutely nothing. Let us get that straight. As soon as we start to think we are anything, or others think we are anything, or tell us we are anything, we are in danger. Man is nothing. God is everything. Be part of God.

## **Every Spirit That Confesseth Not That Jesus Christ Is Come In The Flesh Is Not Of God (1 John 4:16)**

ERRORISTS have accused the Berean fellowship of teaching error because we maintain the original sound teaching of brethren Thomas and Roberts that Christ had Sin-in-the-flesh, and that his sacrifice was for the purification of himself and the race (as IN him) from this condition and all its consequences and effects. This used to be considered a vital first principle doctrine—in fact, the very heart of the Truth. How does Christadelphia stand on it today? Will they openly and courageously rally to its defense, now that it is brazenly and persistently being challenged among them?

## **God Is Love; He That Dwelleth In Love Dwelleth In God (1 John 4:16)**

TO love God and to be loved of God is the only peace, joy, happiness and satisfaction in this life. Secure that, and you have everything. And it must not just be first in our lives. It must be everything. It does not eliminate many other loves. Rather it totally absorbs and directs and empowers them: unites and fortifies them in every darkness and disappointment: sustaining when every human aspect fails.

## **No Man Can Serve Two Masters (Matt. 6:24)**

WE claim, and often tell God in prayer, that it is our “sole desire to serve Him in immortal strength throughout eternity.” Some say “humble desire”—though we always wonder at the depth, or even the understanding, of “humility” of those who tell God they are humble (doubtless we do it ourselves too, as in many other things we wonder about in others). But about this claim to desire to serve God totally and forever, WE can show right now whether this is sincerity or just fancy words. IF we really do desire to “serve God throughout eternity,” we shall be serving Him NOW with ALL our present mortal strength and life, and mind and goods, or else all our fine words are froth. We shall recognize that we have no time to spare—yea, we shall have no DESIRE—for anything else except providing the bare necessities of life so that we may wholly serve Him. Does our way of life confirm or belie our so noble protestations. Do we think God is deceived by mere words?

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“ONE small cloud can hide the sun: one small word can break a heart.”

## **The Sacrifices Of God Are A Broken Spirit (Psa. 51:17)**

EVERY natural disappointment can and should be a thankful stepping-stone to greater peace with God, for by contrast to all things and persons human it emphasizes the unassailable dependability of that peace. What we grieve over as a loss, or disappointment, or deprivation, may be a great emancipation and deliverance and opportunity, a fresh turn of our lives in a higher and more satisfying direction. God's ways of teaching and correcting us are strange and wise and beautiful. The sweetest, deepest scent is from the crushed flower. Natural disappointment and sorrow can be the golden portal to spiritual joy. Joy that is born of sorrow is a far fuller and stronger-rooted joy. Above all things, never let yourself be sorry for yourself. That is sick, fatal, dead-end folly. That is a reproach on God's love.

## **Thy Word Is Truth (John 17:17)**

A correspondent writes (from another group, troubled about the fog of speculation and "new thought" and "non-traditionism" that is filling the Christadelphian air), "That's the thing about the Berean: you never have to worry about what some writer is driving at." We accept this comment thankfully, and as a great responsibility. The Truth does not change: people just tire of it. What was sound in the days of our pioneer brethren Thomas and Roberts is sound today; and what was unsound then is unsound today. "Progress" has an appealing ring: but from where to where? From soundness to unsoundness? From clarity to fog? From the Rock to the quicksand? We are old-fashioned, stick-in-the-mud, "traditionalist"—everything that is anathema to the modern wave of speculation and "new thought," and we are thankful that in God's providence through brethren Thomas and Roberts we have been shown the soundness of the original Faith, and we intend, God willing, never to budge from it.

## **Call On The Lord Out Of A Pure Heart (2 Tim. 2:22)**

GOD, Who calls us to become His sons and daughters, is the perfection of purity and holiness. This thought has great power: we should meditate on it constantly. It is wholesome, and purging, and purifying to the mind. Naturally, we are unclean: physically, morally, mentally. Natural man tends inevitably to filth, like a child to mud and dirt. Read Rom.1; look about you: it is ordinary, animal man in all his beloved, infantile dirt. But love of God can open the mind to the joy of cleanness and the beauty of holiness. Keep the mind fixed on the glorious purity of God.

## **It Is Your Father's Good Pleasure To Give You The Kingdom (Luke 12:32)**

GO for pleasure! Go for it with all your heart and might! That is what you are put here on earth for—to enjoy yourself to the uttermost. BUT—be sure it IS pleasure. The world is full of tragic, tempting, cheating counterfeits that never satisfy, but at best only stupefy with temporary excitement or sensation or absorption, like a brief drug high—but all lead at last to the same dead end. There is only one true, real, permanent pleasure—unalloyed, unassailable, and everlasting. Ignore the myriad masks of the empty face of Folly, and heed the solitary sound of Wisdom's call to everlasting joy. God guarantees "pleasures for evermore."

## **Precious In The Sight Of The Lord Is The Death Of His Saints (Psa. 116:15)**

DEATH is not sad if the life has been wholly lived in and unto God. It is but brief rest from faithful labor, sweet sleep oblivious of all sorrow and care, awaiting joyful and eternal reunion with the choicest, loveliest, most beautiful characters of all ages: the very pick of the human race. How pleasant is good company! Let us so endeavor to live each moment wholly within God and His Truth and His Purpose and His Love, that we may—with humble, trusting confidence—at last close our eyes to this life in perfect peace: total, thankful joy—without fear, without regret.

## **From Everlasting To Everlasting, Thou Art God (Psa. 90:2)**

GOD remains. He will never disappoint us, never disillusion us, never mock us with dissolving shadow where all our hopeful joy thought there was substance and reality. He will never be unkind, or selfish, or unfeeling, or impatient, or harsh, or uninterested. He will never misunderstand us, or trample on our affections, or falsely accuse us, or suspect us when our motives are pure and true. He is always with us—any place, any moment—with limitless help, limitless comfort, limitless patience and understanding, limitless, eternal love. When all others fail us, or turn from us, or leave us, still God remains—all-satisfying, all-sufficient—His preciousness increasingly magnified by every sorrow, every loss, every bitter disappointment. God is real, dependable, eternal. All else, all human things, are fantasy.

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SERVICE to God is the sincerest form of prayer and worship.

### **Purge Away Thy Dross (Isa. 1:25)**

GOD is ready and waiting to deliver us from our follies and fantasies and baby toys—as soon as we are sincerely ready to let them go. But while professing to want to grow up and be free of them, we cling so pitifully to them like the teddy bears of our childhood (which they are). We cannot do it ourselves, but God can and will—swiftly and surgically, as soon as we ask and really mean it. It is a bit of a shock, like extracting an aching tooth without anesthetic, but the relief is wonderful and immediate. But we must have the intense desire, springing from a total love of God and—from the love—an anxious, ardent zeal to approach Him closer and closer, and serve Him more and more. We must come to see all our toys as handicaps and hindrances to total joy in His service. Do we love Him ENOUGH?

### **Be Ye Transformed (Rom. 12:2)**

WE must be able to feel, when we go to bed each night, that we have that day done our most and best: that all we have done was necessary and useful, and the most important thing to be done at the time, and that we have done it with all our heart, unto the Lord. We must not be satisfied with what we have done, but we must be reasonably satisfied that we have tried our best, and that we have noted, and learned something by, our slips and failures. We must be able to feel we are slowly overcoming, growing, deepening, becoming more naturally spiritual—that is less as duty and effort, more as pleasure and desire. We must be able to see ourselves passing some tangible milestones of progress: a steady transformation of the mind Godwards—less and less interest in passing, worldly, animal things of any kind (except secondarily, like the Signs of the Times, as related to God's onward moving purpose). And even this we must see somewhat dispassionately, as from afar. For that will come of a certainty: our major and overwhelming concern must be to be personally ready when it does—when the dreadful and joyful cry goes forth: "The marriage of the Lamb HAS come!—and his Wife hath made herself READY!"

### **The Lord Hath Set Apart Him That Is Godly For Himself (Psa. 4:3)**

WE shall never attain salvation without developing a godly mind. A godly mind does not come naturally. It comes only by great effort and dedication and desire. We could be "in the Truth" one hundred years, and still not have a godly mind. A godly mind is full of God, ALL the time. And it is not just sentiment, though that is vitally

important. It is godly KNOWLEDGE, deep knowledge from His Word reverently studied and pondered, which is equally important. A godly mind lives in the atmosphere of God. It sees God everywhere. Every creature has its natural habitat—the surroundings where it is comfortable, and healthy, and happy. The natural habitat of the godly mind is God Himself: here only it is at home and at peace.

### **Be Not Carried Away With Divers And Strange Doctrines (Heb. 13:9)**

THERE is at present a sad tendency in some groups to take all the robust passages concerning fellowship which have preserved and guided sound Christadelphians for over one hundred years, and surgically isolating and dissecting them, one by one, by contortion to endeavor woolily to rationalize away all their force and meaning; to progressively talk them to death and water them down and down so that no weapons are left for the defense of the Body of Christ from corruption and error. They say, rather smugly, of those who stand aside from error: "By their fruits ye shall know them": Their interpretation of this is: "Look at 'them,' the divided few, and look at 'us,' the undivided many: obviously OUR way must be right." We can see the logic of the Catholic Church using this argument, but it falls strange from the lips of those who profess to recognize the call to "Come out and be separate." Can it not with far truer logic be said from the opposite point of view: "Look at the bitter intra- and inter-continental recriminations, the tolerated errors and confusions, the fearful paralysis of inaction against creeping error, the glaring differences transparently and precariously papered over for the sake of an appearance of 'unity,' the deplored but tolerated assiduous eating away of the sound foundations laid by the pioneers." How can the Truth as so beautifully brought to light by brethren Thomas and Roberts be clearly and robustly presented at lectures if doctrine after doctrine—Responsibility, Kingdom now, Holy Spirit possession, Nature and Sacrifice of Christ, clear-cut Creation, Rome is Babylon, one thousand year Kingdom, post-millennial revolt, Inspiration (Acts a legend, Genesis a myth)—are pushed into a hazy, unmentionable twilight zone of "agreeing to disagree" for the sake of a false "peace"?

### **In Doctrine Showing Uncorruptness (Titus 2:7)**

WE note a strange, and sad, but age-old phenomenon in current periodicals. The ones who have been most active and diligent in breaking down the sound teaching of brother Thomas, and in agitating

and fracturing the cohesion and stability and habits of sound Bible study founded upon those teachings, are the very ones who are now bemoaning the results of their own termite activities. They have sown the wind in their speculations and attempts to undermine respect for the works and teachings of brethren Thomas and Roberts—especially in relation to 1) sound fellowship, 2) the importance of doctrine, and 3) the Revelation—and now they are wringing their hands at the whirlwind that has inevitably followed. They express anguish that the ubiquitous and iniquitous TV and the general tinsel Disneyland of this empty, shallow modern world are taking the place of the Word of God in the interests of the flock. They profess distress that “doctrine” is being neglected and belittled, and that those in responsible positions are incompetent to conduct sound baptismal examinations. They seem utterly oblivious to their own responsibility for these conditions. It is not for us to gloat—far from it!—but rather to be deeply saddened, and to fear and tremble and examine ourselves, for we have no automatic guarantee of immunity from similar folly. We are reminded of the “Reunion” debacle, when all those who were the most active and prominent in promoting it were the first to realize the tragic unwisdom of what they had set in downward motion. Some of them stayed with the movement, perpetually torn with remorse for what they had gotten the flock into. Some soon withdrew from it, but could not summon the ability to face the embarrassment of a direct public reversal, so found obscuring refuge in a further new group. And some—very few—had the courage and wisdom to publicly and frankly retrace their steps, and return to the position they had left. We tend to insufficiently value and acclaim these latter. Could we ourselves rise to do the same? Few indeed could summon the fortitude and moral integrity to take such a clear course of self-correction after such fanfare in the other direction. Most would rather seek a face-saving alternative.

### **Judge Righteous Judgment (John 7:24)**

WE are all weak, we are all erring, we shall all continually fail of perfection—but we **MUST** all work together in compassion and understanding to build the unity and communion of the Body of Christ. We must be very careful that we judge and decide on **FACTS**, and we must be sure our “facts” **ARE** facts. The evil tendency of all flesh (our own included) is to misunderstand and to thoughtlessly misrepresent, to think and expect and say, the worst of others on any occasion of stress or annoyance or disagreement. We must have enough sense and maturity to recognize this fleshly tendency in ourselves and others, so

that our conclusions and statements about others are godly and not fleshly. Truly, we must not close our eyes to reality. But we must be very careful, especially in bad situations, to be sure we do not make them worse by fleshly or family partiality for or against, by jumping to conclusions, by alarm and exaggeration, and above all, by the dreadful presumptuousness of playing God in judging motives. Truly, many mistakes are made in trying to deal with problems, but if the motive is right and godly, and the goal is the Truth's welfare, then we must have compassion with the human errors of implementation. Our sympathy must be, not with ties of blood, but with those who are struggling to uphold the principles of the Truth and the standards of the ecclesia, even if we feel they err in their methods. Our sympathy must not be with those who by their fleshliness are pulling down these principles and standards and creating the problems for those trying to obey. Closeness of relationship must not color our judgments in matters relating to God and His Truth.

### **Blessed Are The Pure In Heart (Matt. 5:8)**

JUST "doing" is not enough. Motive is everything. All that we do, we must do for the love of God. This is the only motive He accepts. We must not do from fear. Or for praise. Or as a burden and a duty. Or in self-importance. Or to impress others. Or in competition or rivalry. There are many, many motives; and the deceptive, natural human heart is many-faceted and complex. But all must be purged out, leaving only love remaining. Then the heart is pure. The pure in heart and they alone, shall see God. God, cleanse us from folly, and make us pure in heart!

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IF our total joy is not in pleasing and serving God, then we do not have the Truth.

### **Seven Times A Day Do I Praise Thee (Psa. 119:164)**

LET us strive each new day to offer to God a perfect day: perfect in useful, godly activity, perfect in manifested character, perfect in thought and word, perfect in total remembrance and continuous consciousness of God, and of our glorious, joyful relationship to Him. We shall, of course, fail to some degree, but we shall have the happiness that we have TRIED. And there will still be other days to come: days to try harder, days to use the knowledge and wisdom we have learned from our previous efforts and failures. Each day is a fresh new beginning—a fresh new adventure in climbing the hill of godliness:

ever upward toward perfect communion, perfect peace, perfect oneness with Him Who is Perfect Love and Eternal Perfection. This is the beauty and the glory of the godly life.

## **Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain (1 Tim. 6:6)**

**CONTENTMENT:** absolute, total happiness with things as they are; freedom from the folly and frustration of unsatisfied (and usually illusionary) desire. Contentment, not because things are "ideal", but because they are exactly as God's love and wisdom wills them to be at the moment. Contentment, not that they stay as they are, but that they are moving in the direction they are going—"working together for good to those that love God." This is the assurance that underwrites godly contentment. Without it, "contentment" would be a lunatic's pitiful self-delusion. Happiness is full, thankful enjoyment of that which is. Unhappiness is desire for that which is not. But "that which is" must be seen as the great, eternal "IS" of which God is the center and meaning. Contentment is not stagnation or indolence or indifference. It is intensely alive and vibrant and active. Paul "yearned" and "wept" and "strove" and "agonized"—yet he was joyfully content in the most hazardous and miserable and destitute of circumstances (Ph. 4:11). Contentment is bedrock, inner peace with God, desiring nothing but the glorious privilege and honor of serving in the great work of God among men. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

## **All My Salvation And All My Desire (2 Sam. 23:5)**

**STICK** with it! Keep the mind fixed. Do not let the flesh sidetrack or divert. Set the one great Goal before you, and eliminate everything else from your interest or your attention. There will be plenty of scope **WITHIN** that Goal for all necessary attention and diversity. Do not be concerned about how much you accomplish. Do not be concerned about how well you do. Our very most and best is nothing in God's sight: it is the **DESIRE** and effort that matters. **DO** be concerned—very concerned—about how great and strong your desire is: pray fervently that it be constantly increased. A fervent, singleminded desire for God is God's greatest blessing: from it all other joys and blessings flow. **DO** be concerned about a wandering mind, a wavering attention, a weak and easily distracted persistence. These are warning signs of weak faith, weak love, weak comprehension of the beauties of God and the glories of eternity—childish signs that we are neglecting our homework. The only cure is **MUCH** prayerful meditation devoted to the

Word. If we are not prepared to shape our lives and affairs so that THIS is life's central factor, then God and eternity are not for us.

### **It Is More Blessed To Give Than To Receive (Acts 20:35)**

BE big. Most people are small: small-minded; small-hearted; small-thoughted. The children of God are called on to make the supreme effort to grow up from mankind's natural, infantile, self-centered smallness. Think eternity, not peanuts. Devote your life to giving, not getting. The getting will come in God's good time—eternally: "heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, running over"—divine good measure. Relax into goodness and largeness of heart. Let the little minds burn themselves out in anxious seeking and fear of being short-changed. Have no fear that you are going to lose something unless you constantly consider your self-interest and fret about your fair share. You cannot possibly lose if you are in track with God. He gives abundantly to all. He will see you do not lose—eventually and eternally—if you have the faith to believe and the patience to wait.

### **Marriage—In The Lord (1 Cor. 7:39)**

ENTER marriage carefully and prayerfully. If God is with you in it, it can be almost inconceivable blessing and comfort and joy. If God is not with you in it, it cannot be at last anything but a dreadful bondage and curse, if you have any sincerity for the Truth. Beware! It is for your life! Do not dare to enter marriage without the assurance of God's approval (by doing it HIS way according to HIS commands). Any other course is tragic folly, IF you are truly interested in the joy of total Divine service and communion. With those who are not, it doesn't really matter much either way, for outside of God, ALL life is tragic folly.

### **Happy Is He That Hath The God Of Jacob (Psa. 146:5)**

THE essence of happiness is to rejoice in what IS—not in the deceptive will-o-the-wisp pursuit of what we imagine might be. And there is plenty to rejoice in, if we will take time off from our self-pity and unhappiness and vain desire to look around us with the eye of faith and love and thanksgiving. We have been assured on the Highest Authority that "ALL things work together for good to those that love God." And it is all the assurance we ever need for permanent happiness. And if we in perfect faith wholeheartedly embrace this

assurance, we shall find, in the marvelous contrivance of God's love, that we shall more and more be permitted to perceive and comprehend just HOW all things in our life ARE working together for good, dark though may be the side of them that presents itself to us at the moment.

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THE only way to divine knowledge is through holiness. We must study to get knowledge, but it will be completely unavailing if not linked with striving for holiness.

### **All Her Paths Are Peace (Prov. 3:17)**

PEACE: the more we grow in the Truth, the more we value it. This grows bigger and bigger to us, and everything else grows smaller. Godly peace, eternal peace—PEACE WITH GOD. If we have this, we have everything. Nothing else matters: even this present life itself. It is freely available to all. It is entirely up to us whether we have it or not. External circumstances have no bearing on it. It is strictly between us and God. Like everything else in this orderly universe, it is the result of a cause. The entire scientific, industrial, agricultural world is built on the immutable fact that certain causes ALWAYS bring certain results, from baking a loaf of bread to landing a man on the moon. A chemical formula always works exactly the same way under the same conditions. Vary the conditions slightly, and you vary the result, and the variation of result is always the same for the same variation of cause. So it is with peace. Follow the EXACT, God-given formula, and it will come. Ignore the formula, or be careless about it, and—though you move heaven and earth—the result will never, never come. God gives us the formula very plainly: total love, total devotion, total service, total striving against Sin in every form, aspect and manifestation. Beat your head forever against the inevitable if you wish, but for the Peace of God you will be forced to come at last to this. There is no other way.

### **He Will Be Our Guide (Psa. 48:14)**

WE tend to seek God's guidance generally but not specifically; vocally but not mentally; ritually but not actually. Regardless of our protestations, and even of what we think are our intentions, we tend in actuality to do what we think (or hope) that God will think is best. Seeking God's guidance is of little value unless it is a continuous, conscious process, applied to every detail of every decision. The flesh is like a powerful spring: though compressed, it will immediately re-extend the moment the pressure is relaxed. It is common to dutifully "seek God's guidance" at the inauguration of a process of action

(compressing the spring), and then immediately to relax the spring and act according to our own “best judgment”—presuming that therein God is guiding us. This is a complete fallacy. Even the utterly fleshly U.S. Congress does this: ostentatiously intoning a solemn prayer for Divine guidance at each opening session, then putting the flesh completely in charge for the rest of the way. To seek God’s guidance is 1) to continually study the Word with the sincere, conscious intention of applying it in detail to our lives, and 2) to appeal to Him in silent prayer in EVERY detail—fully conscious that our own natural fleshly thinking is utterly undependable even momentarily, and realizing that if God does not guide us step by step and moment by moment, we shall never do anything right or worthwhile. We do not break the process down finely enough. We assume periodic spurts of guidance will keep us on track. But God’s guidance is not like momentum which when set in motion will continue thereafter. Rather it is like electric power which stops immediately the circuit is broken.

### **For His Body’s Sake Which Is The Ecclesia (Col. 1:24)**

DO not take your ecclesia for granted. Labor constantly for its health and welfare. The Truth itself is eternal and indestructible. But in these days of the flesh and of weakness, the Ecclesia is a fragile thing, needing constant tending and care. Ecclesias flourish, and ecclesias languish. Ecclesias live, and ecclesias die. Ecclesias grow and ecclesias shrivel. The difference may be you. The health of the ecclesia depends on the spirit of the ecclesia: the oneness, the unity, the closeness, the mutual affection and care of the members one for another. A body is not healthy unless ALL parts are alive and active and working. The ecclesia is a body with many members: all are necessary: all have FULL TIME work to do to make the ecclesia a true, living, spiritual, divine entity—united to God, well-pleasing to God, steadily moving forward and upward to eventual perfect eternal oneness with God. Make the ecclesia’s welfare and harmony and spirituality and mutually upbuilding joy your constant prayer and care. Help, strengthen, encourage, support, serve. Subdue your flesh, and all your fleshly reactions. Subdue your natural antagonisms and criticisms and petty, small-minded frictions. All these things are destructive of ecclesial well-being. Forget yourself, especially your baby grievances, and work wholly for the common good. Herein alone will you find peace and joy and fulfillment.

## **The Joy Of The Lord Is Your Strength (Neh. 8:10)**

PERHAPS what we should pray for most is to be taught how to enjoy God, for this is the foundation of all constructive life, and by nature we are so woefully lacking in even the realization of its existence. By nature we are coarse and ignorant and animal and worldly, and we naturally seek our "joy" in coarse and ignorant and animal and worldly things. To give the name "joy" to such is a desecration of the word. Joy must be the root of all action, not its goal. Joy must come first, flooding in upon us by the realization of the beauty and glory and love of God. The contemplation of beauty is a joyful thing. The personal, active, communing contemplation of the highest, fullest, love-radiating beauty is the most intense joy possible. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Let us use that strength to the utmost.

## **Filled With The Fulness Of God (Eph. 3:19)**

GROW! Develop! Expand your mind! Fill it with reality. Fill it with the eternal things and people of the Purpose of God. Eliminate levity. Eliminate shallowness. Eliminate interest in present, passing, meaningless things. Don't drift! Don't drift for a moment! Be constantly MOVING toward a glorious goal. Use every precious moment of life productively, moving toward eternity. Be solid and consistent all through to the core. Be totally and permanently permeated with God. Don't be just a surface shell of meaninglessness and emptiness. Arise to the flooding realization of the greatness and wonder and joyfulness of the divine call to God-partnered, eternity-destined fulness and holiness. We must be "FILLED with the FULLNESS of God." Anything less is not living, but is mere drifting aimlessly to eventual death. Be something real, something total. We are not here just to amuse and occupy ourselves with trivia, while life and opportunity speed away so swiftly to the end of our brief span. Seize the passing present to lay hold upon God with all your love and interest and attention and effort. Nurture its growth until it completely obsesses you, night and day. Keep your mind on the things of the Word, and get rid of all the time-wasting toys of your past, outgrown fleshliness and immaturity. Really LIVE, and really ENJOY life. Every moment can be a Divine experience: one step closer to Divine perfection. We have no time to waste on folly: and ALL else except this IS pitiful, blind, self-destructive folly.

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WHEN God is with us, all that we do is wisdom: when He is not, all we do is folly.

## **Whatsoever A Man Soweth, That Shall He Reap (Gal. 6:7)**

THE human mind and body are incredibly marvelous creations of wisdom and capability. We do not use one hundredth of our potential. It is probably safe to say we do not use one thousandth of our potential. What the body can be trained to do in the lines of acrobatics and balance would be incredible if it were not proved by the accomplishments of some, as multiple somersaults in the air from a narrow bar, landing in perfect balance on the bar again. And as to the mind, some have memorized the whole Bible. Men spend a lifetime of effort and practice, and accomplish unbelievable marvels—all for a corruptible crown. These people are nothing special in themselves. It's all a matter of effort and determination: of total love and zeal for some one thing in life: of working and thinking while others are playing and being amused like babies (which most people are). It's all a matter of setting a course and sticking with it singlemindedly, day in and day out. What would we be able to accomplish, if we really had a total, all-consuming love for God! What effort are WE making to obtain an incorruptible crown? Do we imagine the riches of the universe will be just handed to us on a platter? Why US, and no one else? What is so special about us? And yet we profess to be in the "race" for life—"striving" toward the mark—earnestly preparing ourselves to the best of our ability for eternity with God. But we tend to just drift through life in ease and comfort, and unprogrammed, day to day, meandering self-pleasing—absurdly assuming that because we happen to be fortunate enough to have "learned the Truth" in its bare essentials, and have gone through the motions of baptism, and show up at some of the meetings, we thereby are guaranteed eternity, while the "heathen" world perishes. What do we think we are given seventy years preparation time for?—just to play and accumulate and please ourselves? What unutterable, tragic folly! As we sow, so shall we reap: God is not mocked.

## **Narrow Is The Way Which Leadeth Unto Life (Matt. 7:14)**

TRUE joy is the consciousness of sincerely and purely doing one's utter best and giving one's total effort to drawing near to God; to being like Him; to doggedly fighting the flesh in all its wide range of defiling ramifications—from the slightest impatience to the deepest licentiousness; and to a life of fulltime service to God, the Truth, and the Brotherhood. This, and this alone, is the "Peace of God that passeth all understanding." Short of this, there is no peace, no satisfaction, no

happiness, no sense of perfect, Divine, transcendent rest. All else is sham and delusion and deception—vanity, vexation, a bitter, meaningless striving for wind. This and this alone is life: the one narrow little doorway out of the dark, empty present into the brilliant warmth and sunshine of the illimitable glories of eternity. How few find it!

### **This Is Life Eternal, To Know Thee, The Only True God (John 17:3)**

WE must be able to go to bed each night knowing a lot more about God and His Word than we did the night before. This is the only real purpose of our life, and any day this is not true is a day criminally wasted: a day to give account of at the judgment seat of Christ. "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God"—and "knowing" God is not just meeting Him only, but a constant, ever-expanding understanding and familiarity and intimacy. To "know" God is not to know ABOUT Him, but to be allowed into His friendship and company and interest—and this is granted to those only whose life's ambition is that their hearts may be increasingly pure: increasingly emptied of the flesh and filled with the Spirit.

### **His Word Was In Mine Heart As A Burning Fire (Jer. 20:9)**

PRAY fervently for intense zeal and inner desire and the mighty power of divine love that will impel you irresistibly to greater and greater work for God and devotion to Him. Remember Jeremiah in all his terrible persecutions: "His Word was a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I could not stay." This is a tremendous blessing. Until we have this we are not safe, we have not "attained," we are not really on the Way of Life. There is no greater blessing than the unbearable disquiet and remorse whenever we are doing less than the most and best we can. Natural man (and some natural men bear the name "Christadelphian") thinks this is an irrational obsession, and tries to "cure" it for us. Sluggish, stodgy natural man has absolutely no idea of eternal truth and reality, no idea of what life is all about, and what the intense zeal of true "living" really means. Natural man is a vegetable: spiritual man is a free-flying bird—a morning lark of joy, a mighty soaring eagle. Natural man thought Christ was "beside himself" because the "zeal of God's House ate him up." Always remember the Cherubim: the perfect ideal of divine service: "They ran and returned as the appearance of lightning . . . They rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." We cannot do

that now in our poor feeble mortal condition: but this is the ideal to which we must constantly yearn and strive and seek to eventually attain. It will never come if we are not constantly reaching out toward it with all our heart and strength and desire.

### **Many That Are First Shall Be Last (Matt. 19:30)**

PRAY fervently to God that your MOTIVES may be right. Pray earnestly for His help to search your own heart and make it right. We may spend a busy lifetime doing great things for God and the Truth and His people, and get paeans of ego-building praise from everyone—except God. This is why “many that are first shall be last.” If our motives are tinged with self and pride and gratification of the flesh, then all our life’s labors are less than worthless: worse than doing nothing at all, for it puts us deeper into the flesh than ever. Help must come from above. The flesh is so deceptive that unguided man cannot discern his own motives, let alone correct them. A truly humble Bible student with spiritual discernment, is embarrassed by praise. It makes him acutely uncomfortable, for he realizes how pitifully puny his highest “accomplishments” are. If we enjoy praise, we are in danger. If we seek praise, we are practically hopeless. If we cannot be happy without praise, we are just about a basket case, spiritually. But there is always hope, if we study the Word continuously, and continuously seek God’s help at self-analysis and self-searching. However, it will take a major mental and spiritual growing up, like getting rid of fat after a lifetime of babyish self-indulgence.

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A partial success is a failure; a partial failure is a success. Let us both learn the stern lesson and reap the sweet comfort, and build strength on the steppingstones of weakness.

### **O Love The Lord All Ye His Saints (Psa. 31:23)**

CONTEMPLATE your blessings: principally the eternal, spiritual, unchanging ones. Contemplate your unworthiness. Contemplate God’s greatness and holiness and marvelous condescending love. Get a constant sense of gratitude and desire to reciprocate that love which is almost painful in its pressing, overwhelming urgency. This is the power and the motive that creates a perpetual and irresistible yearning and striving for worthiness and holiness. It is the only power and motive that can resist and overcome and triumph over the fatal, unremitting, downward pull of the flesh. Love God ENOUGH—through study, meditation and realization—and you can do ANYTHING. There is no other way to life: no other power to overcome.

### **Seek Out Wisdom (Ecc. 7:25)**

IF we are honest hearted, or at least striving with all our might to be honest-hearted—and this should be absolutely fundamental with any claiming to be a brother or sister of Christ—then the greatest thing we need, and what we should most pray for—is to SEE the right way in any circumstance, condition, doctrine or issue.

### **Things Too Wonderful For Me (Job 42:3)**

WILL you lay your poor little insignificant present life and possessions on the scale, if God will lay the glories of endless eternity on the other side? Does not the gracious, marvelous prospect make you anxious to heap every possible service and sacrifice you can on your side, to manifest your bursting and overwhelming sense of thankfulness and awe?—to compensate with the manifestation at least of love and willingness for the utter nothingness of the very best you can offer? If not, are you really a living creature, or just a piece of dead, unfeeling wood? Does not the infinite wonder and beauty of it all fill your heart to overflowing? A cow cannot appreciate the marvels of a sunset, and we are all cows by nature, as to spiritual things. But God be thanked that we can LEARN to be something more than cows, if we desire it above everything else, and strive for it with all our heart.

### **Whosoever Forsaketh Not all (Luke 14:33)**

THERE are only two ways to be: only two sides to take—God's side and the flesh's side. We have got to be all the way over on God's side in everything. We cannot mix it. We cannot have half-and-half. Salvation depends on TOTAL choice of God's side of every decision, every issue, every choice, every activity. Face it: it's for your life.

### **He Is Our Peace (Eph. 2:14)**

LOVE of God is the difference between happiness and unhappiness, peace and unpeace, joy and unjoy. If we love God enough—which, of course, means actually thinking about Him enough, we just cannot be unhappy, or lack joy and peace. Love of God is our natural condition: that is our INTENDED natural condition, before the introduction of sin, and the development of the mind of the flesh. The mind of the flesh is the great barrier to happiness. We do not have to suffer that barrier. God in Christ has shown us how to put it away, and move back permanently into happiness, joy and peace. This must be at our inner core, unassailable by any outward circumstances—the deep root from which all our actions spring.

## **Effectual Fervent Prayer Of A Righteous Man (James 5:16)**

PRAYER has two main purposes: all else is secondary. 1) Thanksgiving—perpetual moment-to-moment thankfulness for everything; for to the eye of faith and love all is glorious, all is joyful. And 2) Seeking help to know right and think right and do right—in every circumstance, every condition. Get these on track as a fixed way of life, and all else will flow in a mighty, irresistible stream of goodness.

## **My Soul Longeth For The Courts Of The Lord (Psa. 84:2)**

WE must supply the desire—the intense, consuming, overwhelming desire, the desire for God that overshadows all else, that blots all else out, the recognition of need and helplessness and uselessness and insignificance, the yearning and the longing, the sense of utter natural emptiness—and God will supply the rest: richly, abundantly, increasingly, bountifully, as we are able to receive it, as we empty ourselves and prepare ourselves for it, as we appreciate it and lay hold on it and use it.

## **What Man Is He That Desireth Life? (Psa. 34:12)**

THE only hope of salvation is complete dedication of the life to God. This consists of three things: 1) Resolute determination to learn as much as possible about God and His desires, from His Word; 2) Resolute determination to eliminate from the life everything out of harmony with God's holiness and perfection; 3) Resolute determination to do everything God desires. There will be many mistakes, and failings, and self-disappointments: but faithfully and prayerfully adhered to, this is Life.

## **To Tell Or Hear Some New Thing (Acts 17:21)**

THE "some new thing" speculators have a new pejorative for faithful brethren and sisters who wish to hold fast to the Saving Truth as taught by our pioneers, and preserved for one hundred years by their sound successors. It is "traditionalist Christadelphians." Watch for it as a danger signal of instability and erraticness. It is cropping up everywhere. It castigates those who want in their simplicity to cling to "outmoded" traditions of belief, and who do not want to "seek new truths."

### **Be Content (Heb. 13:5)**

HAPPINESS is not a matter of being pleased when things are the way you want them. Happiness is the capacity and understanding to be content and thankful when present things are far from what you would like them to be. Happiness is related to, and based upon, eternity and eternal things. A "happiness" that is in any way a precarious hostage to the cheating vagaries of the present is no happiness at all in the real or scriptural sense. It is a worthless sham. It will desert you at the very moment you need it most.

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PRAY that you may desire nothing except to know God, do His will, and help others.

### **They Are Without Excuse (Rom. 1:20)**

TELL a man that man's most intricate computer "just happened" by a heap of nuts and bolts falling into a pile yesterday, and he'll say you are mad; and he will be right. Tell a man that a worm's brain (which is infinitely more intricate and wonderful than man's most advanced computer) "just happened" by a few bits of nothing falling together one hundred billion years or so ago, and he'll say you are an educated modern scientist; and he will be right again. Tell him that if he can believe THAT he is safely over the hump out of rationality and reality into evolutionary fantasy and superstition, and he can believe it about the vast and glorious Universe of God's wisdom and power. "His eternal power and divinity are CLEARLY SEEN from the Creation of the world, by the things that are made, so that they are WITHOUT excuse" (Rm. 1:20). That's GOD'S viewpoint, and it's pre-eminently reasonable.

### **The Knowledge Of The Truth (2 Tim. 3:7)**

EVERY man is a mixture of ignorance and knowledge: a tiny island of knowledge in a vast ocean of ignorance. The proportion of ignorance to knowledge varies slightly from individual to individual; and the FORM of the knowledge varies greatly. Thank God continually that YOUR knowledge includes God and His love and His Word, for that is the only knowledge of any permanent value.

### **Cleanseth Us From All Sin (1 John 1:7)**

PRAY to God that He will make you a part of Himself; that He will look upon you with love and compassion and mercy; that he will strengthen you in all your weaknesses, and cleanse you from all your

uncleanesses. This is the only hope. This is the only peace. Of course we must do our part. God plays no favorites. He has told us exactly whom He will favor, and whom He will not. For us, our part is very big. It is everything: total submission, total dedication of the life, total service: nothing less will do. But, though big for us, it is such a small part of the whole. God's part in the process is so great in comparison that our part, though vital, is really nothing at all. But our little part is the essential key that activates God's mighty and glorious part. So He wills. First He calls, and waits. Then we answer, with all our heart and love. Then He puts into motion His tremendous transforming power, and totally absorbs us into Him. "It is God that worketh in you, to will and to do."

### **Walk Humbly With Thy God (Mic. 6:8)**

WHEN we are not thinking of God, the flesh is in control. When we ARE thinking of God, the Spirit is in control. Our success is, and will be, measured by how much of the time we are thinking of God. His Word is the material of which spiritual thought is made. His law is our life-line. His commandments are a light to our feet. His love is the fire that lights our heart. Man is made to be part of God. There is no true life for man outside of God. Man is made in God's image: a glorious beginning, a glorious foreshadowing of what may be in the eternal beauty of its fulfillment. Blessed are they who get closer and closer, and are finally absorbed forever into God.

### **Thy Word Is A Lamp Unto My Feet (Psa. 119:105)**

READ the standard works of the Truth: Elpis Israel, Christendom Astray, Eureka, Law of Moses, Way of Providence, Visible Hand of God, etc. Until you have mastered these, do not waste your time (relatively) on "modern" works, which are (we sadly say) very often questionable, and at best far less profitable than brethren Thomas' and Roberts' works.

### **None Upon Earth That I Desire (Psa. 73:25)**

HAVE an intimate, living relationship with God. You will not then need anyone else. Other relationships and companionships—based on, and in harmony with, that primary one—are desirable and helpful and enjoyable, but not essential. This one relationship is vital and indispensable. All others are secondary, and, if necessary, dispensable.

## **Desire Milk Of The Word That Ye May Grow (1 Pet. 2:2)**

ABOVE all, throw away your toys, and grow up to reality. Pray God that you may develop and mature mentally and spiritually. The vast majority never grow up: it's always toys and games, under all sorts of rationalized names. But to what end? Look at all the tired, empty-minded, worn-out old people: Half-dead, waiting to die—and they never even learned how to die, or what life is all about. It is the world's greatest tragedy. Such criminally wasted opportunity! What is more wonderful than the knowledge of God, and the prospects of eternity? None of us is immune from the toy complex. We can make a toy out of anything. The work of the Truth is especially susceptible to this, because it is the flesh trying to cope with and rise to the things of the Spirit. Never get so immersed in the activity itself that it obscures the purpose and motive. There's no law against enjoying the work of the Truth. In fact, it's inevitable. But be sure the joy is of the Spirit and not of the flesh. You are doing it for God and man: not for pride and amusement and the gratification of personal accomplishment. Forget yourself in the joy of service and love.

### **House Upon A Rock (Matt. 7:24)**

SUCCESS is simply a matter of pleasing God: happiness is simply a matter of God manifesting His pleasure in our hearts. All else is illusion and delusion: all else is vanity, and—finally—sorrow and death. Life can be ALL deep, quiet, trustful pleasure, even in its pain. Life can be all empty tragedy and failure, even with its glitter and "success." Don't build anything on anything but solid rock. If there is no eternal foundation beneath it, then the better we build and the harder we labor, the greater the ultimate loss and remorse. God is the Rock: the only Rock. Build everything you do on Him. It will then stand firm to all eternity.

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WATCH your motives: study them: work on them. They largely determine the worth and meaning of an action. Be sure that all you do is sincerely done in love.

### **Seek Peace And Pursue It (Psa. 34:14)**

"PEACE with God": three lovely conceptions, even alone, but superlative when conjoined—tranquility, togetherness, divinity. What higher joy? What nobler goal? Serenity, fellowship, spirituality—man's divine heritage, his proper destiny. How sadly is the model

marred, the image distorted, the likeness hideously deformed. What unclean beasts in human form are natural men. But the ideal remains, and can and will be attained by a divine few: peace with God, perfect peace, the peace of God that passeth all understanding. May we have the wisdom to lay hold upon it.

### **Draw Nigh Unto God And He Will Draw Nigh Unto You (James 4:8)**

REALIZE the urgent importance of constant closeness to God. The power of the attraction of gravity is in inverse proportion to the distance, and the attraction increases, not just simply but exponentially, with closeness. This is true both naturally and spiritually. There are always powerful, almost irresistible forces pulling us away—forces of the flesh and of the world. There is no safety or stability except in closely clasped contact with the Eternal Father, the Source and Power of holiness and life and light. Neglect or loosen or forget the urgency of that contact, and you soon will be swept helplessly away into eternal darkness and oblivion.

### **Safety Is Of The Lord (Prov. 21:31)**

HOLD fast. All present things will pass. God never changes. The Truth never changes. All evil is temporary. All good is eternal. The present is but for a moment. The future is forever. Regardless of the sorrow, the disappointment, the griefs, the losses, the betrayal of those we trusted, the pettiness of those we respected, the antagonism of those we looked to for friendship, the weakness of those we looked to for strength—still all is as it should be, all things are working together for good. All we need to do is hold fast in faith, in unwavering assurance, in calm confidence, yea, in thankful joy and cheerful rejoicing. The dross is a mountain: the gold is but a handful. All we see at present is the mountain: but the gold is there, and will endure when all else is gone. Just leave it all to God to work out in His time—and labor and pray every moment that you may be part of that which at last endures.

### **Hold Thou Me Up And I Shall Be Safe (Psa. 119:117)**

WE must develop an intimate relationship with God, so that we turn instinctively and immediately to Him in every problem, every care, every sorrow, every joy—yea, in every daily decision in life—with full assurance, as a small child to a parent.

## **With Goodwill Doing Service (Eph. 6:7)**

WE must get our joy from serving God. And not just from serving Him in things we like to do, but in the fact of serving Him AS SUCH, regardless of the type of service that is required of us. There are things we like to do—things that are right and necessary—and truly we can serve Him in them. But there are also things—right and necessary—that we do not enjoy in themselves, but which must be done in faithfulness as they come to hand. It is in cheerful and joyful service in THESE that we are really serving God in truth and are developing the true, deep capacity for joy in pure service as such, however unpleasant the particular task may be.

## **Whoremongers And Adulterers God Will Judge (Heb. 13:4)**

FILTH, corruption, immorality, unrestrained fleshly lust: these become more and more “normal” for the cesspool of modern society in which we live. Marriage making and breaking at whim; living together in adultery without marriage. The statistics of fornication among teenagers, and even sub-teenagers, are appalling. It was for these filthy things the Canaanites and Sodomites were wiped out, and God has not lessened His fiery and holy indignation against all such animal depravities. It is a time of great peril for the ecclesias. Without constant vigilance, we are certain to be affected in our thinking by the vast weight of the corrupt world pressing in upon us. True, we see these things as “wrong,” but the constant familiarity dulls the sense of outrage and disgust and alarm. Our children are brought into continuous contact with this vile atmosphere in the schools. There are “decent” people left in the world around us, but their numbers and influence and authority are shrinking rapidly before the rising tide of filth. And the teaching class, as a whole, like the news media, are in the vanguard of the downward march to bestiality, under the plea of “emancipation” and “enlightenment.” What can we do? The very least we can do is to speak out very plainly; to not countenance these vile abominations for a moment; to make our disgust and disapproval very clear; and—regardless of closeness of relationship—to faithfully try to protect our ecclesias and our children from any contact with those who deliberately choose to trample God’s holy law in the mire of the world’s pig-pen. Let us be motivated totally by the Spirit and in no measure by the flesh. Let us stand up for purity and holiness!

### **Serve The Lord With Gladness (Psa. 100:2)**

HAVE one simple aim in life: serve God. This is the key to joy, here and hereafter. This alone has permanence. Natural life is composed of changing conditions and ended dreams—until at last all collapses in death, and the utter emptiness of it all is made pitifully manifest. It looks so interesting and attractive at first: lovely babies, carefree laughing children, active intensely-living young people, successful adults. But what is the point in it all? All ends at last in sickness, senility, death. What a mockery is anything that does not have PERMANENCE! Only one thing has permanence. Only one thing will be left when all the glitter of natural life is gone. Only one thing gets better and stronger and more valuable as life ebbs and the inevitable end comes to all. Serve God! Make that the spring of every action. Gradually, logically, methodically eliminate everything else from the spectrum of your supposed “interest” and “enjoyment”, for this alone is real and lasting. Everything else in the world will fail you—yea, cruelly mock you—at the end.

### **To Such As Keep His Covenant (Psa. 103:18)**

WE have a tremendous, overwhelming—almost crushing—responsibility to God. We should be conscious of it every moment. He has richly given us everything: life and existence and consciousness; the revelation of Himself and His loving goodness; His Word; His Purpose; His call to eternal communion with Him in the Divine Nature; the dreadful sacrifice of His only-begotten Son for our salvation; an earth-home full of infinite beauty and divine imprint; the incomparably marvelous tools of the human mind and hands; the power of thought and memory and imagination. And we have agreed to accept all this from Him, on His conditions. And He asks so little in comparison in return, and that for our own good—simply the casting off of everything to do with this dark, dying, sinful world and its follies, and total love and devotion and service to Him. And yet we putter away our life in the stinking rubbish heap of the present, as though all these glorious things never existed. Let us open our eyes and hearts, before it has all passed away beyond our grasp for ever. Opportunity pauses for us just so long; and then—eternal darkness.

### **Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear (1 John 4:18)**

“PERFECT love casteth out fear.” Pray to God with all your heart and strength for Perfect Love. Absolute perfection is not a quality associated with the present dark time of weakness and struggle and

probation; but He may endow you with something very close to perfect love if you seek and desire it enough: seek and desire it all the time with all your being. The question of whether perfection in anything in this weak day—the question of how close to perfection we can, and are required, to come—is not a profitable or practical question. What is pre-eminently practical is how hard we must strive, and how earnestly we must desire. How close we get is not our present concern. God will measure us in the scale of what He has given us, and what He has laid upon us. For each, the scale is different, and known only to Him. How close we try and desire to get to perfection—in the irresistible and burning compulsion of love—is supremely important. It is ALL-important. In our striving toward the attainment and fulfillment of Perfect Love, how repeatedly we in weakness stumble and fail is not of great seriousness (though it can never be shrugged off as unimportant). Perfect Love is perfect oneness with God in all we do and in all we are. It is an ultimate attainment. It is the Divine Promise of the Memorial Name. All life, and hope and peace and joy lie within the boundaries of total, single-minded dedication to it. Outside it, all is the blackness of eternal night. In anything you do, keep continuously in mind the need for Divine guidance and help in prayer: or else—no matter how sincere the effort or “sanctified” the deed—the result will be of the flesh. Without God held constantly in mind, and without His constant help and direction, no activity will rise above the flesh.

### **Abound Yet More And More In Knowledge (Philip. 1:9)**

KNOWLEDGE, knowledge, knowledge!—get all you can. It’s the stuff of which spiritual transformation is made. Knowledge of the Word, of course—there is no other REAL knowledge. Hunger and thirst for it. Never feel you have even begun to have enough. Realize your utter comparative ignorance. At very best, we never really scratch the surface of true knowledge. All is seen through a glass so dimly. But though we are so limited, God requires us to show our love and zeal by getting every bit of knowledge about Him and His Word that we can. We shall be called to account for all wasted time—not so much for itself, but because it so tragically betrays our spiritual dullness, our fatal presumption of sufficiency, our shallowness and weakness of love and desire. God can only use, in His eternal Purpose, those who are intensely alive to the beauty and glory and wonder and infinite desirability of eternal, spiritual things. Though we are all by nature slow-witted and ignorant and fleshly, we CAN develop this

living spiritual intensity. But it takes long, plodding, tiring effort, like playing the piano. Don't sit back and expect it just to come.

### **A Perverse And Crooked Generation (Deut. 32:5)**

**PERVERSION:** It has an unpleasant, unwholesome ring—and well it might: turning away from a straightforward, healthy course to deformity and ugliness. It is the natural, inevitable tendency of our sin-cursed flesh. It is not new, though its modern victims proclaim it as the wave of the future. It is as old as the vile Canaanites that Israel was to ruthlessly wipe out to cleanse the land from filth: as old as the bestial Sodomites whom a holy God burned up in a dreadful outpouring of righteous wrath: as old as the gross antediluvians who were swept relentlessly away by the purifying judicial waters to rid God's fair earth of their moral putridity. And now we have the whole earth sinking rapidly down to the same state: every moral vice glorified as virtue. But perversion takes many forms. Man was designed to serve God in total love, total holiness, total devotion. Anything short of that is the perversion of the flesh. Such selfish perversion in those who know—or should know—better may be more offensive to God than the ignorant bodily perversion of the dead animal world around us. We can so sink down from the true original ideal that we can't even see our own pitiful perversion for what it is. Let us strive every moment to painfully (but joyfully) work our way back up to where God from the beginning intended the blessed and noble race of mankind to be.

### **Let Us Not Therefore Judge One Another (Rom. 14:13)**

**DO** not judge. Rather, try to understand, and make an effort to help. Most people need your patience more than your criticism. Leave the judging to God, unless absolutely necessary in faithfulness to the Truth. He has guaranteed He will take care of all the judging that is necessary, at the proper time. If someone annoys or offends us, the trouble is most likely in our own pride and vanity or small-mindedness or touchiness. Thin skin is a miserable disease. If we were large-minded enough, or less self-centered, we would feel sympathy and compassion, rather than offense. The command not to judge is a broad scriptural principle. It is not, however, to be wrongly used to undermine the specific (and equally important) command to keep Faith and Fellowship sound. When we face a required decision, **THEN** we must judge and act—very carefully and prayerfully: very gently if it means censure of others: very sorrowfully if it means separation—but always

firmly and faithfully. There is a time when it is a sin, and a dereliction of duty, not to “Judge righteous judgment.” But let us cure ourselves of judging and criticizing as a habit and a hobby. This is purely of the flesh and of the devil.

### **Ourselves Also Were Sometimes Foolish (Titus 3:3)**

PERHAPS the kindest thing God can do for us is to open our eyes to the folly of our foolishnesses and fantasies. We should earnestly desire this. We should earnestly pray for it. The natural human mind is a hopeless tangled web of confused and contradictory fancies and desires. Peace and joy in any true consistent sense are not possible because the mind is not co-ordinated to a single, thought-out purpose and life-goal. Some achieve a little closer approach to this than others (though on a natural, animal, transient level), and therefore approach closer to a form of natural, animal “peace”. And while the fantasy lasts that the perceived goal is worthwhile, the “peace” and “joy” persist. But at best there is a worm at the core of all natural pursuits which—if disillusionment does not reveal sooner or later—then death will at last make it unmistakably manifest. There is only one life-goal, only one life-coordinating-and-harmonizing force, that can carry us triumphantly through the great bubble-bursting, fantasy-exploding, reality-enforcing inevitable actuality of death.

### **Renewed In The spirit Of Your Mind (Eph. 4:23)**

LIFT up your mind to God. Naturally it is low and animal and fleshly, like the beasts of the field. Clean out the things that hold it down. Fill it with things that will raise it up. The higher you go, the further you can see—the broader the view, the more glorious the prospect. Most minds are in narrow ditches of their own making: hemmed in by the humdrum immediate present: the passing, meaningless, animal things—self-created problems and frustrations. Lift your sights. Lift your heart. Lift your mind to glory and eternity. The mind of man is the most marvelous thing in God’s creation. Man was designed to fill his mind with God, to be a divinely reflecting vessel of beauty and glory and honor. What tragic failure! What lost potential! But the Divine Plan WILL work out at last, and a small, faithful, purified remnant of mankind, wise in their generation, will attain divine glory.

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LIFT the mind to God. Work toward this as a permanent condition. It is life.

### **Why Art Thou Disquieted In Me? (Psa. 48:5)**

LET us thank God for unhappiness and disquiet—as long as there is reason for them that we should be doing something about. Unhappiness can be one of God’s greatest blessings and love-manifestations, if it keeps us from the fatal error of relaxation and satisfaction with anything less than perfection. We shall never be wholly happy until we are wholly perfect, which will not be in this probationary dispensation of weakness, as we battle with the Law of Sin within us. But we can constantly move into greater happiness by approaching greater perfection.

### **Hold Up My Goings In Thy Paths (Psa. 17:5)**

PUT all your eggs in one basket: direct moment to moment help from God. Cast out everything else, and stake all on this. Relying on God’s continuous help does not mean just sitting and waiting for it. It does not mean just kneeling and praying for it. It means two things: studying His Word, and obeying His commands: constant thought, constant activity—doing our OWN very best, but always realizing that if God isn’t constantly directing, then it’s all a sham and a charade. What guarantee do we have that He will? And how do we know when He does? Don’t worry about that. Just DO. You have nothing to lose by trying, and nothing to gain by questioning. We are promised He WILL, if we are doing our part. And let us not get the foolish and conceited idea that we are “inspired” or “have the Spirit” just because it seems to work. That’s the quickest way to bring everything to a grinding halt. God can turn His help and guidance off as quickly as He can turn it on, and He is quick to deflate presumption. This life is merely for education and training. We can never actually accomplish anything. Anything we do for God He could do infinitely better and quicker Himself. He is patiently teaching us, and preparing us to be useful in the future (if we are at last approved), and presumption will be corrected by allowing humiliating mistakes to teach us wisdom.

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ANYTHING less than our best is offering God a blemished sacrifice: this is an insult.

### **Be Not Far From Me, O Lord (Psa. 22:19)**

WITH God’s help we can do wonders. We can surprise ourselves. We can surprise everyone. Without God’s help we can do absolutely nothing, nothing, nothing. We may APPEAR to be doing something on our own. We may appear to be conquering worlds, advancing

frontiers, controlling millions, accumulating hoards—but it is all vain and empty: merely a false gilding of the brief path to the grave. How soon it is all over!—and another corrupting corpse is hastily buried with hollow pomp and circumstance. But with God’s help every simple, humble step of day-to-day life is being chiseled into eternal rock: stepping-stones ever upward to everlasting joy and usefulness and life, and glorious divine companionship.

### **Christ Our Passover Is Sacrificed For Us (1 Cor. 5:7)**

THE Sacrifice of Christ: substitutional punishment to appease Divine wrath? Or dreadful, purposeless torture for a mere empty “ritual” and symbol? OR—the essential, ultimate self-perfecting of holiness and beauty and victory?—the God-created, God-taught, God-strengthened Son “learning obedience through the things that he suffered”; and achieving—in the fulness of faith and love—the supreme perfection of manhood, that he may absorb all mankind into himself, and into his own perfect victory? How marvelously brethren Thomas and Roberts have pointed out to us that it is this latter! Be humble, and be thankful. Those who cast aside an intelligent appreciation and respect for the work these brethren did under God’s hand, soon lose the depth and beauty of the Truth. Do not let them deceive you.

### **Things Not Seen Are Eternal (2 Cor. 4:18)**

GET out of this world into God’s world. Take everything worthwhile with you, and get rid of all the rest. Don’t have any ties or possessions here: they divide the interest, and dilute the attention. God’s world is the real, eternal world. This world is a passing, meaningless, animal world. There is nothing about it real, lasting, or satisfying. It’s made up merely of dull, repetitious games, which grow increasingly boring as we grow older: travel games, getting-things games, seeing-things games, beating-a-little-ball games, pride games, dressing-up games, collecting-things games, “nice” home games, “nice” car games. What a weariness at last! God’s world is an increasingly interesting and satisfying world. It has to do with working toward perfection and permanence, beauty and joy that does not fade. God’s world is ever brighter, ever stronger. This world is a gradual running down and wearing out until at last it is a cold and endless night. See it as it really is—and leave it all behind.

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WE cannot have peace with God if we are deliberately not having peace with man.

## **Thou Shall Worship The Lord Thy God (Matt. 4:10)**

EVEN a dog can show the beauty of total devotion, with no hope of reward beyond a kind word and a pat on the head. If a human being with the potential intelligence it has been given, cannot use that God-given intelligence to show total devotion to the Highest manifestation of Goodness, Beauty and Love in the universe (with the assurance of infinite reward), it is not worth as much as a dog.

## **Nothing Shall Offend Them (Psa. 119:165)**

BE big enough never to be offended. It is the petty mind that takes offense. Be big enough to make allowances, to understand, to sympathize. If we are "touchy," we have no solid, reserve power for good: things are fine, and we can do wonders, as long as our back is scratched, but we haven't the maturity and stamina to face reality.

## **Pray Without Ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17)**

EVERYTHING is worth praying about, if it is worth doing, or even worth thinking about. If you can't pray about it, that's a sure sign not to do it—it's not part of the godly life. There is no big or small with God. With Him, everything to do with man is very small, so do not think matters have to have a certain degree of "importance" before they are fit subjects for prayer. Whatever merits our attention at all merits our prayer. We should turn to God in EVERYTHING, as a small child turns to a parent. The human mind and flesh being what it is, "self-dependence" is the most fatal folly. Nothing will be right without the direct guidance of God, and the sanctification and consecration of prayer.

## **Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged (Matt. 7:1)**

"JUDGE not, that ye be not judged." This is basic and fundamental. We make no final judgment. We make no unnecessary judgment. We school ourselves to judge as little as possible, and as kindly as possible, as we would wish to be judged. But we are also commanded to "Judge righteous judgment" (Jn. 7:24). And we are rebuked if we cannot "Judge things that pertain to this life" in connection with problems among brethren (1 Cor. 6:2-5). We are commanded to a way of life that requires constant "judgment" of the conduct of others as it relates to OUR association with, or relationship to, them. Only folly or perversity would set one duty against the other. Those who use "Judge not" to break down the commands concerning condoning of, or association with, evil, themselves are constantly "judging" to determine their

course toward others. The process itself is inescapable. It is either done righteously or unrighteously, wisely or unwisely. "Wisdom is profitable to direct," and will teach when judging is or is not appropriate. "JUDGE ye what I say" . . . "What fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness . . . COME OUT." Many circumstances require judging, and acting upon faithfully.

### **Ye Are Bought With A Price (1 Cor. 6:20)**

DO not waste a minute of God's time, not one cent of His money. You are totally "bought with a price," to be HIS faithful laborers. You were not selected from the perishing millions to indulge yourself in unfaithful stewardship, or to lounge lazily in the sun. Total devotion to the WORK of God is the only way to eternal joy. Indolent, self-pleasing, and embezzling servants will be cast with shame into outer darkness. Have wisdom in this brief day of such glorious opportunity. The reward for faithful devotion in His service is beyond our highest conception: the punishment for slothfulness is dreadful to contemplate. Truly, no one can EARN the reward: it is a free gift—but on CONDITIONS. Only by total love, manifested in total devotion and service, can we obtain God's mercy and acceptance. Anything less is a mockery of His infinite goodness toward us. Why would any servant be so stupid as to expect a reward, and not rather severe punishment, for laziness and unfaithful self-indulgence and self-use of his lord's entrusted goods?

### **Happy Are Ye If Ye Do Them (John 13:17)**

HAPPINESS is not in catering to desire, but in putting desire away. Happiness is not in seeking pleasure, but in recognizing and thankfully enjoying the myriad of pleasures that God showers bountifully on us every moment: in His love, in His Word, in His Purpose, in His marvelous Creation: from the infinitely small to the infinitely great—all infinitely beautiful. Happiness is not in getting, but in giving: not in being served, but in serving (though truly there is happiness in being served—if the service is of need beyond our own capacity to fill, and if the service is in love). Christ tells us where happiness is: in pureness of heart, in meekness, in mercifulness, in hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Don't look for it anywhere else. It isn't there. It must be created within ourselves. Its source is of God.

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SEEK God's help. Seek His love. Seek His purity and holiness. Seek an increasing measure of His wisdom. Fix these things before your mind as your continuous desire.

## **Receive The Engrafted Word (James 1:21)**

THE more you learn of the Scriptures, the less you will WANT to learn of anything not eternally useful. The more interested you are in the Scriptures, the less interested you will be in anything not related to God and the Scriptures. This is the difference between the Flesh and the Spirit: they are mutually repellant. They of the Flesh do mind the things of the Flesh. The study of the Scriptures has enough fascination for one hundred lifetimes. Don't waste your wonderful God-given mind on rubbish.

## **Labor Therefore To Enter Into That Rest (Heb. 4:11)**

WORK, labor, zeal, enthusiasm, effort, striving—we MUST get the vital urgency of it, for it is the difference between eternal life and eternal death. We are not here to play, or drift, or while away priceless, irretrievable time, or please ourselves, or pursue ambition, or hoard rotting rubbish. We are here simply and solely to serve God, and build up our spiritual understanding, and totally transform our natural, evil, ignorant fleshly character by the light and power of the Divine Word. We do not have a moment to waste. Every wasted moment is a sin to be repented of, and atoned for by frank confession and earnest prayer and sincere effort to overcome—or it is a permanent stain that will sink us at last in eternal death.

## **Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God (Jude 21)**

WITH God, you can do everything. Without Him you can do nothing. With Him is all joy: without Him is all sorrow. Strive constantly to get so close to Him that you are totally at one with Him. This is life. This is peace. This is accomplishment and success. This is the nobility and beauty and happiness that man was meant to be.

## **Happy Is The Man That Findeth Wisdom (Prov. 3:13)**

HAPPINESS has nothing to do with what we possess, or what we "accomplish" in the world, or where we are, or whom we are with, or our external circumstances, or even our physical condition. Happiness is something we (with God's guidance and help, of course) create within ourselves, based solely upon eternal, unchanging things. Only we ourselves can make it. Only we ourselves can harm it. Any "happiness" that depends upon anything or anyone that can change—and will, with the inexorable passage of time, certainly pass away—is a cheat and a delusion. Look to the end. Will it LAST? If not, do not waste your precious time on it.

## **I Will Offer To Thee The Sacrifice Of Thanksgiving (Psa. 116:17)**

THE two words that should always be on the tip of our mind's tongue are "Thank God." Not just "God," but "THANK God." This is the atmosphere and environment in which our inner heart must constantly dwell. It is wholesome, holy, beautiful, and serene. But cannot Love exist without prior benefit? Is it not purer so? Must Love be built merely on thankfulness for something received? Well, are we speaking of theory, or reality? And are we speaking of the primary Root, or of the subsequent Flower? "We love BECAUSE He first loved us," John says. Could we do it, if He hadn't? No. We are mere flesh. We would not have either the knowledge or the power ourselves. Let us get a true picture of the flesh: not the proud human fantasy of it. God had to show us, and motivate us. Our thanks are for the power and enlightenment of His Love—the essential root of all we can ever be. Once He has set in motion this glorious process, once He has lit the Lamp and kindled the Fire, then Love indeed can go forth and initiate goodness without prior benefit, because its living roots always reach back to this, and to Him.

### **Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done (Luke 22:42)**

"THY will, not mine, be done." My will is to play with earthly toys: Thy will is to work with heavenly tools. My will is to be comfortable: Thy will is to be useful. My will is to indulge the flesh: Thy will is to build up the Spirit. My will is to criticize and condemn: Thy will is to sympathize and help. My will is to proudly speculate and theorize: Thy will is to humbly study and learn. My will is to leave the work of the Truth to someone else, while I "seek my own things": Thy will is to be "always abounding," "seeking not her own." My will is to wallow in childish self-pity: Thy will is to "rejoice always." My will is to complain about trials and troubles: Thy will is to count it all joy, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. My will is foolish talking and jesting: Thy will is gracious speech, seasoned with salt, as the Oracles of God. My will is to lay up baubles on earth: Thy will is to lay up treasure in heaven. My will leads only steadily downward, to sorrow and death: Thy will leads ever onward and upward, to eternal life and joy. "Thy will, not mine, be done."

### **Turn Ye Now From Your Evil Ways (Zech. 1:4)**

THE world says, in its little, passing wisdom, that if you desire a better position in life: act and dress for it NOW. Live mentally in its

atmosphere. Adopt all the ways and views consistent with it. Eliminate from your life those things that are beneath its dignity and importance. Lift your conduct to comport yourself on its level. This is the world's meaningless "advancement": but the principle is so true in eternal things. If we expect to be made "equal to the angels" and "stand in the presence of God" throughout eternity, we **MUST** start acting like it **NOW**. We must live in harmony with it. Many things must be put away which—though not really "bad" in themselves, and quite suitable for earthlings—are quite out of place in the environment we seek, and for which we must prepare ourselves. Do not carelessly indulge yourself at present with things inconsistent with divinity, in the vain delusion they'll be miraculously and conveniently, at the last day, cleaned out of your mind and interests, to make you suitable for God's company. It will be too late then. It's your whole life's **PRESENT** purpose (and opportunity) to labor fervently on it **NOW**—with, of course, God's offered and essential help. Time is short! Don't drift in fatal self-delusion.

### **Give Thanks Always For All Things (Eph. 5:20)**

**BE** thankful. Be intensely thankful. Be continuously thankful—every moment. We can never be thankful enough: we just do not have the physical and mental capacity to be as thankful as we should. No matter how bad or sad our circumstances may be, there are always grounds for more thankfulness than we are humanly able to feel or express. Being thankful has many practical values. It is wholesome. It is healthy. It is therapeutic. It refreshes and clears and invigorates the mind. It wonderfully flushes out the rubbish and the petty cares. It is an automatic antidote to much foolishness and fleshliness. No one can be thankful and lonely at the same time; or thankful and angry; or thankful and self-pitying—not if it is true, deep, spiritual thankfulness. Thankfulness is a powerful incentive to do what is right, and to resist what is wrong. It is a major ingredient of our love for God. It is a wonderful remembrancer—keeping the mind fixed on God and His goodness. "Give thanks **ALWAYS** for **ALL** things" (Eph. 5:20)—for the "bad" as well as the "good," for all is part of a deep and wise Divine Purpose that is training us for Eternity, and leading us to Life.

### **As A Young Man Marrieth A Virgin (Isa. 62:5)**

**HASTY** marriage is utter folly: tempting God, and courting disaster. Even the more sensible element of the world realizes, and strongly counsels, that acquaintance of at least two years is essential for any reasonable hope of success. A true believer marries after long and

prayerful consideration, doing all in seemliness and order, and seeking God's guidance every step of the way—in joyful harmony with the Body, and with all who are intimately concerned and affected.

### **Redeeming The Time (Eph. 5:16)**

LOVE, thankfulness, and knowledge of God: we never have enough. We never begin to have enough. The amount God will judge us by is the amount we COULD have developed in the time, opportunity, and ability He has given each one. Are we, as commanded, "redeeming the time"—every moment? Or are we wasting it in folly and self-pleasing? What a tragedy to appear at the judgment seat of Christ in our cute little play-suit, full of jokes and games, but with our lamps and minds dark and empty! Who dares contemplate the shame and the hopeless remorse?

### **Beware Lest Thou Forget The Lord (Deut. 6:12)**

KEEP your mind on what you are doing—and especially on WHY you are doing it. As soon as you forget you are doing it for God, it ceases to be for God: the flesh has taken over. The motive of all we do must be an ever-conscious love of God. True, strong love does not forget. It CANNOT forget. Where there is forgetting, love is weak and imperfect. Love is what gives value to the service in God's sight.

### **My Heart And My Flesh Crieth Out For The Living God (Psa. 84:2)**

USE every failure on the way of life as a tremendous incentive to get closer to God, and to deepen your love for Him, and sense of dependence upon Him. Love for Him is the only power that can possibly save us, and anything that helps us realize that, and makes us strive harder for it, is a benefit. Let failure teach you to recognize and accept that you are—naturally speaking—weak, stumbling, hopeless. And that—naturally speaking—you will never be anything but weak, stumbling and hopeless. There is only one hope: God's help. But God's help comes only on one condition: total devotion and total service. Try it any other way you wish—but you will be wasting time you can ill afford to lose. What if no one else around you is going all the way God requires? Never measure yourself by others: it's fatally deceptive. God can destroy all mankind, and save but eight, if He sees fit. He has done it. Don't take chances with eternity. Be sure you're part of the eight: whatever others do.

### **Being Fruitful In Every Good Work (Col. 1:10)**

**DON'T** drift. Don't play. Make all your time sensible and constructive and useful. Play is for children. It is essential for them. Your childhood is over. Grow up. There is plenty of exercise and enjoyment and relaxation in practical and effective work. Eschew the fleshly illusion that time must be wasted to be enjoyed. That's stupid. We have no justification or excuse for wasting God's valuable time in childplay—for ALL our time is His, for His purpose. We have solemnly agreed to this. So be honest. Live up to it. You KNOW there is no satisfying peace or joy in slipping back into the vacuous and juvenile play of infancy. Grow up! Press on! Keep your eye on the glorious goal. You have a brief, once-only opportunity to secure eternity. Don't bungle it. Disneyland is for immature and empty minds. It's a dressed up skeleton: a grinning corpse. Look beyond the glitter and tinsel to the cold and dead bones beneath. It's the whole mad world in microcosm: shun it as the plague.

### **The Love Of Many Shall Wax Cold (Matt. 24:12)**

IT is much easier to sell looseness and downhillness and let's-blur-the-edges-ness and compromise-ness, than it is to sell steadfastness and holiness and firmness of purpose and faithfulness to exclusive Truth. It's easy to become both popular and powerful and draw the crowds, if that is our stock in trade. But let us not be discouraged if what we have to sell does not have the common appeal of the broadly popular goods. The Truth of God is a narrow, exclusive, flesh-crucifying, demanding, high-standard thing. It is not designed for the masses, and it has never appealed to the masses, or the shallowly unthinking. It appeals only to the thoughtful, and the wholly dedicated, and those whom the masses call "extremists." The Truth is indeed a total, all-consuming, all-demanding "extreme" thing.

### **Our Fellowship Is With The Father (1 John 1:3)**

THERE is no joy like service. There is no pleasure like perfect peace. There is no happiness like holiness. There is no satisfaction like victorious godliness. There is no glory like total fellowship with God. There is no success like self-overcoming. "OUR fellowship is with the Father." Is it? What does fellow-ship mean to us? What is our conception of it? Have we brought ourselves—or rather, are we bringing ourselves—into true, active, fellow-ship with Him, in all His holiness and beauty and glory and perfection? We are invited to. We are promised the power to. We are promised the necessary under-

standing to, and even the irresistible, overwhelming DESIRE to—if we seek it with total dedication, as a deep-hidden treasure of incalculable value and beauty. At first the concept of pure, endless, irreversible spirituality and holiness frightens us, bores us, depresses us. Always to be self-consciously holy, and serious, and intensely straining upward, while others play in total, animal relaxation and effortless self-indulgence in the sunny green fields below us. But we are promised—if we persevere—the peace, and joy, and desire that will make the struggle its own all-satisfying reward, and reveal the shallow vanishing emptiness of the mindless play in the soon-darkening valley of the flesh that we have left behind to seek the eternal fulness of the fellowship of God.

### **Let Us . . . Serve God Acceptably (Heb. 12:28)**

EVERY time you spend a cent, remember this: You are spending God's money, in solemn stewardship. You have nothing of your own. You are a steward of your Lord's goods. Someday you will have to give account. Are you a faithful, or a wicked steward? There is no in between. Serve God faithfully, and the reward is incalculable. Serve Him unfaithfully, and the penalty is tragic. You should not be serving with an eye to either reward or punishment, but in pure rejoicing love that delights to serve for its own sake. But it is wisdom to keep the consequences in mind. The unfaithful, self-serving, self-indulging steward will be cast in shame into outer darkness. And it could not be any other way. That is only right and just and fair. God's mercy is to those alone who LOVE Him. Do we realize what a total, all-encompassing, transforming thing this Love is—and MUST be?

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JUST manage to get up and try again one more time when you fall down. It's that one last, determined, prayerful, unquitting time that counts.

### **Peace Of God (Philip. 4:7)**

EVERYONE—and everything—is on a secondary level, in relation to our relationship to God. This includes our family, and the ecclesia, and the ecclesial world. Not that they are unimportant. They are very important to us. But they cannot—in the ultimate—mar or jeopardize our personal peace with God. Only we ourselves can do that. Our relationship to God must be such that WHATEVER else happens, it can only have a secondary effect upon us. Sometimes, indeed, a very major and serious effect—but still secondary, and RELATIVELY minor,

in comparison with our impregnable, unassailable peace with God. We must—by deliberate concentration and effort—get all these things into their proper secondary perspective, if we are to have the Perfect Peace that Passeth Understanding. And we CAN have it. We MUST have it. This is spiritual success. All else is failure. God alone is immutable and unchanging. So He alone can be built on and depended on.

### **By Love Serve One Another (Gal. 5:13)**

TO find our life, we must lose it. To exalt ourselves, we must abase ourselves. To rule, we must serve. To conquer, we must yield. To attain our own welfare, we must seek that of others. Everything is the reverse of the flesh's way and the world's conceptions. If we pursue happiness and pleasure and satisfaction directly and for their own sake, they mockingly flee from us, and, like the will-of-the-wisp, lead us at last to a bottomless bog. They can be found only where God's infinite wisdom and love has carefully and wonderfully placed them: in sacrifice and service and self-forgetfulness. Forget yourself in outgoing service and love, and you'll be happy. Dwell on yourself in in-turned self-seeking and self-centeredness, and you'll be miserable.

### **Humble Yourselves In The Sight Of The Lord (James 4:10)**

KEEP constantly before your mind your total helplessness and total dependence upon God. Never slip into the folly of feeling self-confident or self-sufficient. This is the only wisdom. We are nothing. Our highest "knowledge" is foolishness: our greatest achievements are meaningless and puny. Only as willing and faithful instruments in the hands of God can we do anything worthwhile, or anything right. Maintain the direct and continuous contact, or you lose all power of truth and holiness.

### **Therefore Choose Life (Deut. 30:19)**

KEEP in direct contact with God at all times. Keep the communication line open. This is our lifeline. This is our power line. When this is broken or neglected, we are dead. Reading of the Word, meditating on the Word—these strengthen the line, tighten all the connections, clear away the impediment, keep the channel clear, and the power flowing. Pray without ceasing: it has limitless, measureless power. These divine things are real and actual: more so than what we can handle and see.

## **They Rest Not Day And Night, Saying Holy, Holy, Holy (Rev. 4:8)**

WE never love God enough. That is what we must constantly work on. Pray and strive for a love for God of such drive and intensity that it will never rest until it has cleared from your life everything that is in the slightest way out of harmony with God—negative and positive. That is, right down to every empty thought, every wasted moment of time. The Cherubim cease not day and night to worship and praise God in holiness. This doesn't mean they just stand still and sing. It means that every moment of their lives, every activity, every thought—is intense with love and service to God. That is the ideal. We can, and **MUST**, get a lot closer to that ideal than most ever dream of. At **LEAST**, we must recognize it, and how far we fall short of it, and never rest in our striving toward it.

## **He That Forsaketh Not All That He Hath Cannot Be My Disciple (Luke 14:33)**

THE eternal reward we claim to treasure so highly and seek so devotedly is perfection, spirituality, holiness, freedom from all the motions and lusts of the flesh, closeness to God, total godliness in thought and action. How badly do we really want this condition, and what are we really willing to give up to get it? If we are not willing to sacrifice **EVERYTHING** else, and drop everything else in this life to strive for perfection in these divine things, then we reveal that our professed devotion to them and desire for them is shallow and weak. We really want the pleasure of this life and the flesh—and then God **LATER**, when this life is over, and the flesh is worn out and has lost its excitement and appeal. Giving up what we have ceased to enjoy is no sacrifice, God wants our best **NOW**, not our dregs.

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**OFTEN** we do not recognize failure because we do not realize what success could be.

## **My Soul, Wait Thou Upon God (Psa. 62:5)**

IF you have a problem, take it **HONESTLY** to God: that is, honestly seek His guidance, and honestly desire to follow it. Let us not go to God seeking favors, or exception to His holy laws, or confirmation of preconceived answers. Go to God to give, not to get. He has already given us far more than we deserve. Recognize that, and go to Him intensely desiring to make tiny and token repayment in love for His infinite goodness and blessing. Give Him freely everything you have.

Its nothing, at its very best (and let us ever realize that)—but He, as a father with a child, accepts it gratefully in understanding love. But be very sure it IS everything. Once you have solemnly committed yourself to Him, be sure you hold nothing back. “God hath no pleasure in fools.” Remember Ananias and Sapphira.

### **Provoke Unto Love And Good Works (Heb. 10:24)**

DO everything in love: love of God and love of man. Forget yourself. Forget all your own desires: they will never give you any real satisfaction—only frustration and disappointment. There is nothing there: so quit looking for it there. Get independent of personal pleasure and desire. That is the greatest emancipation possible. It frees you to get into the real joys and satisfactions—which are all in love of, and work for, God. This beautifies the character and purifies the flesh.

### **Your Labor Is Not In Vain In The Lord (1 Cor. 15:58)**

DO what you should, rather than what you want to. It will give you far more pleasure and satisfaction in the long run. It will lift you out of fleshly babyhood into spiritual maturity. Self-pleasing now means later regret, for self-pleasing has no LASTING benefit. Duty now means permanent satisfaction: pleasure that not only lasts but compounds with time: pleasure that does not need a constantly accelerating input to maintain the output, like all the “pleasures” of the world that cheatingly end the moment the passing ecstasy stops.

### **I Have Said Ye Are Gods (Psa. 82:6)**

“GOD created man in His Own image” (Gen. 1). What a glorious fact! Let us revel in it. We are children of God: potential gods! “I have said that ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High” (Psa. 82). It is an earnest and a promise. But the corporeal shape is only the barest beginning. It must be our life’s obsession to implore God to complete the process, and to yield ourselves wholly to His hand. “It is God that worketh in you both to will and do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2)—but only if we are striving mightily to learn and practice Godlikeness every moment of our lives.

### **I Will Joy In The God Of My Salvation (Hab. 3:18)**

THANK God for His glorious invitation and opportunity to serve Him totally with all your life and strength. And pray without ceasing for the precious divine blessing of ever more zeal and enthusiasm and dedication and intensity of effort. Working for God is the only true

living: all other activities are various deceptive degrees of death. It is a joy and a privilege far higher than anything this dead, dull world can ever offer, or even comprehend. All worldly accomplishment ends in the grave.

### **My Soul Shall Be Joyful In The Lord (Psa. 35:9)**

LET it not be thought that the course of wisdom is a joyless burden. Rather, it is the course of the only true joy and freedom from burden. We have all seen full-grown, mentally-retarded adults sitting on the floor grinning and slobbering and playing with baby toys. It is a terribly sad and saddening spectacle: a potentially noble and intelligent creature, created in God's image, never developing beyond uncomprehending infancy. Compared to the beauty that might be, this is the spiritual state that might be of all of natural mankind. And merely passing an elementary examination and being baptized does not automatically change it, though such can and should be a tremendous first step in the direction of growth and maturity and nobility and beauty. But it is only a first step. Continuous development **MUST** follow.

### **Cast Ye The Unprofitable Servant Into Outer Darkness (Matt. 25:30)**

NOTHING we have ever experienced in this life will be one thousandth as terrible as rejection at the judgement seat of Christ. And that rejection is a looming possibility if we do not have the wisdom to give ourselves entirely to God in this present brief period of opportunity and probation. It's not so much what we accomplish, but rather the totality of our love and dedication and effort to obey Him and please Him. For the rejected, there will be physical suffering, certainly, but—however severe—that will be but a minor aspect. Many can accept physical suffering with joy in the enthusiasm of a good cause. The real and dreadful depths of the suffering will be mental—the awful, gnawing, unremitting bitterness of hopeless remorse and regret and self-condemnation for the utter stupidity of playing and self-pleasing when God lovingly asks us to **WORK FULL TIME** in the Vineyard, and become an eternal part in His glorious Purpose. How mockingly meaningless will then seem the juvenile things we waste our time and interest on today while precious time slips away! What vain, anguished poundings then on the forever shut door of Joy and Hope! God loved us, and abundantly manifested that love, and sought the totality of ours in small return. Like a spoiled child, we accepted the benefits of His love, but did not reciprocate it in the fulness of

devotion that true love must of its very nature bring forth. Our “love” went not beyond self-interest, and now we reap as we have sown. Mercifully, this dreadful, hopeless anguish will sooner or later end in the then sought-for and at last welcomed relief of eternal death. THE secret of total happiness and total contentment is total love of God. This is the whole meaning and purpose of life. This is that for which we were created and are divinely destined. This solves all problems and assuages all sorrows. This is peace.

### **When A Man’s Ways Please The Lord (Prov. 16:7)**

MAN’S purpose and destiny is to give pleasure to God. When we are pleasing Him, we are in harmony with the universe and eternity. Any human being whose life’s desire is not pleasing God is an abortion and a failure and must be eliminated from God’s universe. A life whose central, basic, guiding principle is not the desire, intention and effort to constantly give God pleasure, is an empty, sterile, dead life—a tragedy of blind folly and lost opportunity. Pleasing God and being in harmony and communion with His love is man’s highest possible joy and happiness. A “successful” life is one in which every moment is consciously devoted to giving God pleasure. He has plainly said what He desires, and it consists mainly of a certain character, attitude and frame of mind. Certainly there are specific things to be done and to be not done, but though the acts themselves are important, the motive and purpose that lie behind them are more important. The motive of everything we do must be thanksgiving and love and joy in the marvelous beauty of holiness that God’s glory has revealed to poor, weak, mortal, perishing man. There is no joy and peace remotely comparable to the assurance that we are striving to the very best of our tiny little ability to please God every moment.

### **Gird Up The Loins Of Your Mind (1 Pet. 1:13)**

DISCIPLINE yourself. Keep bringing yourself back very frequently to the basic purpose of your life. As far as practical, pause very briefly every hour on the hour for re-orientation of your thoughts and activities. Put aside all passing problems for a moment alone with God and with His eternal peace. Our greatest problem is distraction and forgetfulness. The whole weight of the natural mind is to low and present things. We must keep pulling the mind upward. It is not merely for man’s convenience that God has caused the day to be divided into hours. They should be points of reference, compass settings, memory markers. Like the year and the month and the day and the seven-day cycle, they are measuring milestones of pause,

review and refreshing. We mean well, and we plan well, we determine well: but remembering and staying consistently on course are our besetting problems. Set yourself up periodic memory points, course-checking points. Of course the ideal is CONSTANT unwavering awareness; a perfect, undeviating, arrow-straight course toward the eternal goal. But we are weak creatures. Life is an endless, painful (though joyful and glorious) struggle to keep bringing ourselves back to being what we ought to be and doing what we ought to do.

### **Walk Worthy Of The Lord (Col. 1:10)**

YOU have your limits. You have more mental capacity than some, and less than others. You have more physical capacity than some, and less than others. This is true of everyone except the single one at the top and at the bottom. Much can be done in both categories by exercise, but still there are limits—and all are different. It is not important. At his very best and highest, man is still nothing. At worst and lowest, he is still something. What counts eternally is how you use what you have been given, in mental, physical, and circumstantial opportunity. This is your personal stewardship, be it great or small. You will be judged upon it. God requires your most and best, within your limits. This is what love will be eager and anxious to give and still wish it could give more. Do you have this love and zeal for divine service that makes the difference between life and death? It comes with long study and meditation, and prayer. It's not a secret or special gift that some just happen to have. It's something all are COMMANDED to develop, and freely shown how. It is spiritual-mindedness, which is life and peace; and there can be neither life nor peace without it. It is not a matter of sudden and shallow emotional excitement, like orthodox "conversion." It is a deep, steady, consistent learning and growing and transforming, and becoming closer and closer to the Divine Perfection.

### **In My Flesh Dwelleth No Good Thing (Rom. 7:8)**

*"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it? ... He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" —Jer. 17:9;  
Prov. 28:26*

THOSE who by nature are firm have a natural tendency to be harsh and bitter; those who by nature are soft have a tendency to be weak and compromising.

Whatever comes naturally to us must be distrusted, for "in our flesh dwells no good thing." There are no natural virtues. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit."

To pride ourselves on our natural reactions, whatever they are, is to

glory in our shame. We are only safe when we are consciously restraining nature and following the Spirit's expressed instructions contrary to nature.

### **They Shall Prosper That Love Thee (Psa. 122:6)**

LOVE of God. That is the ultimate. That is life. That is peace. That is power. That is everything. That is the Pearl of Great Price for which a man gives away all he has—and is thereby infinitely enriched. The “of” is significantly ambiguous. It is not just love FOR God or love FROM God. It is the inseparable unity of both—necessarily puny from the human side, a transforming flood from the divine side: but necessarily total for both. The mutual totality is the essence. Love is a total giving without reserve. “Love” has many meanings, but its supreme meaning is a perfect two-way union of heart and mind. How do we achieve the exquisite, absolute peace of its perfection? Principally—almost entirely—it is simply a yielding and a self-emptying. All good and perfect gifts come from God and must come from God; and love is the ultimate, crowning good. Man cannot create it. Man cannot create anything. He must seek it from above, as a flower seeks life from the sun. Man's contribution is the yearning and the desire: the rigorous self-emptying of everything else: of every other love. That is, every other love that could mar, or obscure, or dilute the perfection of this love. The “love” that pours forth to all creation is the result and flower and fruit of this love: the second commandment, whose fulfillment follows inevitably upon the achievement of the first commandment. The love of God, and it alone, has the power to change fleshliness to spirituality, filth to cleanliness, ugliness to beauty—if we will only have the wisdom to choose beauty—and faith and courage to yield ourselves wholly to it without reserve.

### **Give An Account Of Thy Stewardship (Luke 16:2)**

BLESSED are the poor, for their circumstances restrict their capacity to indulge in the natural, universal, fleshly tendency to make unfaithful fools of themselves. But, alas, with “easy” (!) credit, even the poor can play this fatal game. And waste of our (God's) time can be even more wicked than waste of our (God's) money.

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TO have God is enough for anyone. And the less we think we need or want other than that, the happier we are, and the more we experience and understand peace.

## **If Ye Live After The Flesh Ye Shall Die (Rom. 8:13)**

TAKE pleasure in being holy, pure, clean, godly. It is much more satisfying and enjoyable than being dirty, once the mind is properly enlightened and adjusted. The natural man is dirty in all his thoughts and operations: "dirty" from God's point of view, for all is of the flesh, from top to bottom—and the natural works of the flesh are all uncleanness. Man is like an untaught small child, loving mud and filth. To the human point of view, some natural works of the flesh seem more perverted than others, because natural man as a society has, from age to age, certain self-imposed and varying "standards"—largely as a result of some faint residue of light from original divine instructions. Greece and Rome had lost all this, and were vile. "Christianity" brought a glimmer back to society, at least on the surface, up to recent times. Today "standards" of decency and morality are practically non-existent: and mankind is rapidly going back to total filth and defilement. But to God, these natural distinctions of society are minor. To Him, ALL that is natural is unclean. He calls man out of the natural filth to the wholesome joy and beauty and glory of true, clean, eternally-satisfying holiness. Those who truly try it are ceaselessly thankful for their redemption, and appalled at what they formerly approved.

## **The Greatest Blessing**

THE blessing to be most greatly desired and most fervently prayed for is spiritualmindedness: interest in and affinity with spiritual things. This is the root and motive power of all virtues: and motivation is the all-important thing. All else will follow, if zeal and desire and love is strong. David exclaimed—

*"My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee... My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psa. 63:1; 84:2).*

For this David could be endlessly thankful: it is the way to sainthood and peace.

## **Comparing Themselves Among Themselves Are Not Wise (2 Cor. 10:12)**

LET us not "compare ourselves with ourselves"—that is, with the brethren and sisters around us. That, says the apostle, is "not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12). By this course, a community's standards of conduct and holiness and service and sacrifice gradually and imperceptibly sink lower and lower toward the way of the flesh, with blind complacency. Let us rather constantly and honestly compare our service and way of

life with the holy precepts of the Word, and with the humbling and mortifying examples of Christ and of Paul, which are specifically set before us as patterns to copy and standards of comparison. This way a community's standards and accomplishments and devotion and service gradually get higher and higher, toward the Spirit, even "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 2:18).

### **Study To Show Thyself Approved Unto God (2 Tim. 2:15)**

STUDY of the Word is essential to spiritual transformation, which in turn is essential to salvation. Most people are too lazy to study. They'd rather drift, or be entertained. That's why Disneyland, and the infantile rubbish on TV, is so popular. A large number of people read, because they enjoy it. And it may even be good reading, reading on the Truth—but few people STUDY. Study is effort and digging and concentration, and a methodical going over and over to get things clear, and fixed in the mind. Reading can be a mere passing pleasure, a lazy relaxation, giving the satisfying and salving illusion of real interest in Divine things, but it is not necessarily study. Study is disciplining the mind to consistent, purposeful labor and accomplishment. The motive must be love. If we do not love God enough to WANT to study and learn all we can about His Word and Work, then we are of no use to Him. Be sure your reading is purposeful, beneficial study.

### **Apply Thine Heart Unto Instruction (Prov. 23:12)**

MAKE the total dedication and devotion of your life your sincere desire and goal. Realize clearly that this is the only possible way to either present joy or future life. Do not be discouraged by repeated failures. Just keep doggedly at it, with determination and prayer. Try to make each day a new accomplishment of some kind, and not just a piece of colorless passed time. Try to make each day a little better than the one before. Think big and eternally. Make yourself face and realize the foolishness and emptiness and uselessness of present things. Think! Keep thinking! Keep examining yourself, and what you are doing, and WHY. The flesh is your enemy, a very deceptive and hypocritical one: promising everything, delivering nothing. Don't mistake it for a friend. There is no real joy and satisfaction except in spiritual things. To realize this in youth is a tremendous blessing. Most realize it too late—or never at all. Thank God for the light—and walk in it.

## **Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15)**

WHAT is the “stricter stand”? Is it not that which we sincerely believe to be the closest to the scriptures? Could anyone conscientiously take any other stand than that which he believed to be the scriptural one? Have we the right to make “stricter” rules than God makes in our fear for the purity of the Truth? This is a well-meaning error, but it is a fatal one for the life and spirit of the Truth. This is what happened to the Pharisees. Do we feel we must be “stricter” and more holy than brethren Thomas and Roberts? I once felt this way, in my youthful presumption and ignorance, but I am ashamed of it now. If I can just do my tiny little bit to hold the line as brethren Thomas and Roberts set it, not deviating to new theories on the right hand or the left, I shall feel very happy, and very privileged, and in very good company.

## **Let Thy Light And Truth Be Guides To Me**

PRAY urgently and fervently for a yearning, aching realization of your need for God—how dark and empty and meaningless everything in life is without Him: how bright and full and purposeful everything is with Him. Christ has, in God’s love, opened and illuminated the way to God and to life and this is perfect obedience. We cannot achieve this of ourselves, but we can be covered by that of Christ, IF we enter into and abide in Christ. Entry into Christ is by knowledge, belief and baptism. Abiding in Christ is by total dedication to learning and developing and obedience, and putting all we have and are into his service. We find no other way to life promised in the scriptures. Any who promise or expect an easier one are deceiving and being deceived.

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THE more we give, the more we truly possess: the more we hoard, the less we have.

## **Teach Us To Apply Our Hearts Unto Wisdom**

**(Psa. 90:12)**

CHRIST’S brethren and sisters have no time for games or for unnecessary activities not related to eternity. They are provided with a full schedule of activity by the master, which leaves no room for the foolishness and amusements of the world. They are called to total application to study and work and preparation for eternity. It is a tragedy that so few realize this. So many appear to think that they can coast into eternity, like the pampered passengers on a luxury cruise. Let us all grow up and put away these frivolities, and awake to the magnitude of our opportunities and responsibilities. When those who

did little sought to please brother Thomas by commending his prodigious and indefatigable labors for the Truth he was not flattered but saddened and said in effect, "Come out of your lazy dream world into reality; you should all be doing the same."

### **This Is The Way — Walk Ye In It (Isa. 30:21)**

WE must get our joy and satisfaction in God and from God. It is not just wrong to get it elsewhere: it is impossible. The real thing doesn't exist anywhere else. God is Light, and the only Light. God is Love, and the only Love. God is Life, and the only Life. The disciples were often childish and limited as they followed Christ, but they had one thing perfectly straight in their minds, and it was the root of everything else: there's just nowhere else to go. All other roads are at last dead ends. Most people spend their lives running away from reality, and seeking substance where there is only shadow; seeking permanence where there is only brevity and dissolution; seeking security in that which is inherently insecure; seeking peace and satisfaction down a seemingly pleasing road that must inevitably end in the dark swamp of sorrow and emptiness, and—if there is enough mental capacity then left to comprehend the tragedy—in bitter remorse and regret. There is only one high, narrow, hard way out of it all, to eternity and peace and life: total dedication of this life to God, total swallowing up of this life in Christ. The vast majority go the wrong way. That's tragic. Many go TOWARD the right way, but not far enough. That's even more tragic. Let us realize the infinite bigness and glory of it. It must loom so large to us as to overwhelm and dominate our every thought and action—or we haven't really gotten close enough to it yet for its mighty, irresistible gravity to draw us totally into itself. Why go just part way toward God and glory?

### **Be Ye Holy — For I Am Holy (Lev. 11:44)**

IF we are to attain to the Kingdom of God, and to a condition of eternal usefulness to God, we must in this life lift our minds to an entirely new plane of consciousness and thinking: to the plane of holiness—far above the natural, animal desires and interests of the flesh. Holiness is Beauty: the Beauty of Holiness: all else is ugliness. Holiness is Separateness and Purity: a Separate Purity; a Pure Separateness. The mental food that creates the transformation of our minds from natural repulsiveness to spiritual attractiveness is the Spirit-Word, continuously and liberally indulged in. "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." Naturally we are the very opposite of holy. To become so, more and more, is life's purpose: its ONLY purpose. Any

time spent that does not contribute to this is precious divine time wasted: unfaithful stewardship. "Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" is a large enough command, and a high enough ambition, to completely fill any lifetime. With God's bountiful and loving help, lift your mind above all natural childishness and foolishness, all interest in worldly things, all unclean fleshly habits and thoughts, all of the ugliness of the flesh, as anger, impatience, harshness, unkindness, selfishness, lack of sympathy and compassion and healing, forgiving love. "Be ye holy, even as God is holy." What a joy! What a revelation! What a beautiful, noble company! "Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness!"

### **Put Not Trust In Men (Psa. 146:3)**

WE must earnestly desire God's personal companionship. We must not be content or happy without it. It must be a constant yearning and feeling of need. Sad and bitter experience in this life greatly strengthens this desire. That is one of the reasons it is needed and beneficial. Only God is dependable. Only God understands. In God's mercy and wisdom, there can be much comfort and support in human beings, but we cannot make our happiness dependent on them, or build upon them, or build on them as our foundation. All flesh is grass. In God alone is safety and security.

### **The Flesh Is Deceitful**

WHEN we are consciously and deliberately doing God's will, we are happy. When we are not, we are not. In the nature of things it HAS to be that way. And in the reality of things, it IS that way. Analyze it through, and you will find it so. Any other "pleasure" has to be, and is, self-deception: an ignorant or deliberate self-blinding, a shutting out of reality and consequence, a desperate, warped, juvenile submersion in the present to drown the pain of natural life's meaninglessness and emptiness, to briefly dim the final, inescapable, staring face of eternal death.

### **Let Your Joy Be Full**

JOY: the healthiest, happiest, most satisfying human emotion. God offers it freely to all, in measureless abundance; immediately, permanently, eternally, perfectly; under all circumstances and in all situations—BUT—only on one immutable condition: total separation from the world, and total devotion to Him in love and service. Part way will accomplish nothing but disappointment and frustration, for the very

essence of the joy itself is dependent on the absolute totality. Let's face it: it's all or nothing. What do we call people who hoard trash and throw away diamonds?

### **Think Not Highly Of Yourself**

GET your mind off yourself! You are totally unimportant. You can BECOME important—eternally important to God—but it will never be by thinking about yourself. It will only be by forgetting yourself, and setting your mind totally on God and on others. Thinking of yourself shrinks your mind smaller and smaller until at last it shrivels and dies. Thinking about God and others expands your mind more and more until at last it bursts into glorious, eternal Life and Beauty. God's Way is the only way. Beware of the great diabolos-deceiver: your own desires.

### **Your Work Of Faith And Labour Of Love**

HELP the old and sick as much as you possibly can: especially those whom you think deserve it least, for they are likely to be the ones everyone neglects. Christ's command to do it is not because of their merit, but because it is the will of our Lord and a test of our love and obedience to him. Helping those who are in need of help is far more important to Christ than catering to our own comforts and desires, though somehow the latter seems quite important to us at the moment. The flesh is very self-centered, and serving the flesh will never give us life. We shall be asked about this matter at the judgment seat. It may be rather a sticky question, and it would pay to have a good answer ready. Better yet: a good record ready.

### **Present Yourself Wholly Unto God**

GOD requires a total life-devotion and life-service that is the inevitable accompaniment of True Love: not for the service itself, for our greatest possible service is nothing before Him, but because He requires a depth of love that cannot be contained and content in anything less than total devotion and service. This is what made David a "man after God's own heart." He sinned at times, and was necessarily severely punished, for his own good, and to sanctify God's inexorable holiness. But the Psalms reveal the depth of love and devotion, and deep remorse for sin.

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THE only happiness, peace and satisfaction is doing our most and best in God's sight.

## **Do Not Keep Back Part Of The Price**

IF the current of our mind is not CONTINUOUSLY in God, then our profession is hypocrisy, and our performance is sham. It is just a sometime thing. It is not solid and permanent and real. If we truly HAVE the Truth, it will possess us totally. It will be a continuous ringing in our minds and fire in our bones. Don't be a half ANYTHING—and certainly not in things pertaining to God and eternity. Be total. Go all the way. Give it everything. In the other way lies frustration and unhappiness, and—at last—dreadful, inescapable remorse. Why jeopardize eternity with half-ways?

## **Let Him Eshew Evil, And Do Good (1 Pet. 3:11)**

HATE evil we must. But we must hate it most in ourselves. Evil in ourselves can do two terrible things to us: it can rob us of the peace of God now, and it can banish us forever from His love and presence at the last great day of account.

## **Lay Up For Yourselves Treasures In Heaven (Matt. 6:20)**

WE must move out of the changing, passing fantasies of the present into the realm of unchanging, eternal reality. We must transfer all our affections and possessions there. This is “laying up treasure in heaven,” where it will be eternally abiding.

## **Hold Fast The Form Of Sound Words (2 Tim. 1:13)**

WE should not be interested in peddling crotchets. The Truth was settled among us long ago to the satisfaction of the sound and stable, including the basic meaning and interpretation of the book of Revelation. We hold fast to the original sound Christadelphian principles of doctrine and fellowship, desiring neither to add new tests of fellowship, nor to abandon old ones. We have no sympathy with the welter of modern speculations and speculators who do not comprehend the value of the sound foundation laid. Let those who revel in “some new thing” seek the company of the pagan Athenians. We are very happy and encouraged to learn, from considerable spontaneous correspondence, that—in the general declension—there are still many who are of the same mind: deeply troubled at present trends. May God guide each one into all truth.

## **Behold It Was Very Good (Gen. 1:31)**

TOTAL peace and joy for man are found only in total service to God. That is man's original and “natural” condition. That must be regained.

All life must be given to the effort. All else is degeneration and perversion without promise or hope.

### **Grow Up Into Him In All Things (Eph. 4:15)**

BE a “man of God”—externally and internally: to the world, and to yourself. Bring everything you do into harmony with this holy pattern. Make it your life’s goal and ideal. Eschew everything that is inconsistent with it. Be real, and solid, and genuine all through. Man is not true man at all, unless he becomes man of God. This is his divinely intended glory and destiny. GROW UP unto God—this is the purpose for which we are given the wonderful gift of life. Keep growing, keep learning, keep developing. So many are content to stop growing, and to just vegetate—to be childish and ignorant and immature all their lives. It is a tragedy, when the human mind and character have such incredible potentials for divine development.

### **The Seed Should Spring And Grow Up (Mark 4:27)**

GOD is a Loving Father teaching us to walk. We are infants in His hand. He does not condemn us for our constant stumblings, for the weakness and unsteadiness of our legs, for our clumsiness and lack of balance. He knows that all that is inevitably part of the learning process. He does not demand instant perfection or ability or dexterity. But He DOES demand desire, and effort, and perseverance, and dedication. He DOES condemn us for failure to try, for wandering interest, for indolent contentment to remain spoon-fed, spiritual infants. He does not condemn us for difficulties and setbacks in the process of growing up to Him. But He does condemn us—and will ultimately REJECT us—for not giving total effort and zeal.

### **Faith That Works By Love**

WORKING for God is not enough, even though it is intense, compulsive and total. That indeed is important, but two other things are even more important: love of God, and holiness of life. There can be a dead work without love (though it may give a wonderful appearance of “life”). But there cannot be the true required Love without both Holiness and Work. “Faith that works by Love” is the golden key to life.

### **Love And Tribulation**

WHAT we are building is a life, a character, a record, an eternal engraving on the changeless stones of time. This is the whole purpose of our divinely-given existence. It must be clean and worthy and holy

and beautiful. The two essential ingredients in the development of a beautiful character are love and tribulation—in just the right, divinely-prescribed and divinely-applied proportions. Together they are the furnace that purifies the gold and purges the dross, the sun and storm that nurture the raw and spindly sapling into the mighty, sturdy tree, the hammer and chisel that shape the formless marble. Welcome them: God’s mighty agents: Love and Tribulation.

### **Love The Lord Thy God With All Thine Heart (Matt. 22:37)**

WE cannot weaken the flesh: but we can, and we **MUST**, strengthen the spirit, so that it may subdue and control, the flesh. To begin with, we are **ALL** flesh: “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind,” like the beast of the field, knowing nothing better or higher. We build the strength of the spirit by the intense love of God. There is no other way. And love of God, in effective strength, comes by much study and meditation on His Word. The one great command of life is: “Love the Lord thy God with **ALL** thy heart, **ALL** thy mind, **ALL** thy life, and **ALL** thy strength.” This is not a command in the ordinary sense of a requirement by someone else for their purposes and benefit. Rather it is divine loving advice on the only possible way of escape out of death into life. An intense, life-dominating love of God is the only power in the universe that can overcome the flesh, and the promise of God’s glorious eternal future is only to “him that overcometh.”

### **Do Good Unto All Men**

WE must thankfully enjoy the marvelous divine privilege of doing good, and serving the eternal cause of good—not for fleshly gratification, but for spiritual gratification. There is no law against pleasure and happiness and enjoyment: they are what God intends for man. But they must not be groveling and fleshly and death-tending for man. They must be on the plane of, and in harmony with, eternity. Our pleasures must be pleasures of the Spirit. It is hard to grow up to this, and to leave all the bright baby toys behind us; just as all growing up and leaving behind is hard. But only they who tread this hard path can reach the infinitely greater pleasures of eternal maturity. It means setting out in faith up the sometimes dark and rocky road from perishing pleasures to eternal pleasures: but the light at the summit is always shining brightly to lead us on. The world prefers to live and die with its childish toys.

## **Thy Face, Lord, Will I Seek (Psa. 27:8)**

“THIS is life eternal: to KNOW Thee” . . . “Thou shalt seek Me, and shalt find Me when thou shalt seek for Me with ALL thine heart.” Let us never think we have totally found God. There is always further to go, closer to get, deeper to understand—and this is the whole joy and beauty and meaning of life. Our life has no value or purpose if we are not continually getting closer to God. The time will come, says Paul, when “We (the true faithful) shall know as we are known.” But it will NEVER come for US if we are not continuously striving with all our might in that direction NOW. God is not going to force eternal glory upon the lazy and worldly and unspiritual and uninterested. If we are interested in worldly things, we shall perish with them. Eternity is only for those few who realize the infinite value of the Pearl, and who eagerly “sell ALL they have” to purchase it.

## **The Rock Of My Strength And My Refuge, Is In God (Psa. 62:7)**

KEEP your mind on God: on God HIMSELF as a Person—not just on what He has done, or what He has made, or what He has said—except as these things direct your mind to Him Himself. It is so easy to “do God’s work” all day, study God’s Word all day—and never really think about or make personal contact with God Himself. Build your whole conscious life on God as the closest, most real person of your acquaintance. Keep this personal aspect very prominent in all your thinking. It must become your greatest motive power, your greatest strength, your greatest comfort and joy. It is all you need. It is everything you need. Other crutches and supports are graciously given us because we do not have the spiritual comprehension and maturity to fully utilize this supreme, all-sufficient one. But the less we rely on anything or anyone secondary, the better. Appreciate all other helps and comforts and companionships. Be thankful for them. Draw fully on them as they are given. But never build on them—only on God, Who can never change, never fail.

## **They Shall Be All Taught Of God (John 6:45)**

THE people of God are ever anxious to LEARN. They have no time for or patience with foolishness. They do not want to be amused, or excited, or entertained—they want to be TAUGHT. They are ever eager to learn more about God and His Word—what He has said, and what He has done—the marvelous and beautiful kaleidoscope of divine and human events from Adam in Eden to John in Patmos. They never have

time hanging on their hands. They never have “nothing to do”—the pitiful bane of empty, infantile minds. All the spare time in their busy, active lives is given to study and meditation on the wonders of the Word. They begrudge time spent—even necessarily—on present, passing things: though, in love and faith, and stumbling, slow-learning patience, they realize that these things too, if necessary, can equally be a service to, and communion with, their loving Father.

### **Perfect Peace (Isa. 26:3)**

LET us not even wish for peace until we have, with God’s help, created the conditions in our life and mind that justify peace. Short of this, “peace” is not a blessing, but a dangerous deception and soporific. True peace can come only from oneness with God in heart and life and action. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is STAYED on Thee.” “Stayed” implies permanence and consistency: Total dependence and dedication. “There is no peace to the wicked.” Hopefully, we are not “wicked,” but to the degree that we are sinful (and though we must mightily strive, none of us can ever rise completely above that), to that degree will our peace be marred. The only peace is “Peace with God”: and God is perfect in holiness. Any unpurged corruption or foolishness within us will prevent our being wholly comfortable or “at peace” with Him, or He fully accepting us in oneness.

### **His Secret Is With The Righteous (Prov. 3:32)**

THE secret of total happiness and total contentment is total love of God. This is the whole meaning and purpose of life. This is that for which we were created and are divinely destined. This solves all problems and assuages all sorrows. This is peace.

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SALVATION is very, very easy—IF the whole life and mind and desire and effort is given to it, and to nothing else. It is impossible, if it is not.

### **Create In Me A Clean Heart (Psa. 51:10)**

CLEANNES. It is the great lesson of the Law of Moses—over and over and over. Natural man is filthy. God is absolutely pure and holy. Outer cleanness is important: inner cleanness is vital and essential. Cleansing can come only from God, but He requires a mighty effort on man’s part—AS man’s part. He will clean some; He will not clean others. The difference lies wholly in what THEY do, and how they submit, and—above all—in how clearly they perceive their natural filthiness, and how strongly they desire to be clean. Cleanness of heart,

cleanness of thought, cleanness of motive, cleanness of life—how beautiful and desirable they are! How unclean is the flesh and all its ways! We are washed in the Word (Eph. 5:26), and in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14). Let us ever strive for absolute cleanness—holiness, spiritual purity and beauty—and never be satisfied with anything less.

### **Let A Man Examine Himself (1 Cor. 11:28)**

PRAY fervently for the blessing of being able to stand back and view yourself objectively and dispassionately: to see all your uglinesses and weaknesses, failures and limitations. They are you, and they call for action, like typhoid fever would call for action. These are you now, but they need not be you eternally: they DARE not be you permanently. They must be faced and dealt with before it is too late. This is our principal and over-riding responsibility and task in this life. It is a full time, full effort task. The faculty of self-examination is a marvelous gift of God—the key to life—but it is so tremendously unused and unappreciated. Very few realize the urgency and magnitude of the task of self-transformation. Most critical evaluation is directed outward to others. How universal is the tendency to criticize others! How rare the tendency to critically and consistently and EFFECTUALLY criticize ourselves! What rationalizations! What lame and transparent excuses! What unworthy self-justification! God give us self-discernment and self-honesty!

### **She That Liveth In Pleasure Is Dead While She Liveth (1 Tim. 5:6)**

ENTERTAINMENT, excitement, amusement: sports, games, playing—these things are not true living, they are a running away from life. They are a denial of living; a tragic, criminal perversion of true living and true pleasure and true joy. They are abortions, evasions, dead ends. The only true living is being part of the eternal Plan and Work of God, and growing spiritually in knowledge and wisdom and grace. Living is GROWTH. Where there is no growth there is stagnation, and—at last—death. And it must be growth in real, permanent, lasting things—things connected with God and eternity. How can marking time—and wasting time—on death row, playing tiddledywinks, be called “living?” And that’s all the present natural life is: filling up the time with some mind-dulling distraction, until it comes our turn to die. That was not the destiny God planned for man, but it is the one most choose—“Eat, drink, and go through the motions of being merry, for tomorrow we die.” Is that all that the marvelous contrivance called “man” was made for? God forbid!

### **I Press Toward The Mark (Philip. 3:14)**

THE way of folly is a swiftly downward path, in things great or small—whether we drift into a wasted hour or a wasted lifetime. That is why God in love wisely requires totality of effort and devotion. It is the only wise way. It is the only practical way. It is the only possible way. Be alert. Keep checking yourself for the beginning of folly, and drifting, and aimless time-wasting. Guard against the first small downward, backward step. That is the most important and dangerous one. All flows so easily from that. Totality is the only practicality. Nothing else has the power of worthwhileness and incentive. There is no sustaining, uplifting, transforming power in part-time, part-heart service, even though it is ALMOST full time. A chain has not one ounce of lifting power if there is a gap of only one link. One missing connecting link, and immediately ALL the strength and continuity is lost. So with our lives. The chain of strength to lift us up must be continuous and unbroken, and we must jealously preserve and protect every continuous unbroken link that connects us with the power of God. It is our lifeline. One lost link is death.

### **God The Judge Of All (Heb. 12:23)**

GOD is great, majestic, terrible, destructive. His glory must be maintained. He does not brook the slightest hint of rebellion or presumptuous folly. He has struck down men—even great hosts—without warning. He has ordered a man stoned for merely gathering sticks at the wrong time. But let us observe with thanksgiving that love of God—our love for God—is a perfect insulator against the dreadful lightning of His wrath. God has shown infinite love to mankind, and made the evidence of it inescapable. Where love is shown in return, He is the gentlest and most compassionate of fathers. To those who love Him, He is patient with failure, and temperate with folly. He corrects, and punishes—but with restraint, and in love: to build and not to destroy. Of course, our love, to really BE love, must be total, and intelligent, and anxious to learn His way, and to please Him in careful obedience.

### **O Lord, Truly I Am Thy Servant (Psa. 116:6)**

OUR total, overwhelming desire should be to serve God in love. That is what we SAY we want to do eternally. If we MEAN it, we'll start right now. This must grow and grow within us until all other interests and desires become very minor or completely disappear. This IS possible in mortal flesh. It is not only possible, but it is the path and

direction and endeavor that God requires of all. It is the result of total, purposeful devotion of the thoughts and heart to God: a firm commitment of the will, based on an intelligent appraisal of the facts. The Word of God is the instrument of POWER: the substance and reality upon which the spiritual mind is built and nourished and made stronger and stronger. The Word must be studied in reverence and faith as the loving, personal message of a loving, personal Father.

### **He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things**

PRAY continuously, as a regular way of life. It is the only way to control and overcome the ignorance and evil of the flesh that is so pervasive within us all. And the flesh **MUST** be overcome. It is our most pressing problem: far more pressing than our daily food, our daily livelihood, our attendance at the meetings, our "work" for the Truth and the Brotherhood. All these are necessary, but overcoming the flesh is vital. And only a continuous life of prayer, habitually developed by long effort, can do it. Christ could "of himself do nothing," and certainly neither can we. The Word and Prayer are the great channels of power. Keep them clear and open and freely flowing at all times. Any stoppage is like a stopped artery: mortification begins immediately. The Word and Prayer are the life-blood and the circulatory system of the spiritual Body, and—as in the natural, so in the spiritual—"the Life is in the Blood." The need is continuous: five minutes without blood can kill the brain.

### **Humble Yourselves Therefore Under The Mighty Hand Of God (1 Pet. 5:6)**

BE humble, and then God will not need to humble you. Having to be humbled is very unpleasant (though wholesome). With wisdom, it can largely be avoided, by getting there first voluntarily. Of course, if you are not God's, He may not bother to humble you, He may just let you run out your animal course in your pride. But if you are His, humbling must come, one way or the other. Christ was humble—"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." He towered infinitely above every one on earth. How then could he be sincerely humble? Because he realized that he was nothing, and God was everything. He did not (like so many) compare himself with those around him, but with God. He knew that all he ever did or was or understood was of God: the gift of God, the love of God. He had no illusions of his own innate strength or goodness or wisdom. He emptied himself—his own natural, fleshly self—and filled himself totally with God: or, rather, he submitted to God totally filling him, to perfectly direct every thought,

word and deed. He was the perfect vessel for the Divine use. Let us try to follow him. A word of caution: we are not to sit supinely waiting for this to happen to us—and then assume our own fleshly thoughts are God’s. We are expected to strain to the limit to prepare ourselves for divine use by study of the Word and meditation and prayer and constant self-searching. We can be sure that that is the wise and scriptural course that Christ followed. *Psa. 119*, and others, tells us that.

### **Follow Righteousness**

RIGHTEOUSNESS is an inseparable, balanced combination of Truth and Love. If either ingredient is lacking, or flawed, or weak, it is not true scriptural Righteousness. Let us labor diligently to strengthen and perfect both within us, but let us be especially observant of that side of Righteousness in which we tend naturally to be most weak. By nature, some of us are weakest on one side, and some on the other. One great danger is that, between two individuals that are weak in opposite directions, there is almost inevitable friction and controversy. There are two opposite and unbalanced emphases, when there should be one common central balanced emphasis on both. A balanced person, strong in both aspects of Righteousness, can help reconcile such conflicts. Let us strive mightily to the latter.

### **Marriage Is Honourable In All (Heb. 13:4)**

MARRIAGE must be “only in the Lord.” This tells us that marriage is only for mature, godly adults: not for immature children who are not yet ready or competent to face life’s basic decision of divine dedication. It tells us that any who have not reached the stage of spiritual maturity to discern the Truth of God, and accept it, and LIVE it, are not ready for marriage, nor that which leads to marriage. We are not speaking about the dead, ignorant, animal world, with its totally debased and promiscuous carnality. We speak about those very few who have the intelligence and spiritual potential to rise far, far above the common corruption into and unto eternal things. Marriage has tremendous possibilities for good if it is entered into maturely as a spiritual communion for mutual assistance in spiritual things. The tragedy is that most “marriages” are mere animal unions of convenience and caprice, motivated by lust, selfishness and self-gratification.

### **Many Are Called, Few Are Chosen (Matt. 20:16)**

DO not take your salvation for granted. “Many are called, but few are chosen.” At our baptism, we do not step onto a smooth, effortless

moving sidewalk that will automatically carry us comfortably into the Kingdom, though many act as though they assume this is so. Rather we stand at the foot of a steep and rugged hill, and there is no ski-lift. That hill is our probation: the “working out of our salvation with fear and trembling.” God knows the height and degree of difficulty of our hill, and He knows the lifespan before us that He has given us to climb it. We shall need ALL that time, and all the available help He has provided and promised in so many ways. How long is it since your baptism? How far up the hill of God have you faithfully climbed? There are tempting but fatal relaxing places along the way, among them that deceptive worldly conceit called “retirement.” Are you in one of them? The day draws on, and the top is still above you.

### **The Peace Of God**

PERHAPS the peace of God does not appeal to you as worth seeking before everything else in life. It may seem a rather dull and monotonous prospect to those still in the toy-and-games stage. A baby enjoys movement—any movement—and cries when the movement stops. He has no capacity for meditation, or spiritual enjoyment. If you are still in this stage, remember that “movement” takes many forms. Most of us progress beyond the craving for the pleasure of being jiggled on someone’s knee. But have we gotten very FAR from that stage? An intelligent child soon learns there are other more mature and more satisfying pleasures, and will spend hours on the boring chore of learning the rudiments of playing a musical instrument, for the pleasure it perceives or senses in the ultimate accomplishment. Laboring toward the perfect peace of God is the greatest pleasure and most significant “movement” possible to man.

### **To Be Spiritually Minded Is Life And Peace**

**(Rom. 8:6)**

“TO be fleshly-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.” Keep telling yourself that, over and over. It is vital! It is for your life. To be fleshly-minded takes absolutely no effort, no study, no thought. It not only just comes naturally—it comes powerfully, and almost irresistibly. To be spiritually-minded is the very opposite. It DOES take great effort, and study, and thought. And even that’s not enough. It takes constant prayer and constant Divine help. It will never come naturally just by being in the Truth, and “doing the Readings,” and “attending the meetings.” Baptism of itself is a passport to nothing except a glorious opportunity to give ourselves joyfully to God, and be

accepted by Him. To be spiritually-minded is a constant struggle, a constant self-examination and self-discipline, a constant refreshing and re-cleaning in the water of the Word and the blood of the Lamb. But it alone is "life and peace," intensity of Life Forevermore, and Perfect Peace now and forever, to the depth of the soul.

### **The Desire Of Our Soul Is To Thy Name (Isa. 26:8)**

LOVING God ENOUGH is the key to everything: the ONLY key. We need two things: Desire and Realization. First, the constant, intense Desire to be better than we are, to be the very best we can be, to be one with God, perfectly and eternally. And we can never be satisfied with anything less—with the poor little toys and lusts that the infantile world chooses and plays with and sets its empty mind on. And then we need Realization: The realization of our utter helplessness and weakness and need—that we can do nothing of ourselves. All is of God. Face it: the whole universe is of God, and is God. He is everywhere and everything. If we run from Him, or cross Him, He will destroy us. He must. He is perfect goodness, and must in the fulness of time abolish everything out of harmony with Himself. Only perfect goodness can be eternal. If we run to Him, He will accept and love us, and absorb us to Himself. He will bless us. He will glorify us. He will lift us up to His Own divine nature. Is there any question of the choice to make?

### **Love Is Of God**

IF we do not have love, we are NOTHING—just an empty shell, a rattling skeleton: love of God, love of Christ, love of the Brotherhood, love of mankind, love of every vital, living blade of grass in God's glorious Creation, so full of endless marvels of beauty and design. And love of Truth, of Beauty, of Holiness, Purity, Goodness, Nobility, Unselfishness: love of the bottomless richness of the treasures of the Word. Love scorns to descend to petty criticism and shallow victories, even in the cause of Truth. Love grieves at sin, strives for good, yearns for universal happiness and blessing. Love is life. Love is always busy, always building, always working and praying for good. Love is compassionate, and patient, and understanding of weakness. But it does not condone, or belittle, or pamper sin and error, any more than a sensible doctor belittles or pampers corruption and infection. He fights it vigorously, and often violently, though an ignorant bystander might think him extreme and harsh. Love discharges its unpleasant duty toward sin and error faithfully and resolutely, though very carefully

and self-searchingly and prayerfully—ever conscious of its own weakness and limitation and need.

### **Doth Not Wisdom Cry? (Prov. 8:1)**

WE have found the “Truth”: the saving Gospel of the Kingdom of God and the things concerning the Name of Jesus Christ. That is fine. That is indeed vital (and let us make sure we always HAVE it, and not just HAD it. The mind is leaky. We must keep refreshing and replenishing it). But, have we found THE truth? Have we “gone on to perfection”—to completion?—right to the heart and core of the matter? “He that loseth his life shall save it” . . . “A man must forsake all he has to be my disciple.” Have we “lost” our (natural) life, and forsaken all of it?—total submission, total self-emptying, total yielding, total humility and pridelessness, total devotion, total service, total love, TOTAL “peace with God”? This is what God gently, reasonably, lovingly asks of us. Do we love Him enough to give it? This is what “love” means. Is it worth it? Is eternity worth that much effort and application? Can we give less than all, and safely presume on God’s “mercy”—or that hopefully He will not notice that we are selfishly “keeping back part of the price”? Human beings are congenital gamblers: that is part of the ingrained “works of the flesh.” But are not the stakes here a little too high, the risks a little too great? Doth not wisdom cry a warning?

### **Seek Ye The Lord (Isa. 55:6)**

WE must get closer to God. It is pressing and urgent. It is the whole purpose of our lives. We are never close enough. Our whole life’s main endeavor must be a continuous drawing closer to Him. His Word is the great bridge across the chasm, the golden pathway through the vast wilderness. We get closer to Him by study and meditation and prayer and love and holiness—not little dabs lost in the endless busy-ness of other things, but as a total dedication that overshadows everything, and gives direction and color to everything we do: a fixed and constant purpose in life to which all else takes a proper secondary position. Let us realize the immensity of this call to divinity and eternity—brief, crawling worm that man is. If it does not totally seize and transform us, we are not of the people of God, but a mere incidental part of the passing background for the development of the people of God. Orthodoxy, with its bloated views of human worth and “natural immortality,” may well expect painless, effortless salvation: and automatic passing on to a naturally-destined higher state. But those who have been enlightened to man’s utter perishing and mortal insignificance should know much better than this.

### **Subject To Vanity (Rom. 8:20)**

WHATEVER we put in, we get out. Every moment wasted is an eternal loss. If enough are wasted, all is lost. Nothing is by chance. Everything has a cause. Every action has a result: good or ill. Every moment of life is with eternal possibilities.

### **In Everything Give Thanks (1 Thess. 5:18)**

THANK God! Thank Him continually for everything. Thank Him for health and all the marvelous functions of your body and mind. Thank Him for His glorious self-revelation, His love, His condescension, His invitation to eternal life and joy.

### **Be Swift To Hear, Slow To Speak (James 1:19)**

WHEN others talk, listen. When others want to listen, talk. And don't just chatter. Really try to think something worth thinking, and say something worth saying. You have the world's most marvelous computer right inside your own skull—a brain: a multi-billion cell miracle: a gift from God. Don't let it rust, or rot with rubbish.

### **But The End Thereof Are The Ways Of Death (Prov. 16:25)**

REJECT the flesh as a way of life. It isn't. It is a way of death. Reject it over the whole spectrum of your thinking and activity. It is cheating, deceptive and misleading. It has nothing to offer by way of satisfaction and happiness, in spite of all its false promises and glittering attraction. It's the world's biggest fake and fraud.

### **Make Your Calling And Election Sure (2 Pet. 1:10)**

GET your whole life into God. It is the only way. And the longer you wait, the greater the regrets, and the greater likelihood of failure. No part can be omitted. It is ALL, or it is meaningless. Not that it will be all, all at once. But that must be the constant, energetic goal. There must be no satisfaction, no relaxing of effort and attention, no waste of time on other things, until that is achieved.

### **This Is The Day Which The Lord Hath Made (Psa. 118:24)**

THANK God for every new day. Make each one a fresh, thankful, enthusiastic new beginning. Yesterday's follies, failures, fleshlinesses, weaknesses, time-wastings, are all gone with the night: analyzed,

learned from, repented of; forgiven. Today we try again: to do a little better, to grow a little more mature, to control the flesh more faithfully, to serve God more lovingly, to remember Him more continuously—out of weakness to grow strong, upon passing sorrow and disappointment to build eternal hope and joy, with prayerful meditation to reach more deeply into everlasting Truth, to discern and set aside, one by one, the myriad follies of the flesh. We are nothing. God is everything. Only the totally self-emptied will He fill. Eschew self-confidence like the plague. It is the world's god, not ours. Do your best continually, knowing it is a puny nothing; but if God is in it, it is one small part of the Eternal Temple that will endure when all else has passed away.

### **Give . . . Thy Servant An Understanding Heart (1 Kings 3:9)**

BE very slow and careful in your judgments of others, or of anything. Realize that it is very, very little that we really understand, and that there is a hundred million times more to be known than we know, or ever shall know, in this life.

### **Let Us Cleanse Ourselves From All Filthiness (2 Cor. 7:1)**

LET us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. This is the whole purpose for which we have been given life. Let us thank God. Let us thank God that He has shown us how and made it possible. Don't waste time.

### **Always Abounding In The Work Of The Lord (1 Cor. 15:58)**

THERE is one thing you should do right now—this very minute. DO IT! Do not sidetrack it; do not procrastinate; do not fiddle with rubbish for mere "amusement." That's childish. That's babyish. Grow up! Do the thing right now that SHOULD be done. And make that the constant, purposeful, satisfying pattern of your life, from moment to moment. And do it cheerfully, heartily, thankfully, joyfully. Reluctant, unhappy, grudging service is an insult to God, and a self-imposed burden to ourselves. The thing to be done at the moment may be just nothing; it may be just waiting—patiently and faithfully. Sometimes that's all there is to do. Sometimes that's all we have the physical capacity to do. But do it profitably, and in a godly manner. Fill the mind with profitable and godly thoughts. Always have something profitable at hand to read. Or, failing that, let your mind dwell on the rich treasure

of information and instruction you have wisely stored up beforehand, while you had opportunity. Above all: never, never just sit and fret. That's destructive, physically, mentally and spiritually. Always be doing SOMETHING useful.

### **The Zeal Of Thine House**

SEEK the great and essential gift of total devotion that marks off the few, rare, eternal children of God from all the shapes and sorts and sizes of passing creatures of the flesh: total dedication, total singleness of mind and love and purpose. Pray fervently and constantly for it. Nothing is accomplished without it. With it, mountains are moved. "I MUST be about my Father's business . . . The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up!" This is not some strange, far-off uniqueness for Christ alone. This is the ONLY Way of Life, which he has gloriously exemplified for us. God will give it to all who constantly and earnestly SEEK it: not just in passive prayer, but in study, and service, and deep meditation—and repeatedly wrenching the mind back from present distractions to eternal realities; constantly wrenching the mind and hands back from childish fleshly playing to mature spiritual working. The prize is eternity. It is only for those who value it enough to give it their whole lives, and cast everything aside to get it. Anything less mocks God.

### **Be Ye Perfect (Matt. 5:48)**

OUR fixed life's aim must be total harmony with God. Anything less than this is a wasted, aborted life. This is the standard set before us, and there is no other. "Be ye perfect, as your Father is perfect." Any other standard is a wicked, deceptive human invention, guaranteeing death, foolishly and fatally "comparing themselves with themselves." We shall admittedly never totally achieve this aim in this life. Only Christ did that: and he was specially prepared, helped, and strengthened to accomplish it. That did not make it easier for him: it just made it possible. He achieved it by constant effort and constant vigilance. We are required to get and stay as close as we possibly can to that—within the limits of our abilities and capabilities (which only God knows). We constantly tend to drift away. We must make a thousand course corrections daily to stay on target. We must keep constantly pulling ourselves back. With sufficient love of God, this is a joy. Without it, it is an intolerable burden. True love for God couldn't be happy doing anything else.

## **Look Unto The Lord**

WE must be so filled with love and joyfulness and thanksgiving on an eternal, future-looking, spiritual level that it will completely and infinitely more than counterbalance all sorrow and problems and disappointments on a present, natural, passing level. Truly there will be sorrows and problems and disappointments—deep and terrible and wrenching, and sometimes seemingly endless and insoluble. But the tremendous divine power of a sound and robust spiritual outlook and atmosphere and understanding will bring it all into its proper relatively insignificant perspective, like brief passing tunnels of darkness on a triumphant, ascending, God-approaching highway of glorious Light. Nothing really matters except the ultimate, transcendent, endless END to which, in God's love, all sorrows lead.

## **Let This Mind Be In You (Philip. 2:5)**

NOTHING that we do means anything if the mind is not continuously fixed on God. All labor, all study, all service and sacrifice and suffering, are useless if we do not keep God before our mind, for none of it is serving its intended purpose. Here is the danger and deceptiveness of the flesh. Various aspects of the "work of the Truth" appeal to the natural inclinations of different people. Some like to debate and contend, some like to study, some like to teach, some like to do the active work: the cooking, the entertaining, the arranging, the procuring. All this is fine, and we should be thankful that it is so. But let us always remember: if we are not CONSCIOUSLY doing it for God—in love of God—it is fruitless and meaningless in any eternal sense. The mind fixed on God—in total harmony with God—is the ultimate goal and purpose of all. If any activity is not contributing to this purpose, but rather diverting the mind from it to its own self, then that activity is counter-productive and destructive, however "good" it may be. It has usurped the position of God in our heart and mind and thoughts. It has become idolatry.

## **Joy Overflowing**

WE should all be always in an ecstasy of spirituality and divine joy. If we are not, we are tragically missing the whole real meaning and beauty and power of the Truth. We are then just clods masquerading as stars. Total joy, perfect peace, and the beauty of holiness are all ours for the asking—unwavering, unassailable, unending. Why then are we timidly and unworthily content to lie earthly among the pots?

## **Laborers Together With God (1 Cor. 3:9)**

BE thankful that God has guaranteed you a job. For an able-bodied, able-minded person, there is no affliction worse than unemployment. There is never unemployment for the true children of God. They always have full time employment: plenty to do. They are spiritually-minded, and they perceive the vast amount of spiritual labor crying to be done, and the laborers few. And they lovingly rejoice at the God-provided opportunity to be “laborers together with Him.” And they cheerfully set to work at the huge pile, from dawn to dusk, in total, exhilarating satisfaction and enjoyment. They retire at night to sweet repose, serene in the consciousness of a good day’s work done for the eternal, triumphant, ever-advancing divine purpose. Very little result can be seen with the natural eye, but the mighty edifice progresses steadily, stone by stone. What a wonderful blessing that God’s spiritually-minded, spiritually-aware children have an abundance of wholesome, useful, enjoyable work. What a tragedy is slothfulness and unemployment. How sad the poor blind earthly creatures who “don’t know what to do with their time”!

## **We Need God’s Help**

WE need God’s help and guidance every moment: in everything we do, in every step we take—however simple or trivial. This is the whole secret of life. Without this, we do not have a chance. Without this, we are just blind, perishing animals, stumbling out our sad, brief, faceless existence to death and oblivion. Train yourself to keep God in the very forefront of your mind at ALL times. Let Him totally dominate your thoughts. Make pleasing Him your only motive and desire. Keep pulling your mind back to this, over and over. It will wander, for we are all, and will always be, very much children—but never give up forcing it back. Don’t worry over the failures: we can’t change anything that’s past. Just keep concentrating on the effort. This is reality. This is living. This alone is joy and peace.

## **Give Yourself Wholly To God**

“It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” If He does not, we are nothing. We can put on a good show, but it is only a show. It has no spiritual life or meaning. It is of the flesh. But God will not work in us unless we give ourselves WHOLLY to Him. Why should He? If we don’t have enough affection or sense to do at least that much, why should He bother? There are countless millions of half-hearted “worshippers.” He demands ALL the heart. He will not

compete with rubbish for our affections. He will not share us with folly and the flesh. No true deep human relation can be built on divided affection: why expect a divine one to be? It has to be all or nothing. Only a fool would keep back part of the price in view of the greatness of the reward. God hath no pleasure in fools.

### **Relax—Release Worldly Tensions**

RELAX! The more the eye is relaxed, the further it can see. The more the mind is relaxed, the deeper it can comprehend. The Protestant magic carpet that “Christ did it all” is a pitiful delusion. The glorious scriptural truth that “God WILL do it all” is the secret of eternity. Relax totally into God. Relaxing doesn’t mean resting, or lazying. It means letting all the strain and stress and tension go. It means turning over the mind to eternal rejoicing, keeping the eye focused on the inconceivable glory of the far distant future that is rushing toward us, and will inevitably come. Relaxing isn’t improvidence or indolence or “leaving it all” to some Protestant-invented “substitute.” It is total, joyful, harmonious labor and effort free of all the strain and constriction of the smallness and foolishness of the flesh.

### **Total Dedication To God’s Work**

ZEAL (enlightened zeal) inevitably leads to happiness and peace of mind. Zeal is the conviction that there is a glorious and worthwhile work to be done, and an intense, irresistible enthusiasm to do it—to throw oneself totally into it. Zeal is positive and constructive and upbuilding. It has no room for doubt and discouragement, nor lazy wallowing in self-pity. Human failure does not daunt zeal, for its roots are deeper. Zeal knows with sorrow that narrow is the Way, and few there be that find it. Zeal necessarily grieves at this unnecessary folly: but it knows too that glorious salvation is freely offered and available to all who have the wisdom and the gumption to cut themselves free from the bonds of the flesh and fly to divine heights on the wings of zeal. God calls us to Him. Who will hear?

### **Being Filled With God**

WE are absolutely nothing, except as God chooses to use us in His purpose. All our meaning and value lies in being part of His work. Outside of that, we are empty, uninteresting chunks of flesh, like the cattle. If we wish to have any meaning or permanence—to be anything other than dumb, perishing animals—we must fill our minds with God’s Word, and fill our lives with His service.

## **Get Closer To God**

DO not try attacking your faults and weaknesses one by one. It will not work. It is like cutting just the tops off weeds. It's a losing battle. Rather get closer and closer to God in the atmosphere of your mind and spirit, and let His glory burn the evil out of you. Strive to elevate your mind from natural childish interest in temporalities and trifles to the REAL things, the eternal things, the spiritual eternal things, the things that matter and have meaning. The only way is to get more and more of the Word into your mind and thoughts. The written Word of God is unique on earth today. It is gold: all else is dross. It is Spirit: all else is flesh. For overcoming—and we MUST overcome—there is absolutely no substitute for a mental attitude of which God is the permanent and conscious center. All else will fail.

## **God's Handiwork**

"THE handiwork of God." We hear the expression often. It is a pat phrase on the lips of those who have run off to the woods or to the beach to spend God's time and money enjoying themselves in laziness. We do not condemn the phrase as such. It is fine IF it is coupled with a total life-dedication to the real, handy, WORK of God—the work right to hand, day after day in His service: if it comes from a mind that gives evidence that it has spent much profitable time with God and His work. But, sadly, so often it is just a phrase, a form of words, a conscience-salver: "Here I am, enjoying myself, doing nothing useful for others, playing around, wasting my time, childishly engaged in meaninglessly beating a stupid little ball into a foolish little hole—and, O yes, enjoying the 'handiwork of God'."

## **Flying Above The Storms**

LET us use the emotional momentum of trouble or sorrow or disappointment in this life to raise our spiritual consciousness to the next higher plane. That is what these providential "evils" are for. Take full advantage of their power, and be thankful for them. The jets in the stratosphere fly high above all storms, in the perpetually clear sky and sunshine. So must we, in our deepest inner consciousness. Not that we may necessarily ignore the storms; but we must handle them from an impregnable mental position of stability that is far above their turbulence and uncertainty. Nothing and no one in this life is wholly dependable. Do not build on the flesh. That would be hopeless pessimism, except for the glorious fact that there is Something and Someone that IS totally dependable.

## **Do Always Those Things Which Please Him (John 8:29)**

HAVE only one motive in life: to please God. Get all your pleasure and satisfaction from that. It will, at one stroke, eliminate 90% of your “problems,” and ALL your inner “unhappiness.” Don’t seek praise. Don’t seek status with others. Don’t seek advancement. Don’t seek THINGS. All these pursuits are happiness-robbers. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor pride with praise, nor lust with possession. All these are ashes in the mouth at last. Even of themselves they are stupid, but as set against and displacing spiritual motives and pursuits, they are pure suicide. Check every thought and word, and ask: “Will this please God? Could I at this moment be pleasing Him better?” This wonderfully pacifies and harmonizes and unifies life, and gives it purpose. Set the goal of your life to bring everything into harmony with this, and to eliminate everything out of harmony with it. This is success.

## **As He Thinketh—So Is He**

WHAT we are doing externally is secondary, though important. What we are doing internally is vital: what we are thinking, and what we are thinking about, and what we are thinking about it. What are our purposes and motives for what we do and the decisions we make? Are we just seeking personal self-satisfaction and pleasure or do we want to be a useful part of eternity: something bigger than ourselves?

## **For What Shall We Pray?**

PRAY for zeal. Pray for love. Pray for purity and holiness, and for all the Spirit-fruits that will make you beautiful in God’s sight, and worthy to be preserved among His precious gathered jewels. These are the true possessions and riches to desire: the inner possessions that become part of ourselves and give us value to Him.

## **Total Service**

TOTAL peace and joy for man are found only in total service to God. That is man’s original and “natural” condition. That must be regained. All life must be given to the effort. All else is degeneration and perversion, without promise or hope.

## **The Standard—God’s Truth**

DO not judge the Truth of God by the people you find in it. Judge the people (if judging is necessary) by the Truth. The Truth of God is perfect. It never changes. No one of mortality ever attains to its perfection. The people of God are those alone who are striving and

agonizing toward that perfection, deeply conscious of their own pitiful shortcomings. Wisdom will understand and join them in the struggle.

### **Eternal Joy—Our Eternal Destiny**

GOD in mind at every moment: that is the ideal. Be satisfied with nothing less. We shall forget, and wander, and fail a million times, but we must keep on roughly and doggedly pulling our minds back, over and over and over, until it becomes second nature. This is the only way anything is learned, and this is the greatest of all learning: the only TRUE learning at all. Accept nothing less of yourself, for nothing less is acceptable. Eternity of joy with God is a mighty, glorious, incomprehensible destiny. It is not for the half-hearted, the wavering, timid, double-minded devotees of half-measures and divided interests. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon . . . Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!" The present life is the briefest of moments in the vast sweep of endless time. Its only value and meaning is its once-for-all opportunity of seizing the glories of eternity. Would you stop to play with baubles on a rapidly-sinking ship? You have but the briefest of moments to decide, the smallest of gifts to offer to God in thanksgiving for His goodness: trade it all—gratefully and without hesitation or regret—for the infinite wealth of eternity.

### **Without God We Are Nothing**

PERHAPS the most important thing to pray for is the constant remembrance and awareness that of ourselves we can do nothing: that without God's constantly sought help, nothing we do is of any importance or value. We so easily and almost inescapably keep slipping back into the presumptuous illusion that WE are actually doing something, accomplishing something—that we are of our own ability and wisdom supplying some necessary part of the divine purpose. This is the thinking of the flesh. The spirit—the informed, intelligent spirit-mind—recognizes that it must CONSTANTLY, uninterruptedly, seek guidance every step of the way. But we can never assume we ARE guided. We can never be dogmatic and self-assured. We can only humbly hope and pray that we are. We must always recognize the power and probability of self-deception, and pray to be delivered from it. God can give guidance, and He can give "strong delusion." He is not capricious. His reaction is strictly according to how He is approached—and of recognition of the natural ignorance of the flesh.

## **The True Riches**

SEEK not wealth and pleasure and power. Pray fervently for the real treasures: the treasures of character and personality and relationship to God—for deeper, clearer, stronger faith and vision. Pray for compassion and love and patience and zeal. Pray for knowledge and understanding and wisdom: seek them constantly in the Word. Labor for the imperishable treasures that enrich the mind and the heart, the treasures that become part of yourself forever. External relationships and circumstances are nothing, except as they help to relate us to God and to eternity. Build your character by constant study and self-discipline. Lay up the true riches. Every spiritual thought we think, every spiritual fact we learn, every spiritual deed we do—adds to our true wealth and inner value. We begin life as useless, valueless, empty shells. Most end life as useless, valueless, empty shells: a once-for-all eternal opportunity frittered away in stupid folly. They only are rich who fill themselves with God's freely offered riches of spiritual instruction and transformation. Let us be rich.

## **Be Single-Minded**

WE must want it with all our heart. That is our part. It is not ALL of our part, but it is most of it. God will give us anything, if 1) we want it with ALL our heart, and 2) it is good for us eternally. But we must be total-minded, and we must be single-minded. We are not always conscious that we are double-minded: that our affections are divided: that we want things that are mutually incompatible. We may truly want holiness, but we may be harboring interests and desires, perhaps just seemingly little ones, that are incompatible with holiness—little worldlinesses that seem so inconsequential. This will not do. It will not work. We must go all the way. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." God says He will give him absolutely nothing. But to the totally single-minded, God will give every good and perfect gift. It is sure. He has said so. No good thing will He withhold from those that love Him. But what a tremendous, dominating, exclusive, all-embracing totality that love must be! God absolutely will not share our heart with anyone or anything. All else, all others, must be so completely secondary as to be relatively inconsequential and insignificant. God brooks no rival.

## **Companionship**

DON'T force yourself on others. Don't keep bothering them. Let every man bear his own burden (with God's freely-offered help). If you really HAVE the Truth in your heart, if it totally possesses you (and

there's no hope for anyone without that), then your own company, and God's and the Word's, are all you ever need. Truly, other spiritual companionship is desirable. It is a great blessing from God. Be thankful whenever it comes. Put yourself in the channel of receiving it by being a pleasure to be with: a giver and not a taker. But do not demand it. Be perfectly content, if necessary, without it. Be available to all—to help THEM. But as far as humanly possible, be very sparing of seeking, or expecting, or demanding, their help for YOU. All have their own lives and problems. You can solve yours best by forgetting yourself. Fill your mind and preparations with being ready to help others. Be alive and aware to the needs of others. God will use you as He needs you (and He is always short of such). But if He doesn't, then just patiently wait and prepare for when and if He does. The desire and readiness and patience is YOUR part. Leave GOD's part to Him, in His Own good time. It will come.

### **Eternity—Its Immensity**

DO you realize what ETERNITY means? It means that—if worthy—you will be given a billion years of perfect, joyful life for every SECOND you have spent serving God. And you could make that one hundred billion years—and still be understating it. In the light of this, how can anyone claim to love God and not give Him the total full-time devotion and service that He asks? How can anyone be so cheap and selfish as not to give every possible effort to manifest love and gratitude in service? No wonder the verdict is to the napkin-wrapper—"Thou wicked and slothful servant! Cast him into outer darkness."

### **Whither Goes Your Mind?**

LIFT your mind out of the dust into the sky. It is a lifelong, try-fail-and-try-again process, over and over. Keep forcing the mind back, and up. It does not come easily. The mind is lazy, very lazy, especially in spiritual things. It likes to grovel in the earth. It likes to putter with toys. It likes to be amused, excited, entertained—ANYTHING but work and labor. But, with God's help, the mind is capable of wonderful, glorious, infinitely-joyful things. It is a marvelous device, though made of common clay. How little we use its intended powers! How we waste and degrade and abuse it with our infantile toys and prattle and buffoonery!

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GOD'S greatest gift to us personally is Conscience. And His greatest blessing is a pure conscience, through obedience that comes by love that comes by faith.

## **What Is Our Purpose In Life?**

**PURPOSEFUL.** Be purposeful. Make everything you think, and say, and do, purposeful. Discipline your mind and tongue and actions, and the use of your precious, limited, eternal-life-preparing time. That is the only satisfaction, and the only success. Be a meaningful, completely-harmonized, goal-seeking totality. Do not drift, or gossip, or fritter away life in side-issues and amusements. Every moment is God's. Every moment is golden. Every moment can be spiritual awareness and spiritual joy. God invites us to a magic carpet—far up out of the meaningless humdrum of common cattle. Do not be afraid to board the flight to total divine joy.

## **God Is Not Our Servant**

**PRAYING** is of no use without doing. "Fervent Prayer" is no substitute for fervent action (though it must accompany it). There is no point appealing to God if we are not prepared to put forth total effort ourselves. God is not there as a servant to wait on us, or get us through life easily. He is there to guide and strengthen and encourage and help us in the greatest endeavor and accomplishment possible to man—to transform ourselves from death to life, from flesh to Spirit, from ugliness to beauty. It is a total, tremendous, full-time enterprise. In our brief moment of fleshly existence we are called to eternity: called to eternity by the love of God.

## **Being Part Of The Body Of Christ**

**WE** are obviously not a part of the Body of Christ if our life is not devoted to the service and welfare of the Body of Christ. This is the lesson of the scriptural type of the human body. Every true member of the Body (natural and spiritual) has a use and a purpose. Our ability and physical condition may at times make it quite small: but as long as we have life and consciousness, we must give our most and our best in loving service. This is the very essence of being allowed the infinite privilege of being part of the Christ-Body. It is only for the devoted. We are not part of the Body of Christ if our heart and mind and love are not centered in the body.

## **Walking With God**

**THERE** is no reason why we cannot think of God every minute. There is no reason why we cannot have His will and presence, and the love of Him, always in the forefront of our consciousness. **SOMETHING** has to be there—what better subject of interest and desire? It is

of such—and such only—that He is making up His living jewels out of the vast dead human rockpile. Not of course that they ever achieve this in perfection: but He seeks only those who are deeply conscious that THIS is His desire and their salvation, and who strive totally to bring their weak fleshly minds and bodies into conformity with this perfect, complete unity with Him.

### **True Contentment**

THE Spirit is love, and patience, and giving, and service to others, and forgetfulness of self, and contentment with little, and helping all, and speaking ill of none, and sober wisdom at all times. The Flesh is thinking of self, and wasting God's time getting this world's goods, and hoarding, and seeking pleasure and amusement in the mindless toys and games of the world, and laziness, and drifting. The spiritual mind is always thinking about God and spiritual things, and will lead us to eternal joy with God. The flesh is easy and downhill, with no effort, and lots of empty-headed company and will lead us to eternal death. Only a fool will choose the flesh. Most are fools.

### **Mistakes Can Be Useful**

BE thankful for your stupid mistakes—for they usefully remind you of your natural incompetence and need for help. And that reminds you of your total dependence on God's guidance and direction, in order to do anything useful or worthwhile. And that brings your mind back to where it should have been in the first place, from which it had wandered through the weakness and deceptiveness of the flesh. A "successful," self-satisfied, self-dependent man is a man totally out of touch with the eternal realities which we must ever keep in mind if we are to please God and be His. Be thankful for your stupid mistakes: they're wonderful eye-openers.

### **Pleasures Forevermore**

EVERY minute of your life belongs to God. It is doubly His. It is His to begin with, and you have freely dedicated it to Him in solemn covenant. Do not rob Him: it is folly—He is a jealous God. His holiness and righteousness require that He punish folly in those who have taken on His holy Name before men. And do not rob yourself of the total joy of total service. There is no happiness like the exhausted, restful happiness of the consciousness of a day fully immersed in the divine atmosphere, and fully, energetically spent in the divine service. You have unmeasured treasures of pleasure within hand's reach. Reach out!

Why be satisfied with present passing worldly crumbs and ashes when eternal joy beckons?

### **Love—The Incentive To Please God**

STICK with it! Whatever it is that you want to do, stick with it! Don't just drift, and flutter, and complain. Discipline yourself to keep your mind and effort on the job in hand. That's the only way that anything has ever been accomplished. For this, you must have incentive: powerful driving incentive. The slave's incentive is the task master's lash. It keeps him very attentive to what he is doing. Natural incentives range from terror of that which is bad to strong desire for that which is pleasant and desirable. OUR incentive must rise higher than this. Our driving incentive, like a fire in our bones, must be intense love of and zeal for God, developed by long study and meditation upon His glorious Word and works.

### **The Human Computer—Needs Correct Programming**

MOST people assume that their mind is a built-in, ready-made machine, and that it has all the answers to life, and that whatever they THINK must be correct because they think it with their mind that they have so much faith in. This is nonsense. All you have to begin with is a blank computer with a tremendous bias toward erroneous operation, requiring much sound input to make it useful, and constant checking from without to make it at all reliable. The normal adult mind is a faulty computer filled with rubbish and error. But the case isn't hopeless. God knows our limits, prescribes His remedy, and asks nothing except our poor little faulty best. But it must be our very best—or woe betide us!

### **Grow To The Measure Of Christ's Stature**

THE natural fleshly mind is small, cramped, petty and infantile. This is the natural condition of ALL minds, and few ever advance anything beyond this. There is no point in trying to teach the fleshly mind anything, nor to reason with it. All effort must be devoted toward inducing people (including ourselves) to GROW UP unto Christ, and to develop the breadth and beauty and nobility of the spiritual mind, by constant study of the Word, and meditation, and prayer. Many professedly (or at least presumably) on this course manifest poorer results than some unaided fleshly minds of the world. This is a bit confusing, but should not be surprising, and must not be discouraging. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel."

## **What Shall I Do?**

WE must fill our minds with the Word of God to the fullest extent of our opportunities. Nothing is more pitifully infantile than for anyone in the Truth saying they have "nothing to do." What blindness! There should be an eager, insatiable desire to learn more and more of the marvelous divine record. All its so interesting characters should become more and more real and familiar to us—all its warnings and promises more and more vivid and impressive. One thing only is certain to us: Christ's judgment seat, where we must give open, public account of how we have used or abused our Master's goods: time, talents, property, opportunities. Keep that inevitable day ever before your mind: will it be eternal joy—or shame and eternal death?

## **Seize Eternity**

THERE is no satisfaction except in putting away the flesh, and serving God. There is diversion, there is excitement, there is amusement, truly—but all these are cheap baby things: totally unworthy of mature adults, totally unsatisfying to mature adults. Eternal usefulness is the only justification for existence, and will be found to be the only true joy. A tiny few among mankind will have the wisdom to prepare themselves to be useful to God. All the teeming rest merely exist without living, and at last drop into the dark cold grave forever. Be wise: seize eternity!

## **Choose You This Day**

WE must choose wisdom and reject folly. We are faced with this choice every moment of our lives. All our thoughts, words and actions fall into one category or the other. They will all naturally be in the category of folly (and death) if we do not consciously and deliberately place them in the category of wisdom (and life). This is the constant battle against the diabolos—the devil—our natural selves. This is the required overcoming: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." He that does not overcome shall not inherit anything. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. We must diligently build up the Spirit's lust (desire) by study and meditation and prayer, so that it is stronger than the flesh's lust.

## **Bear Ye One Another's Burdens**

GET your mind off yourself: off your "troubles" and desires and fears, and everything that everyone does or doesn't do to you or for you. Get your mind on wholesome and constructive things. Be a plus and

not a minus. Get your mind on God, and eternity, and God's Word and the needs of others. Grow up. Think big. Learn the joys of love and service. Don't wait to be asked: God HAS done so already. There is no restriction: any number can play (but so few do!). Be a part of Life: real living—and not of Death. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

### **I Must Be About My Father's Business (Luke 2:49)**

WE must be driven and obsessed and extreme and fanatic—but the driving motive power must be love of God and of Christ and of the Brotherhood and of mankind, and the purpose must be study and self-suppression and service. Most people are ciphers, zeros—dead and dull and drifting in small selfishness and shallow satisfactions. This can be the case "in the Truth" as well as out of it: it is the natural way, and very pervasive. It is a refreshing relief to see a man driven by a purpose beyond himself, though all purposes but one are perversions of man's true purpose, and lead only to a common grave with the most purposeless of men. It was said of Christ that "he is mad...that he hath a devil...he is beside himself"... "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up." He is our example. His singleminded intensity was beyond the comprehension of the careless, common crowd. Brethren Thomas and Roberts were wholly obsessed and absorbed with the love of the knowledge and service of God. This is real living.

### **That It May Be Well With Thee (Eph. 6:3)**

Our mind is a marvelous thing. It can do many, many things we do not even dream of. Let us use it to the full: and never, NEVER waste it or degrade it with rubbish. There is no greater folly, crime, or tragedy than perverting the mind from its one, great, intended, life-giving purpose. Cram it full of God, and of love, and of joy and hope, and of communion with the great host of the faithful of the past in the Divine Word. Cram it so full that it will keep welling up and running over. This is our wisdom and our duty, and no one can do it for us. It is done by study and thought and meditation and prayer — steadfastly wrenching the mind ever back from all present emptiness, and disciplining it into profitable, productive, eternal channels. God has given to each of us the most marvelous computer in the world. Are we using it just to play tiddledywinks with death?

### **Desire Accomplished Is Sweet**

LOVE God, and He will give you peace. Serve Him, and He will

give you joy. Give yourself wholly to Him and He will give Himself to you. It is entirely up to you. Nothing outside of you can have any effect on it, except to intensify it. It is not a matter of ability, but of desire. It is not a matter of accomplishment, but of effort. It is not a matter of brains, but of heart. This does not mean that we do not need to study, and learn, and think. It means that a little brain is just as good as a big one—probably much better—if it is wholly devoted to loving and serving and learning about God. Focus totally on God: get Him sharp and clear. Let everything else—EVERYTHING else—fade into the background and get a little hazy: that is, the relatively important things. All the myriad of UNimportant things—let them fade right out into the distant mist. What is important? Very little. What is important when the ship is going down, and the last life-boat is leaving?

### **How Sweet Are Thy Words!**

KEEP filling your mind with the Word. Keep putting it in—as much as you possibly can. You can never be sure it is already enough, because what God will require depends upon the opportunity and ability He gives you, and this is added to day by day. Only your best and fullest efforts are pleasing to Him: total, pure and acceptable sacrifices. Fill your wonderful, God-given mental computer with real meat for it to work on—THEN it will come up with sensible and wholesome and healthy and powerful thoughts, leading to healthy and powerful deeds. Get all the rubbish out of your mind, so it can work smoothly and cleanly on spiritual things. Clean out all the empty, fleshly, present, passing things. GROW UP! Grow up SPIRITUALLY by devotion to the Word. THIS is living; all else is death. Don't be satisfied to be a fleshly baby all your life, like the blind world. Struggle to lift your little mind to the infinite greatness and glory of the Divine Call.

### **With Thy Might (Capacity) (Ecc. 9:10)**

KEEP telling yourself over and over (if it is true—and it is almost certain to be true), there is something I should be doing right now, more important than this, more related to eternity, more helpful to others, more useful to the Truth; less childish, less foolish, less selfish. Some day I will go to bed to sleep and I will be thankful that I have made the effort required, that I will work hard on forever hereafter with satisfaction and joy; and no regret or embarrassment. Perhaps God is watching at this very moment to see if I am suitable for His eternal use and pleasure; whether the deepest recesses of my heart are fleshly or spiritual; whether the natural bent of my heart is fleshly, and

the "spectacle" is but a veneer; or whether the spiritual is the true self; sincerely struggling against the terrible power of the flesh.

Is this moment the watershed of my destiny? Shall I go on from here in prayerful, intelligent, organized spiritual self-discipline or drift week by week into the cosy valley of death; or put ineffectual sociality between both? Take your life firmly in hand and give it unto the Lord. There may be NO tomorrow. For millions there will not be, and will never be again. Today is eternally appealing, and God may have decided today that we have had tomorrow enough.

(Note: The above was the last "filler" brother Growcott wrote before his death on April 16, 1981.)



# Index

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## A

A Perverse And Crooked Generation (Deut. 32:5) .....	41
A Workman That Needeth Not To Be Ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15) .....	13
Abound To Every Good Work (2 Cor. 9:8) .....	12
Abound Yet More And More In Knowledge (Philip. 1:9) .....	40
All Her Paths Are Peace (Prov. 3:17) .....	26
All My Salvation And All My Desire (2 Sam. 23:5) .....	24
All Nations Before Him Are As Nothing (Isa. 40:17) .....	16
All Their Heart And All Their Soul (2 Kings 23:3) .....	16
Always Abounding In The Work Of The Lord (1 Cor. 15:58) .....	79
Apply Thine Heart Unto Instruction (Prov. 23:12) .....	61
As A Young Man Marrieth A Virgin (Isa. 62:5) .....	49
As He Thinketh—So Is He .....	85

## B

Be Blameless As The Steward Of God (Titus 1:7) .....	1
Be Content (Heb. 13:5) .....	34
Be Not Carried Away With Divers And Strange Doctrines (Heb. 13:9) .....	21
Be Not Faithless, But Believing (John 20:27) .....	5
Be Not Far From Me, O Lord (Psa. 22:19) .....	43
Be Single-Minded .....	87
Be Swift To Hear, Slow To Speak (James 1:19) .....	78
Be Thankful Unto Him (Psa. 100:4) .....	14
Be Ye Holy—For I Am Holy (Lev. 11:44) .....	63
Be Ye Perfect (Mat. 5:48) .....	80
Be Ye Transformed (Rom. 12:2) .....	20
Bear Ye One Another's Burdens .....	92
Behold It Was Very Good (Gen. 1:31) .....	66
Behold, Now Is The Day Of Salvation (2 Cor. 6:2) .....	11
Being Filled With God .....	83
Being Fruitful In Every Good Work (Col. 1:10) .....	51
Being Part Of The Body Of Christ .....	89
Beware Lest Thou Forget The Lord (Deut. 6:12) .....	50
Blessed Are The Pure In Heart (Matt. 5:8) .....	23
But In Understanding Be Men (1 Cor. 14:20) .....	15

But The End Thereof Are The Ways Of Death (Prov. 16:25) .....	78
Buy The Truth, And Sell It Not (Prov. 23:23) .....	8
By Love Serve One Another (Gal. 5:13) .....	53

## C

Call On The Lord Out Of A Pure Heart (2 Tim. 2:22) .....	18
Cast Ye The Unprofitable Servant Into Outer Darkness (Matt. 25:30) .....	56
Choose You This Day .....	92
Christ Our Passover Is Sacrificed For Us (1 Cor. 5:7) .....	44
Cleanseth Us From All Sin (1 John 1:7) .....	34
Commit Thy Works Unto The Lord, And Thy Thoughts Shall Be Established (Prov. 16:3) .....	10
Companionship .....	87
Comparing Themselves Among Themselves Are Not Wise (2 Cor. 10:12) .....	60
Create In Me A Clean Heart (Psa. 51:10) .....	70

## D

Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts (Titus 2:12) .....	10
Desire Accomplished Is Sweet .....	93
Desire Milk Of The Word That Ye May Grow (1 Pet. 2:2) .....	36
Do All To The Glory Of God (1 Cor. 10:31) .....	1
Do Always Those Things Which Please Him (John 8:29) .....	85
Do Good Unto All Men .....	68
Do Not Keep Back Part Of The Price .....	66
Doth Not Wisdom Cry? (Prov. 8:1) .....	77
Draw Nigh Unto God And He Will Draw Nigh Unto You (James 4:8) .....	37

## E

Effectual Fervent Prayer Of A Righteous Man (James 5:16) .....	33
Esteem Them Very Highly In Love For Their Works Sake (1 Thess. 5:13) .....	6
Eternal Joy—Our Eternal Destiny .....	86
Eternity—Its Immensity .....	88
Every Spirit That Confesseth Not That Jesus Christ Is Come In The Flesh Is Not Of God (1 John 4:16) .....	17

## F

Faith That Works By Love .....	67
Fervent In Spirit, Serving The Lord (Rom. 12:11) .....	14
Filled With The Fulness Of God (Eph. 3:19) .....	28
Flying Above The Storms .....	84
Follow Righteousness .....	74
For His Body's Sake Which Is The Ecclesia (Col. 1:24) .....	27
For Thy Name's Sake, Lead Me And Guide Me (Psa. 31:13) .....	7
For What Shall We Pray? .....	85
From Everlasting To Everlasting, Thou Art God (Psa. 90:2) .....	19

## G

Get Closer To God .....	84
Gird Up The Loins Of Your Mind (1 Pet. 1:13) .....	57
Give . . . Thy Servant An Understanding Heart (1 Kings 3:9) .....	79
Give An Account Of Thy Stewardship (Luke 16:2) .....	59
Give None Offence (1 Cor. 10:32) .....	10
Give Thanks Always For All Things (Eph. 5:20) .....	49
Give Yourself Wholly To God .....	82
God Is Love; He That Dwelleth In Love Dwelleth In God (1 John 4:16) .....	17
God Is Not Our Servant .....	89
God Resisteth The Proud, And Giveth Grace To The Humble (1 Pet. 5:5) .....	13
God The Judge Of All (Heb. 12:23) .....	72
God's Handiwork .....	84
Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain (1 Tim. 6:6) .....	24
Grace Unto You, And Peace From God (2 Thess. 1:2) .....	11
Grow To The Measure Of Christ's Stature .....	91
Grow Up Into Him In All Things (Eph. 4:15) .....	67

## H

Happy Are Ye If Ye Do Them (John 13:17) .....	46
Happy Is He That Hath The God Of Jacob (Psa. 146:5) .....	25
Happy Is The Man That Findeth Wisdom (Prov. 3:13) .....	47
He Had Wasted His Goods (Luke 16:1) .....	8
He Is Our Peace (Eph. 2:14) .....	32

He That Forsaketh Not All That He Hath Cannot Be My Disciple (Luke 14:33) .....	54
He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things .....	73
He Will Be Our Guide (Psa. 48:14) .....	26
Him Only Shalt Thou Serve (Matt. 4:10) .....	14
His Secret Is With The Righteous (Prov. 3:32) .....	70
His Word Was In Mine Heart As A Burning Fire (Jer. 20:9) .....	30
Hold Fast The Form Of Sound Words (2 Tim. 1:13) .....	66
Hold Thou Me Up And I Shall Be Safe (Psa. 119:117) .....	37
Hold Up My Goings In Thy Paths (Psa. 17:5) .....	47
Holiness Becometh Thine House, O Lord (Psa. 93:5) .....	5
House Upon A Rock (Matt. 7:24) .....	36
How Sweet Are Thy Words! .....	94
Humble Yourselves In The Sight Of The Lord (James 4:10) .....	53
Humble Yourselves Therefore Under The Mighty Hand Of God (1 Pet. 5:6) .....	73

## I

I Beseech Thee, Show Me Thy Glory (Ex. 33:28) .....	15
I Have Said Ye Are Gods (Psa. 82:6) .....	55
I Must Be About My Father's Business (Luke 2:49) .....	93
I Press Toward The Mark (Philip. 3:14) .....	72
I Rejoice In Thy Salvation (1 Sam. 2:1) .....	4
I Said, Thou Art My God (Psa. 31:14) .....	2
I Saw That Wisdom Excelleth Folly (Ecc. 2:13) .....	3
I Will Joy In The God Of My Salvation (Hab. 3:18) .....	55
I Will Offer To Thee The Sacrifice Of Thanksgiving (Psa. 116:17) .....	48
If Ye Have Faith And Doubt Not (Matt. 21:21) .....	12
If Ye Live After The Flesh Ye Shall Die (Rom. 8:13) .....	60
In Doctrine Showing Uncorruptness (Titus 2:7) .....	21
In Everything Give Thanks (1 Thess. 5:18) .....	78
In My Flesh Dwelleth No Good Thing (Rom. 7:8) .....	58
In The Day Of Adversity, Consider (Ecc. 7:14) .....	4
It Is More Blessed To Give Than To Receive (Acts 20:35) .....	25
It is Your Father's Good Pleasure To Give You The Kingdom (Luke 12:32) .....	19

## J

Joy Overflowing .....	81
Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged (Matt. 7:1) .....	45
Judge Righteous Judgment (John 7:24) .....	22

## K

Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God (Jude 21) .....	47
--	----

## L

Laborers Together With God (1 Cor. 3:9) .....	82
Labour Therefore To Enter Into That Rest (Heb. 4:11) .....	47
Lay Up For Yourselves Treasures In Heaven (Matt. 6:20) .....	66
Lead Me In The Way Everlasting (Psa. 139:24) .....	8
Let A Man Examine Himself (1 Cor. 11:28) .....	71
Let Him Eschew Evil, And Do Good (1 Pet. 3:11) .....	66
Let This Mind Be In You (Philip. 2:5) .....	81
Let Thy Light And Truth Be Guides To Me .....	62
Let Us . . . Serve God Acceptably (Heb. 12:28) .....	52
Let Us Cleanse Ourselves From All Filthiness (2 Cor. 7:1) .....	79
Let Us Not Therefore Judge One Another (Rom. 14:13) .....	41
Let Us Put On The Armour Of Light (Rom. 13:12) .....	5
Let Your Joy Be Full .....	64
Look Unto The Lord .....	81
Lord . . . Hath Redeemed My Soul Out Of All Adversity (2 Sam. 4:9) .....	9
Love And Tribulation .....	67
Love Is Of God .....	76
Love Never Faileth (1 Cor. 13:8) .....	2
Love The Lord Thy God With All Thine Heart (Matt. 22:37) .....	68
Love Ye Your Enemies And Do Good (Luke 6:35) .....	6
Love—The Incentive To Please God .....	91

## M

Make Your Calling And Election Sure (2 Pet. 1:10) .....	78
Making Mention Of You In Our Prayers (Eph. 1:16) .....	1
Many Are Called, Few Are Chosen (Matt. 20:16) .....	74
Many That Are First Shall Be Last (Matt. 19:30) .....	31
Marriage Is Honourable In All (Heb. 13:4) .....	74
Marriage—In The Lord (1 Cor. 7:39) .....	25

Mistakes Can Be Useful .....	90
My Heart And My Flesh Crieth Out For The Living God (Psa. 84:2) .....	50
My Soul Longeth For The Courts Of The Lord (Psa. 84:2) .....	33
My Soul Shall Be Joyful In The Lord (Psa. 35:9) .....	56
My Soul Thirsteth For God (Psa. 42:2).....	8
My Soul, Wait Thou Upon God (Psa. 62:5) .....	54

## N

Narrow Is The Way Which Leadeth Unto Life (Matt. 7:14) .....	29
No Man Can Serve Two Masters (Matt. 6:24) .....	17
None Upon Earth That I Desire (Psa. 73:25) .....	35
Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done (Luke 22:42) .....	48
Nothing Shall Offend Them (Psa. 119:165) .....	45

## O

O Lord, Truly I Am Thy Servant (Psa. 116:6) .....	72
O Love The Lord All Ye His Saints (Psa. 31:23) .....	31
Offer Unto God Thanksgiving (Psa. 50:14) .....	2
Our Fellowship Is With The Father (1 John 1:3) .....	51
Ourselves Also Were Sometimes Foolish (Titus 3:3).....	42

## P

Peace Of God (Philip. 4:7) .....	52
Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear (1 John 4:18) .....	39
Perfect Peace (Isa. 26:3) .....	70
Pleasures Forevermore .....	90
Pray Without Ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17) .....	45
Precious In The Sight Of The Lord Is The Death Of His Saints (Psa. 116:15) .....	19
Present Yourself Wholly Unto God .....	65
Provoke Unto Love And Good Works (Heb. 10:24) .....	55
Pure Religion And Undeiled (James 1:27) .....	2
Purge Away Thy Dross (Isa. 1:25) .....	20
Put Not Trust In Men (Psa. 146:3) .....	64

## R

Receive The Engrafted Word (James 1:21) .....	47
Redeeming The Time (Eph. 5:16) .....	50
Rejoicing In Hope; Patient In Tribulation (Rom. 12:12) .....	7

Relax—Release Worldly Tensions .....	83
Renewed In The Spirit Of Your Mind (Eph. 4:23) .....	42
Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15) .....	62

## S

Safety Is Of The Lord (Prov. 21:31) .....	37
Seek Out Wisdom (Ecc. 7:25) .....	32
Seek Peace And Pursue It (Psa. 34:14) .....	36
Seek Ye The Lord (Isa. 55:6) .....	77
Seize Eternity .....	92
Serve The Living And True God (1 Thess. 1:9) .....	5
Serve The Lord With Gladness (Psa. 100:2) .....	39
Seven Times A Day Do I Praise Thee (Psa. 119:164) .....	23
She That Liveth In Pleasure Is Dead While She Liveth (1 Tim. 5:6) .....	71
Study To Show Thyself Approved Unto God (2 Tim. 2:15) .....	61
Subject To Vanity (Rom. 8:20) .....	78

## T

Take Heed That Ye Be Not Deceived (Luke 21:8) .....	15
Teach Us To Apply Our Hearts Unto Wisdom (Psa. 90:12) .....	62
Teaching Every Man In All Wisdom (Col. 1:28) .....	9
That It May Be Well With Thee (Eph. 6:3) .....	93
The Desire Of Our Soul Is To Thy Name (Isa. 26:8) .....	76
The Flesh Is Deceitful .....	64
The Flesh Lusteth Against The Spirit (Gal. 5:17) .....	3
The Fullness Of Him That Filleth All In All (Eph. 1:23) .....	11
The Greatest Blessing .....	60
The Human Computer—Needs Correct Programming .....	91
The Joy Of The Lord Is Your Strength (Neh. 8:10) .....	28
The Knowledge Of The Truth (2 Tim. 3:7) .....	34
The Lord Hath Set Apart Him That Is Godly For Himself (Psa. 4:3) .....	20
The Lord Is My Helper (Heb. 13:6) .....	15
The Love Of Many Shall Wax Cold (Matt. 24:12) .....	51
The Peace Of God .....	75
The Rock Of My Strength, And My Refuge, Is In God (Psa. 62:7) .....	69
The Sacrifices Of God Are A Broken Spirit (Psa. 51:17) .....	18
The Seed Should Spring And Grow Up (Mark 4:27) .....	67
The Standard—God's Truth .....	85

The True Riches .....	87
The Zeal Of Thine House .....	80
Therefore Choose Life (Deut. 30:19) .....	53
They Are Without Excuse (Rom. 1:20) .....	34
They Rest Not Day And Night, Saying Holy, Holy, Holy (Rev. 4:8) .....	54
They Shall Be All Taught Of God (John 6:45) .....	69
They Shall Prosper That Love Thee (Psa. 122:6) .....	59
They That Seek The Lord Shall Not Want (Psa. 134:10) .....	3
Things Not Seen Are Eternal (2 Cor. 4:18) .....	44
Things Too Wonderful For Me (Job 42:3) .....	32
Think Not Highly Of Yourself .....	65
This Is Life Eternal, To Know Thee, The Only True God (John 17:3) .....	30
This Is The Day Which The Lord Hath Made (Psa. 118:24) .....	78
This Is The Way—Walk Ye In It (Isa. 30:21) .....	63
Thou Shall Worship The Lord Thy God (Matt. 4:10) .....	45
Through The Valley Of the Shadow Of Death (Psa.23:4) .....	1
Thy Face, Lord, Will I Seek (Psa. 27:8).....	69
Thy Word Is A Lamp Unto My Feet (Psa. 119:105) .....	35
Thy Word Is Truth (John 17:17) .....	18
To Be Spiritually Minded Is Life And Peace (Rom. 8:6) .....	75
To Such As Keep His Covenant (Psa. 103:18) .....	39
To Tell Or Hear Some New Thing (Acts 17:21) .....	33
Total Dedication To God's Work .....	83
Total Service .....	85
Tribulation Worketh Patience (Rom. 5:3) .....	13
True Contentment .....	90
Try Me And Know My Thoughts (Psa. 139:23) .....	2
Turn Ye Now From Your Evil Ways (Zech. 1:4) .....	48

## W

Walk Humbly With Thy God (Mic. 6:8) .....	35
Walk Worthy Of The Lord (Col. 1:10) .....	58
Walking With God .....	89
We Need God's Help .....	82
What Is Our Purpose In Life? .....	89
What Man Is He That Desireth Life? (Psa. 34:12) .....	33
What Shall I Do? .....	92
Whatsoever A Man Soweth, That Shall He Reap (Gal. 6:7) .....	29
When A Man's Ways Please The Lord (Prov. 16:7) .....	57

When Ye Have Done All . . . Are Unprofitable Servants (Luke 17:10) .....	3
Whither Goes Your Mind? .....	88
Who Art Thou That Judgest Another? (James 4:12) .....	9
Whoremongers And Adulterers God Will Judge (Heb. 13:4) .....	38
Whosoever Forsaketh Not All (Luke 14:33) .....	32
Why Art Thou Disquieted In Me? (Psa. 48:5) .....	43
Wisdom is Profitable To Direct (Ecc. 10:10) .....	16
With Goodwill Doing Service (Eph. 6:7) .....	38
With My Whole Heart Have I Sought Thee (Psa. 119:10) .....	6
With Thy Might (Capacity) (Ecc. 9:10) .....	94
Without Counsel Purposes Are Disappointed (Ecc. 12:22) .....	4
Without God We Are Nothing .....	86
Work Out Your Own Salvation (Philip. 2:12) .....	3

## Y

Ye Are Bought With A Price (1 Cor. 6:20) .....	46
Ye Ask And Receive Not Because Ye Ask Amiss (James 4:3) .....	4
Your Labour Is Not In Vain In The Lord (1 Cor. 15:58) .....	55
Your Work Of Faith And Labour Of Love .....	65