

## RAIN FELL ON THE EARTH

The Lord said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. Take with you seven of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and two of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, and also seven of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made."

And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him.

Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month – on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. Gen 7:1-12



Noah is commended because of his faith. At the age of 500 Noah and his sons began to build that enormous ark. After a hundred plus years, during the 600<sup>th</sup> year of Noah's life, the flood came. Second Peter 2:4 tells us that Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. Day-after-day, year-after-year for one hundred and ten years, Noah warned the Lord saw how great the wickedness of the people on the earth had become. Not some but every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil all the time. God was grieved that He had made mankind, and His heart was filled with pain (Gen. 6:5-7).

As He did with Ezekiel, God made Noah's forehead like the hardest stone, harder than flint; telling him:

“Do not be afraid of them or terrified by them though they are rebellious. Surely, they are not willing to listen to you because they are not willing to listen to Me.”



We are told faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Heb. 11:1). By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (Heb. 11:7).

God made Noah a wall to the people, a fortified wall of bronze. Though they fought against him, they did not overcome Noah because God was with him to rescue and save him. The same promise He makes to everyone and anyone who is willing to listen, to take action without knowing the outcome.

The following information was taken from the article “Top 14 Bible Verses: Faith and Action,” written by Bob Jackson and posted on the website Everyday Servant. A little scary? What does it take for that first step to be taken?

Courage? Courage based on...our own strength? Our own knowledge? Our own intelligence? Our own interests? How about courage based

on faith. Faith in the strength of God....Faith in the goodness of God...Faith that God knows what's best...If we can't take that first step without knowing the outcome...Is it really faith?

If we have faith in God our faith will lead to action...If we must know exactly what will happen...Then we do not have real faith...Except perhaps in ourselves...Read these verses about faith in God...Faith that leads to action:

What good is it, my beloved, if someone says they have faith but does not have works? Can faith save them? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. James 2:14-17

If anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, they are like a person who looks intently at their natural face in a mirror. They look at themselves and go away and at once forget what they are like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no

hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, they will be blessed in their doing. James 1:23-25

Someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. James 2:18

Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3:18

Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for them it is sin. James 4:17

Whatever you do, work whole-heartily, as for the Lord and not for people knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ Jesus. Colossians 3:23-24

Be doers of the Word (obeying the message), and not merely listeners, betraying yourselves (into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth). James 1:22

As the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. James 2:26

God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7

They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. 1 Timothy 6:18-19

He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. Daniel 11:32

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are ever-increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or

unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter  
1:5-8

<https://everydayservant.com/%EF%BB%BFtop-14-bible-verses-faith-and-action/>



As these booklets I share become more than just a hope and aspiration, Holy Spirit points to the Beginning – to Genesis. The first few chapters provide a clear-cut explanation for the reason the world and the nature of mankind became fallen, captivated (tempted, self-interested, felled) by a lie (distortion, exaggeration, half-truth).

The purpose of deception is for errors in judgment to be made. The consequence for Adam's error in judgment may have been colossal, but the choices of thought and speech and behavior of those who have followed invited the monstrous purpose of evil to come upon mankind: kill and steal and destroy. So egregious was their behavior God was grieved, His heart was filled with pain (Gen. 6:6).



All the goodness and loving-kindness God shared could not prevent the heart's desire for more. We each know the pain of being able to do no more than watch someone we love hurt themselves. Well welcome

to God's pain. God sends His Word telling us to turn from evil and do good, to seek peace and pursue (seek, follow, run after) it (Ps. 34:14).

However, if we choose to follow the dictates of our heart the evil one will ensure the consequence for deception (insincerity, treachery, deviousness) is experienced: Be - ever hearing, but never understanding. Be - ever seeing, but never perceiving. When Truth is rejected, ignored or misinterpreted (bent, veiled, distorted), a heart becomes calloused, ears are made dull and eyes remain closed.

When we have no interest in discovering what errors or deceptions or distortions we have accepted, we are bound to be rigid (immovable, demanding, unyielding). Our own thoughts and beliefs and opinions that we've housed so deeply in the chambers of our heart, cause us to dwell in dark dankness. Brewing (inciting, cultivating, advancing) in unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment, shame, condemnation...those things bred by negativity.

The key to freedom is not in the hand of the independent heart and mind, but within the hand of those who make the choice to be God-dependent. When Truth is considered (viewed, regarded, esteemed) then eyes receive the might to see, ears receive the capacity to hear and



hearts receive the power to understand – to turn from fear and pridefulness and sin; to turn (rest, digest, drink-in) what God bestows - Loving-Kindness and Humility and Forgiveness - and be healed (Isa. 6:9-10).



And this is God's desire that we experience inner healing. That we are delivered of those heavy burdens whether it's guilt or shame, fear or condemnation, religion or legalism...whatever weighs us down because it's for freedom that Christ sets us free (Gal. 5:1a).

So I pray as we continue on this journey of renewal and recovery the Spirit of Truth frees us from chains of words that have bound us to error and deception. I pray God's Word lifts those yokes of slavery to the ways of this world so an uninhibited stance can be taken.

A stance of faith and freedom and confidence to approach God, Who wants us not to be discouraged by sufferings (Eph. 3:12-13); for sadly, there are many hardships we go through before entering His kingdom. God sends us what we need Knowledge, Understanding and Discernment so we can stand against the devil's schemes (Eph. 6:11).



God sends His Word to dwell within us to strengthen and encourage (Acts 14:22) and clothe us with Jesus instead of immorality and jealousy, contention and corruption. With the Word of God dwelling in our thoughts and opinions and beliefs we can set aside any deed of darkness because Holy Spirit is helping us to put on the armor of Light.

So instead of gratifying those desires of our sinful nature we (Rom.13:12-14) will learn and train and practice self-control. God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who clothes us with faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet (1 Thess. 5:8-9) so we not only think but confidently profess:

- God exists and I matter to Him
- We admit we are powerless
- We admit in certain areas our lives have become unmanageable
- We believe God will restore us with Love, a Sound Mind and Power

- We believe He will help us stay committed to this decision to put all of who we are into His possession and safekeeping
- We believe the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen us as we make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves
- Because of God's loving-kindness we are willing to admit to God, to ourselves and another person the exact nature of our wrongs
- With Truth as our solid foundation we are entirely ready to have God remove all our defects of character
- Having received faith and hope and love for the Surety God has given we humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings
- Having gained knowledge and insight and understanding we make a list of anyone we have harmed, and become willing to make an amends to them all
- Having gained confidence and trust in God's refuge we step out with the mindset we are doing this with God and for His glory to make those amends whenever possible unless to do so would cause injury to others
- We embrace our covenant relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by continuing to take a personal moral inventory, and when we are wrong being prompt to admit it

- We invest in our relationship with God by communicating through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with Him seeking knowledge of His will and the power of grace to carry that out
- We seek Revival, Restoration and Reconciliation a spiritual awakening as a result of taking steps to carry God's message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs



The blessings of God – Truth, Wisdom, Insight, Discernment, Prudence (attentiveness, caution, deliberateness) – causes a person to be strongly rooted (abiding, enduring, embedded) like a tree planted by the water, sending its roots out by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes, because its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought, and never fails to bear fruit (Jer. 17:7-8).

God's Word gives us much to think about so we can reconsider what we know about God and ourselves. We are invited to join His mission on earth "IN RE," rehear, reconsider, redefine, reimagine, reexamine with regard to God's Word and our way of life. That we may know God is Love; He takes no pleasure in wickedness; nor will evil dwell with Him (Ps. 5:4 NKJV).



God is Light; in Him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). He lives in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 1:5), for the Lord God is a Sun and Shield. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly (Ps. 84:11 AMP). God is a consuming fire. His glory covers the heavens. His brightness is like the sunlight; rays stream from His hand and there in the sun-like splendor is the hiding place of His power (Hab. 3:3-4 AMP).

He is a jealous God (Deut. 4:24), Who will not give His glory to another or His praise to idols (Isa. 42:8). The land mourns and multitudes who live in it waste away guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord. There is cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; (like the springs that broke forth on the earth) blood shed follows bloodshed, for all bounds are broken. Where is faithfulness and love and acknowledgment of God (Hos. 1:2 & Hos 4:1-3)?



Yes, the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a zealous (fervent, passionate, demonstrative) God (Ex. 34:14). He is mighty, and yet despises no one nor regards anything as trivial; His is mighty in power of

understanding and heart (Job. 36:5 AMP). His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness sustained Him. He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as with a cloak (Isa. 59:16-18).

Therefore, I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which He is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us – yes, the many good things He has done according to His compassion and many kindnesses (Isa. 63:7). That you may know the message God sent proclaiming the Good News of peace through Jesus Christ, Who is Lord of all (Acts 10:36).

Let the nations give glory to the Lord, and declare His praises. For the Lord went forth like a mighty man. He stirred up His zeal like a man of war. He cried out:

“Yes!”

So shout aloud, for He prevailed against His enemies (Isa. 42:12-13 NKJV). God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with Holy Spirit and power,

and He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him (Acts 10:38).



Yes, God is mighty, and firm in His purpose (Job 36:5 NIV). Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Who has ever given to God, that He should repay them? For, from Him and through Him and to Him are all things (Rom. 11:34-36). He alone stretched out the heavens, and spread out the earth by Himself. Your Redeemer Who formed you in the womb (Isa. 44:24).

Sing for joy, O heavens, for the zeal of the Lord has done this; shout aloud, O earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all you trees, for the Lord has redeemed Jacob, He displays His glory in Israel (Isa. 44:23) and says:

“Surely they are My people, and so I became their Savior. In all their distress, I too was distressed. In love and mercy I redeemed them. I lifted them and carried them all the days of old. Yet they rebelled and grieved Holy Spirit.”

“Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear Me and keep My commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! For what does righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can Light have with darkness? What harmony is there between God and Belial? What do the people of God have in common with unbelievers? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?”

“Yes, from ancient days I am He. No one can deliver out of My hand. When I act, who can reverse it? With everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you. I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you. I am zealous for Jerusalem and Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her!”

Isa. 63:8-10, Deut. 5:29, 2 Cor. 6:14-16, Isa. 43:13, Isa. 54:8, Isa. 44:22, Zech. 1:14  
NKJV



God revealed just how zealous He is for mankind, when He sent His Son into the world to be lifted up on that cross. Yes, God so greatly



loved and dearly prized the world that He gave up His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life (John 3:16 AMP).

Let us be zealous to know the Lord (to appreciate, give heed to, and cherish Him). Yes, let us see (recognize, be acquainted with and understand) Him. His going forth is prepared and as certain as the dawn, and He will come to us as the heavy rain, as the latter rain that waters the earth (Hos. 6:3 AMP).

I will always remind you of these things, even though you may know them, and may be firmly established in the Truth you now have (2 Peter 1:12). For most blessed are they whose hope and confidence and trust is in the Lord (Jer. 17:7). Who join their voices with the Samaritans to say, "I no longer believe just because of what someone else has said, I have discovered for myself, and I know this Man, Christ Jesus, is the Savior of the world," John 4:39).



The decision to invest time with God's Word of Truth, is how interest is accrued. I'm not speaking about the interest of financial fortune and prosperity, but interest in our spiritual well-being. As we taste the

goodness of the Lord we come to see (notice, realize, expect) to be blessed for taking refuge (shelter, protection, sanctuary) in Him (Ps. 34:8).

Surely, we have taken more than an interest in what disheartens and discourages. We have consumed the “bread” of negativity - bias, offense and malice to become consumed by those things “bred” by negativity - resentment or hatred or lust... which causes a loss of dignity, honor and confidence, such damages to self-worth only God can truly repair. These are a few dividends God bestows:

- A crown of beauty instead of ashes
- The oil of joy for mourning
- A garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness
- God’s people will receive a double portion instead of their shame
- They will rejoice in their inheritance instead of disgrace



Everlasting joy will be bestowed on those (Isa. 61:3a&7) who don’t just proclaim their knowledge of the Lord; instead, their faith and actions will be working together (James 2:22a NKJV) to do His will with this heart-felt desire - to glorify His name in all we do (Isa. 26:8 TLB).

God's chosen people will not be giving thought to gratifying the desires of the sinful nature; instead, they are clothing themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14).

For they too like Peter have come to realize, "Lord, to who shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God," John 6:68. With the word of Christ dwelling in us richly we can clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (NIV). Not holding onto offense or grudges; instead, ready to forgive for this is what the Lord (TLB) so graciously has done for us.

God has given us this new kind of life for practicing tenderhearted mercy. And, because of His deep love and concern for us (TLB), He calls us to be peaceful and to be ever thankful for making the decision to let Love guide our life and the peace of Christ to rule in our soul (Col. 3:12-15).

Beloved, those chosen by God are careful to follow His instructions. We're working out our salvation (NIV) by doing the good things that result from being saved, obeying God with deep reverence, shrinking back from all that might displease Him. For God is at work within us, helping us want to obey Him, and then helping us do what He wants (Phil. 2:12-13 TLB).



In the Old Testament God spoke through prophets like Zechariah:

“You who now hear these words spoken by the Prophets who were there when the foundation was laid for the house of the Lord Almighty, let your hands be strong so the temple may be built.”

Zech. 8:9

God has distinguished mankind with privilege (approving, authorizing, empowering) life to be shared in relationship with Him. So we ought always to thank God, from the beginning He chose us to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in His Word of Truth (2 Thess. 2:13).

Paul wrote, Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you? Yes, by the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder. No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 3:16,10-11); for it is written in the Prophets: 'They will be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from Him comes to Jesus (John 6:45).



We come as building stones for the construction of a sanctuary vibrant with Life, in which we are to serve as holy priests offering Christ-approved lives up to God, Who said:

“Look! I’m setting a Stone in Zion, a Cornerstone in the place of honor. Whoever trusts in this Stone as a foundation will never have cause to regret it.”

To you who trust the Lord, He’s a Stone to be proud of (1 Peter 2:5-7 Message). For God has chosen to make known to you the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27)

So don’t be afraid, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32). Therefore, stand firm and hold to the teachings that have been passed on to you, for God called you to this through the Gospel so you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 2:14-15).

And, with this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of His calling, and that by His power He may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith (2 Thess. 1:11). Believing your body is a temple for Holy Spirit, Who you received from God, and that He lives in you (1 Cor. 6:19).



Yes, God lives in us, and His love is made complete in us (1 John 4:12). Those who obey His commands live in God, and He in them. And this is His command to believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another (1 John 3:23-24). So be of good courage; be strong, and do everything in love (1 Cor. 16:13-14) kindness, thoughtfulness, appreciation and respect for one another.

God has given us His Spirit so we can know that we live in Him, and He in us. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them, and they in God. So we know and can rely on the love God has for us (1 John 4:13-15).

We are beloved by the Lord, so stand firm for the Lord Himself and God our Father, Who loves us and by His grace has given us eternal

encouragement and good hope to encourage our heart and strengthen us in every good deed and word (2 Thess. 18-17).

For God paid a very high price to make us His, so we always should be willing to honor Him by remembering our body is a temple for Holy Spirit. We don't own ourselves (1 Cor. 6:18-19). In Jesus the whole building is joined together and rising to become a holy temple in the Lord. In Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit (Eph. 2:22-22).

This is why you are to honor God with your body (1 Cor. 6:18-20): So the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and His beloved Son Jesus our Lord (2 Thess. 1:12).



Through the Word, Christ Jesus, we learn how to be a friend to God. We have lived our lives before knowing Christ in enmity (rancor, hostility, estrangement) with God because of our friendship with the world.

Jesus, God's Word of Life, is hated because He testifies to all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life – these are not of the Father, but of the world (1 John 2:16) and the things they tempt to be done are evil (John 7:7).

The Scriptures have not said this in vain, “The Spirit Who God sends to dwell in us yearns jealously.” But God gives us more grace to be humble for He resists the proud (James 4:5-6). God gave people His law so our sinful behaviors could be seen.

However, without knowledge and understanding of God and His Word and how we have been conditioned to be worldly-minded more and more of what is wrong continues to be committed. Praise God, for through Jesus His wonderful grace became much more abundant.

Just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through the Lord, Christ Jesus (Rom. 5:20-21 NLT).

And those who choose to receive from God Holy Spirit, so He can dwell in them, come to know through experience God is equipping us



with everything good for doing His will so He may work in us what is pleasing to Himself, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory forever and ever (Heb. 13: 21).



Holy Spirit is always working in us to help us humble our prideful ways under God's mighty hand. He reminds us to cast all our anxiety on God because He cares for us. He is always encouraging us to be self-controlled and alert because our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion just looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:6-8).

Holy Spirit works in us to make us to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power (Eph. 6:10). Again and again He brings to us the Word of God Almighty (Zech. 8:18) so the sons of God would be made strong in the grace and truth that are in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 2:1).

That we, the temples of Holy Spirit, would know how we ought to conduct ourselves, for we are the Church of the living God, Who is the pillar and foundation of the Truth (1 Tim. 3:15).

Yes, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are His," and "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness," 2 Tim. 2:19.

So come dance the waltz of life with Jesus leading. This is not a race but a marathon so run to win!

All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So run with purpose in every step (1 Cor. 9:24-16). Talk with God and meditate on His Word, for surely your conscious contact with Him will be improved.

Ask Him for knowledge of His will for your life and the power to carry that out. Pray for a spiritual awakening so all that God has for you will be received, and with boldness tell others how great our God truly is!



Yes, run every step with purpose. Don't just shadowbox. Discipline your body like an athlete, training it to do what it should (1 Cor. 9:24-26) with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord (Eph. 6:4). For this is how we train ourselves to be godly. Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and the life to come (1 Tim. 4:7-8 NLT).

Beloved, if our conscience does not accuse us (if they do not make us feel guilty and condemn us), we have confidence (complete assurance and boldness) before God (1 John 3:21 AMP).

We can come forward and draw near with true, sincere hearts by faith (Heb. 10:22 AMP) that asserts the answer lies in Christ, Who came to earth as a Man, was proven spotless and pure in His Spirit, was served by angels, was preached among the nations, was accepted by people everywhere, and was received up again to His glory in heaven (1 Tim. 3:16 TLB).

Actually, this is an order from God: We should believe in (put our faith and trust in and adhere to and rely on) the name of His Son Christ Jesus, the Messiah, and that we should love (listen to, honor and respect) one another. When we obey God's orders and habitually practice what is pleasing to Him we receive from Him whatever we ask.

Everyone who keeps God's commandments (who obey His orders and follows His plan) abides in Him, and He in them. They let Christ be a home to them and they are a home of Christ, and by this we know and understand and have the proof that He lives and makes His home in us by Holy Spirit Who God has given us (1 John 3:21-24 AMP).



You are taught the Holy Scriptures because they give you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our life.

God's Word corrects our errors in judgment, and teaches us Truth so we can do what is right. God sent His Word to prepare and equip His people to do every good work (2 Tim. 3:15-17 TLB).

We are in training to BE still, and know that Jesus is God; He is being exalted among the nations; He is being exalted in the earth. The Lord Almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our Fortress (Ps. 46:10-11). The Lord assures us:

*"If I were to glorify (magnify, praise and honor) Myself, I would have no real glory, for My glory would be nothing and worthless. (My honor must come to Me from My Father.) It is My Father Who glorifies Me."*

John 8:54 AMP



God exalted Jesus to His own right hand as Prince and Savior that He might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to those who come to Him (Acts 5:31). The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10). Pontius Pilate was heard to say, "I find no basis for a charge against this Man. However, what I have written, I have written. You take Him and crucify Him," John 19:6&22.

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took His clothes, dividing them into four squares saying, "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened so the Scripture might be fulfilled which said:

"They divided My garments among them,  
And cast lots for My clothing."

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said:

"I am thirsty!"

A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When He had received the drink, He said:

“It is finished!”

With that, He bowed His head and gave up His Spirit (John 19:23-24,28-30).



The Word of Life speaks of God’s eternal gift because “Our Spiritual Life Matters.” Jesus said:

“My food is to do the will of Him Who sent Me and to finish His work. My Father gives you the true Bread from heaven. The true Bread of God is He Who comes down from heaven and gives Life to the world. I am the Bread of Life. Anyone who comes to Me will never go hungry, and those who believe in Me will never be thirsty.”

John 6:32-35

The Word of Truth speaks of the present. A daily gift from God because Our Life Choices Matter. We learn what God’s Word says:

“I told those who saw Me and still they did not believe. Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed. For all the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away.”

“I have come down from heaven not to do My will, but to do the will of Him Who sent Me. And this is the will of Him Who sent Me, that I shall not lose none of all that He has given Me, but raise them up at the last day. For My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.” John 6:36, John 20:29, John 6:37-39.



This is the only work God wants from you. Believe in the One He has sent (John 6:29 NLT). Let us keep a firm grip on the hope and promises God has given that keep us going. God always keeps His Word (Heb. 10:23 Message). So let us keep ours and in everything we do, do it for the glory of the Lord!

Jesus of Nazareth was a Man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know.

This Man was handed over to the jealousy, hostility and violence that a heart of evil harbors. By God's set purpose and foreknowledge Jesus was put to death by nailing Him to the cross. But God, He raised Jesus from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for Death to keep its hold on Him.

God's Holy Spirit set the Word of Life in David so we too could know this about "Mashiah," a Hebrew word that means "Messiah," "Anointed," and gives a perfect description of Christ Jesus, Who fulfilled Adonai's promise of deliverance and salvation for mankind:

"I saw the Lord always before Me. Because He is at My right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore My heart is glad and My tongue rejoices; My body also will live in hope, because You will not abandon Me to the grave, nor will You let Your Holy One see decay. You have made known to Me the paths of life; You will fill Me with joy in Your presence."

Acts 2:22-28





As Man, Jesus knew these words were spoken so all mankind could know God is our Savior, and the hope of all the ends of the earth. He answers us with awesome deeds of righteousness (Ps. 65:5). As God, Jesus knew these words were spoken so all mankind could know His tender mercy and loving-kindness have ever been from of old. Those who lift up their heart and soul with trust to Jesus as their Lord will never be put to shame.

Know, the Lord confides in those who fear Him, whose hope is in Him all day long as God their Savior, and guides them in His truth. Good and upright is the Lord, He instructs sinners in His ways. The Lord guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His paths. For all His ways are loving and faithful for those who remember to honor the covenant they've made with Him. For the sake of His name He forgives their iniquity, though it is great. The Lord remembers not the sins of their youth and their rebellious ways, for He is good and remembers them according to His love. Those who have their eyes ever on the Lord will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the

land. For the Lord makes His covenant known to them, only He will remove their feet from the snare (Ps. 25:1-15).



The Lord has made it possible for us to look forward to the salvation God has promised. There is no longer any room for doubt. We can tell others that salvation is ours. There is no question that He will do what He says (Heb. 10:22 TLB) because the Lord God is merciful. He has seen our willful ways, yet He says:

“I will heal you; I will lead you also and will recompense you and restore comfort to you. Peace, peace to those who are far off. Who have become corrupt and have made any kind of idol. Who worship man-made gods of wood and stone that cannot see or hear or eat or smell, doing evil in the eyes of God. In the days of your distress and things have happened to you, if you seek the Lord, you will find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

“Peace, peace to those who are near, who have returned to the Lord and obey Him, Who will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant He confirmed by oath. He will

create the fruit of your lips, and heal you making your lips blossom anew with speech in gratitude and thankful praise.”

“But the wicked they are like the troubled sea that cannot find rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace for them. I had concern for My holy name, which has been profaned among the nations.”

“See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you. I will save My people from all their uncleanness. I will show the holiness of My great name. Not for the sake of My people, but for the sake of My holy name I am going to do these things.”

“I will deliver you from all your uncleanness. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do

them. Then you shall dwell in the land and be My people, and I will be your God.”

“The nations shall know that I am the Lord, when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. You will no longer suffer shame and disgrace. The conduct of your evil ways and wicked deeds I will not remember. You will have disgust and loathe your sins and detestable practices.”

“You will put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, to be made new in the attitude of your mind. You will put on the new self, created to be like Christ Jesus. For your sake and on your behalf Jesus sanctified, dedicated and consecrated Himself, that you also may be made righteous and sanctified (dedicated, consecrated, made holy) in Him, God’s Word of Truth.”

“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch, and the nations see your righteousness. Till the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is known with all earnestness, for though He is rich,

for your sake He became poor humbling Himself though being in the very nature - God."

"The One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth, Christ Jesus, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Found in appearance as Man, He became obedient to death - even death on a cross so that you through His poverty might become rich in faith, and inherit the Kingdom His Father promised those who love Him."

"So don't lose heart for the Lord will bring low those things that cause eyes to be haughty. God's Word of Truth will keep your lamp burning for God turns your darkness into light. That you will be rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share, for in this way you lay up treasure for yourself as a firm foundation in heaven, while living a fruitful Christian life as well."

(Isa. 57:17-21), (Deut. 4:25-31), (Ezek. 36:21,29), (Isa. 42:9), (Ezek. 36:25-29 NKJV), (Ezek. 36:29-32), (Eph. 4:22-24), (John 17:10 AMP), (Isa. 62:1-2), (2 Cor. 8:2-9a), (2 Cor. 8:9b), (John 1:10), (Phil. 2:6-8), (2 Cor. 8:9c), (James 2:5), (Ps. 8:27-28), (1 Tim. 6:19 TLB)



May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of Him and Jesus our Lord. By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life.

We have received all of this by coming to know Him, the One Who called us to Himself by means of His marvelous glory and excellence. He enables us to share His divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desire (2 Peter 1:2-4 NLT).

Who is going to harm us if we are eager to do good? Even if we should suffer for what is right, we are blessed. "So do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." In your heart set apart Christ as Lord. He died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God.

Jesus was put to death in the body, but made alive by the Spirit, through Whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.

In that ark only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him.

If Christ has not been raised, then all our talk of Him is useless, your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died believing and trusting God’s Word.

Just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another Man. Just as everything dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new Life (1 Cor. 15:14-22 NLT).

So always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks the reason for the hope that we have. For it is better, if it is God’s will to suffer for doing what is good than for doing what is evil. (1 Peter 3:13-22).



Paul also wrote, I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death, for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (Phil. 1:20-21). I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

For His sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not in having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith (Phil. 3:8-10), though the law is good if one uses it properly.

The law was made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers – and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which He entrusted to me (1 Tim. 1:8-11).





I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection of the dead (Phil. 3:11).

Bearing in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote with the wisdom that God gave him (2 Peter 3:15).

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, Who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service. Even though I once was blasphemous, a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life. Now to the King

eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever (1 Tim. 1:8-17).



Beloved, accept God's words and store up His commands within you, turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding. Call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding. Look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, for then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find knowledge of God (Prov. 2:1-5).

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Prov. 9:10:10). It is the Lord Who gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. If you are wise, godly wisdom will reward you, if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer (Prov. 9:12).

For the Lord holds victory in store for the upright (Prov. 2:7a). Freely and gratuitously by God's grace, we are justified and made upright and in right standing with Him, through the redemption which He has provided us in Jesus (Rom. 3:24 AMP).



Yes, the Lord is a shield to those who walk in integrity, for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones (Prov. 2:7b-8). It is God Who calls us into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and He is faithful. For in Jesus we are given God's grace, and in Him we are enriched in every way – in all our speaking and in all our knowledge – because the testimony about Christ is confirmed in us.

Therefore we do not lack any spiritual gift as we eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus to be revealed. He will keep us strong to the end, so that we will be blameless on the day of our Lord (1 Cor. 1:4-9).

So don't let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3), so it may benefit those who listen (Eph. 4:29).

Therefore dear friends, we are to build ourselves up in our most holy faith, and pray in Holy Spirit (Jude 20) so we can truly understand what is right and just and fair – every good path. So wisdom will enter our heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to our soul.

So discretion will protect us, and understanding will guard us. Then we will come to understand Wisdom will save us from the ways of the wicked, from those whose words are perverse, who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways (Prov. 2:9-14).



In the Gospel a righteousness which God ascribes is revealed, both springing from faith and leading to faith. As it is written, the man who through faith is just and upright shall live and shall live by faith (Rom. 1:17 AMP).

And since we have all sinned and have fallen short of the honor and glory which God bestows His righteousness is what we need. And, this righteousness comes only by believing with personal trust and confident reliance on Christ Jesus. And it is meant for all who believe, for there is no distinction (Rom. 3:22-23 AMP).

The Lord Almighty has determined the people's labor is only fuel for the fire. The nations exhaust themselves for nothing. For the earth will be

filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:13-14); however, those who do not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He has given them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done (Rom. 1:28). Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping (2 Peter 2:3).

For they have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless people.

Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things, but also approve of those who practice them (Rom. 1:29-32).

But thanks be to God, Who always leads those who trust in His Word in triumphal procession in Christ, and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing; to the one we are the fragrance of Life, and to the other the smell of

death (2 Cor. 2:14-16). For they have no excuse because we know that God's judgment against those who do such evil things is based on His Word of Truth.



Judgmental criticism of others is a well-known way of escaping detection in our own crimes and misdemeanors (Rom. 2:1 Message). When a mere man passes judgment on another saying they are wicked and should be punished, they condemn themselves, for those who judge others do the very same things. And we know that God, in His justice, will punish anyone who does such things (Rom. 2:1-2 NLT). For God did not spare even the angels who sinned; He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the Day of Judgment.

God did not spare the ancient world – except for Noah and his family. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood (2 Peter 2:4-5) for forty days and nights.



Roxanne Mann wrote: The number 40 shows up often in the Bible in contexts dealing with judgment or testing. It is understood to be the number of “probation” or “trial.” This doesn’t mean that 40 is entirely symbolic; it still has a literal meaning in Scripture. “Forty days” means “forty days,” but it does seem that God has chosen this number to help emphasize times of trouble and hardship.

<https://walkonwaterfl.com/blogs/roxanes-reflections/40-days>

Fr. Wade Menezes shared: The Holy Scriptures disclose to us the number 40 is used by God to represent a period of testing, preparation and/or judgment. So it is, then, Scripturally speaking – “40 means something,” as it brings to mind such qualities as repentance, newness, preparation (say, for an important work or task), self-examination, transformation, task fulfillment, escape from bondage or slavery (as to sin), nourishment and growth (in spiritual life), and finally, personal fulfillment, such as with redemption and salvation, and ultimately, new generation, rebirth and new life. <https://fathersofmercy.com/the-significance-of-40-in-scripture/>



From the website Scripture Revealed we learn: The Word of God is amazing. Throughout the Scriptures, there are patterns and symmetry that proves it is inspired. We can see God’s designs and patterns not

only through types and parallels, but also in numbers and the meaning of names of people and places. I believe these are part of the “deep things of God.”

1 Cor. 2:7-10 tells us, “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of the world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory!

But, as it is written: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God, He has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God,” (KJV).

It is important to note that parallels and patterns should never be used to form doctrine. However, they should be used to support what has been already revealed by God’s Spirit through the clear teaching of the Word.

- Numbers play an important role in Scripture. The number 40 represents a time of testing, trial or probation. Of all the types and



shadows of the Old Testament, none is as pervasive and important as the shadows revealed in the relationship between “Forty” and the fulfillment of promises.

- The forty days of rain during the flood were the judgments of God. The forty day periods of fasting, testing and communing with God that were faced by Moses and Jesus were a form of God’s judgments. The forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness were also the judgments of God. There is a consistency and pattern that is revealed in Scripture.

<http://www.scripturerevealed.com/bible-studies/numbers-in-scripture-the-number-40/>



The Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority. They live under God’s curse. They have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong.

Such people are as useless as dried-up springs or as mist blown away by the wind. They are doomed to blackest darkness. They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting, with an appeal to twisted sexual desires. They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption, for you are a slave, to whatever controls you.

When people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. They prove the Truth of this proverb: "A dog returns to its vomit." And another which says, "A washed pig returns to the mud," 2 Peter 6-22 NLT.

What the Lord once said about the Levites, His priests, may be considered relevant today:

"My people are ruined because they don't know what's right or true. Because they've turned their back on knowledge. Because they refuse to recognize the revelation of God. The more priests, the more sin! They traded in their glory for shame. The result: You can't tell the people from the priests, the priests from the people."

## Hosea 4:6-7 Message

The Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; the Lord has been exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are those who wait for Him (Isa. 30:18). He will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him, because they trust in Him. In Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength so trust in Him forever (Isa. 26:3-4). Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever (Ps. 125:1 NKJV).



Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable Your servants to speak Your Word with great boldness. Stretch out Your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of Your holy Servant, Jesus. I pray the places where we meet will be shaken. That Holy Spirit fills us with confident assurance to speak the Word of God boldly – the only Way, Christ Jesus.

That all believers would be one in heart and mind. Following the Way with great zeal as they once did, when no one claimed that any of their possessions were their own, but shared everything they had. With the power of Holy Spirit we would continue to testify to the resurrection

of the Lord Jesus with much grace upon us, and that there would be no needy among us.

That we no longer rob God in tithes and offerings; instead, we bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in the house of God, Who says:

“Test Me in this, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. All the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land.”

Mal. 3:8-12



That we are no longer people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption; that we no longer live as those who have forsaken the Lord; that we no longer speak as those who have spurned the Holy One of Israel with turned backs on Him.

People who persist in rebellion as if the whole head is injured, the whole heart afflicted. From the sole of the foot to the top of the head there is no soundness – only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil (Isa. 1:4-6).

“The wounds of My people are dressed as though they are not serious. ‘Peace, peace,’ they say, when there is no peace. Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush.”

“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from Me you evildoers.’”

Jer. 6:14-15, Matt. 7:22-23



In the days of old, prophets like Jeremiah spoke the Word of God: People are crushed, and I am crushed; I mourn and horror grips me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wounds of the people (Jer. 8:21-22).

But God, He sent His Light into the world (John 3:19). The coming of the Lord is as brilliant as the sunrise; rays of light flash from His hands, where His awesome power is hidden (Hab. 3:4 NLT).

Yes, God sent His Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through Him (John 3:16 NLT). The inner healing and deliverance we so desperately need comes to us through Jesus!

God's Word became flesh, and Christ made His dwelling among us (John 1:14). The Lord is your Healer! He forgives all our iniquity, He heals all our diseases (Ps. 103:3 ESV)! He came to restore our relationship with God, to cure the sick and poor in spirit and to heal our wounded souls.

As worshippers of God we must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We must worship God not just with our voices, but with each and every choice and live and do what is pleasing to Him.



The Lord was heard to say:

“Surely, it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I desire mercy, not sacrifice; for I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. Have you not discriminated among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one.”

Matt. 9:12-13, James 2:4, John 8:15

Each person will appear before the judgment seat of Christ that they may receive what is due them for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10).

Jesus is the Shoot Who has come up from the stump of Jesse. From his roots a Branch, Christ the Messiah, will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord rests on Jesus – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord – and He delights in the fear of the Lord.

The Son of Man will not judge by what He sees with His eyes, or decide by what He hears with His ears; but with righteousness He will judge the needy, with justice He will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be His belt, and faithfulness the sash around His waist (Isa. 11:1-5).



Evil doers don't understand the importance of justice, but those who follow the Lord are much concerned about it (Prov. 28:5 TLB). Like an

oracle transgression speaks to the wicked deep in their heart (AMP). For sin lurks deep in the hearts of the wicked, forever urging them on to evil deeds. They have no fear of God to hold them back. Instead, in their conceit, they think they can hide their evil deeds and not get caught. Everything they say is crooked and deceitful; they are no longer wise and good. They lie awake at night to hatch their evil plots instead of planning how to keep away from wrong.

But, Your steadfast love, O Lord, is as great as all the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your justice is as solid as God's mountains. Your decisions are as full of wisdom as the oceans are with water. You are concerned for men and animals alike. How precious is Your constant love, O God! All humanity takes refuge in the shadow of Your wings. You feed them with blessings from Your own table, and let them drink from Your rivers of delight.

For You, Lord, are the Fountain of Life; our light is from Your Light. Pour out Your unfailing love on those who know You! Never stop giving Your blessings to those who long to do Your will (Ps. 36:1-10 TLB).



Yes, God comes in awesome majesty. The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power (NIV); we cannot imagine the power of the Almighty, and yet He is so just and merciful that He does not destroy us. No wonder people everywhere fear Him; for He is not impressed by the world's wisest people (Job 37:22-24 TLB)!



Why are there so many who are not impressed with God, Who performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted (Job 5:9). Why are they not impressed with the Lord? He is robed in majesty. He reigns and is armed with strength (Ps. 93:1). Jesus not only said:

“Greater love has no one than this (add your name),”

But the Lord of Heaven's Armies laid His life down for you and for me, His friends (John 15:13).

“For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and My year of redemption, the year of My redeemed, has come. And I looked, but there was no one to help; I was amazed and appalled that there was no one to uphold truth and right. So

My own arm brought Me victory, and My wrath upheld Me.”

Isa. 63:4-5 AMP



It makes good sense that God Who got everything started and keeps everything going now completes the work by making the Salvation Pioneer perfect through suffering as He leads all God’s people to glory. Since the One Who saves and those who are saved have a common origin, Jesus doesn’t hesitate to treat them as family saying:

“I’ll tell My good friends, my brothers and sisters, all I know about You, Father; I’ll join them in worship and praise to You.”

Again, He puts Himself in the same family circle when He says:

“Even I live by placing My trust in God. I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

Heb. 2:10-13a Message, John 5:19

Yet again the Lord said:

“I’m here with the children God gave Me.”



Since the children are made of flesh and blood, it’s only logical the Savior took on flesh and blood in order to rescue them by His death. By embracing death, taking it into Himself, Jesus destroyed the devil’s hold on earth, and freed all who cower through life, scared to death of death.

It’s obvious, of course, He didn’t go to all this trouble for angels. It was for people like us, children of Abraham, the father of Isaac and Ishmael. That’s why the Lord had to enter into every detail of human life.

Then, when He came before God as High Priest to get rid of the people’s sins, He would have already experienced it all Himself – all the pain, all the testing, all the temptation – and would be able to help where help was needed (Heb. 2:13b-16 Message).



God made His endless treasures available to us in Christ. God, the Creator of all things, kept this mysterious plan secret from the beginning (Eph. 3:8-9 NLT), and His purpose that Jesus, Who was before all else began and by His power holds everything together. Christ has become Head of the body made up of God's people – that is, His Church. God wanted all of Himself to be in His Son (Col 1:17-19 TLB).

Now we are the body of Christ, and each one of us is a part of it; and Holy Spirit shows us the most excellent Way. The way of Love (1 Cor. 12:27,30,14:1), for God is Love, and everyone who loves is a child of God and knows Him. Dear friends, we surely ought to show love (appreciate, value, respect) one another (1 John 4:7a,11 NLT).

It was through what His Son did that God cleared a path for everything to come to Him – all things in heaven and on earth – for Christ's death on the cross has made peace with God for all by His blood (Col. 1:20 TLB).

God showed how much He loved us by sending His One and Only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him. This is real love – not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins (1 John 4:9-10 NLT).

Think about that. Let this Message God sent into the world seep into your soul. Though we were once so far away from God, actually considered His enemies; separated from Him by our evil thoughts and actions, yet now He has brought us back as His friends.

Jesus did this through the death on the cross of His own human body, and now as a result, Christ brings us into God's very presence. We are standing before God (Col. 1:20-22a TLB) Almighty, Who does not despise anyone; He is mighty in power and understanding (NLT) and firm in His purpose (Job 36:5 NIV).



The Church, you and I, are meant to display His wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was His eternal plan, which He carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. Because of Christ and our faith in Him, we can now come

boldly and confidently into God's presence. So please don't lose heart because of our trials here on earth (Eph. 3:10-13 NLT).

A place where we are strangers and sojourners with God, for the land is His (Lev. 25:23 NKJV). The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters (Ps. 24:1-2).

As children of Abraham, we make our home in the land like a stranger in a foreign country. Abraham lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise (Heb. 11:9).

Therefore, my beloved, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.



I will always remind you of these things, even though we know them and may be firmly established in the Truth we now have. I think it right to refresh your memory as long as we live in the tent of these bodies.

Peter continued to say: We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, saying:

“This is My Son, Whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.”

We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with Him on the sacred mountain (2 Peter 1:10-19 Fire Bible).



Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by Life.

Now it is God Who has made us for this very purpose, and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore, we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.

We live by Faith, NOT by sight. We are confident, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please Him (2 Cor. 5:1-9).

We can't allow ourselves to become lazy; instead, we must imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised (Heb. 6:12). When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of any righteous thing we had done, but because of His mercy.

God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by Holy Spirit, Whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of life eternal (Titus 3:4-7).





Yes, Jesus brings us into the presence of God with nothing left against us with this one condition: That we fully believe the Truth; standing in God's Word steadfast and firm, strong in the Lord, convinced of the Good News that Jesus died for us, and never shift from trusting Christ to save us.

This is the wonderful news that came to each of us and is now spreading all over the world (Col.1:22b-23 TLB). That by faith we too are looking forward to the city whose Architect and Builder is God (Heb.11:9).

A line must be drawn in the sand. The choice has to be made to live by faith, not by sight. God made us for this very purpose (2 Cor. 5:1-9), we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which He prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10 NIV). God picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.



Now, God has us where He wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all His idea, and all His work. All we have to do is trust Him enough to let Him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't

play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing!

No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and the saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join Him in the work He does, the good work He has gotten ready for us.

Please, don't take any of this for granted. It was only yesterday that we were outsiders to God's ways having no idea of any of this, not knowing the first thing about the way God works, or the faintest idea of Christ. With no knowledge of that rich history of God's covenants and promises in Israel. Nor with a clue about what God was doing in the world at large. Now because of Christ - dying that death, shedding His blood - we who were once out of it altogether are in on everything (Eph. 2:6-13 Message).



Dear children, this is the last hour, and as you may have heard the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. Deceitful people, liars who deny that Jesus is the Christ; those who deny the Son do not have the Father either; but those who acknowledge the Son also has the Father, Who has given us an Anointing, His Holy Spirit, so we

can know all things. So you will know the Truth, and realize that no lie, no deception is of God.

The work (the service) God asks us to do: Believe in the One Whom He has sent (John 6:29). So I share God's Word so Truth will abide in you, and you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us – eternal life.

Concerning those who may try to deceive you, the Anointing, Holy Spirit, Who you have received from God abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same Anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as God's Word of Truth teaches you, you will abide in Him (1 John 2:2:18-27 NKJV).



God commissions us, and He has identified us as His own by placing Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything He has promised us (2 Cor. 1:21-22 NLT). Yes, it is God Who enables us to stand firm for Christ, Who says:

“If you love Me, obey My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, Who will never leave you. He is Holy Spirit, Who leads into all Truth.”

“When the Father sends the Advocate as My representative, He will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.”

The world cannot receive Him, because it isn't looking for Him and doesn't recognize Him. But you know Him, because He lives with you now and later will be in you.

“No, I will not abandon you as orphans – I will come to you. Soon the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me. Since I live, you also live. When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you.”

“Those who accept My commandments and obey them are the ones who love Me. And because they love Me, My Father will love them, and I will love them and reveal Myself to each one.”

“I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. The peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid. Remember what I have told you; I am going away, but I will come back to you again.”

John 14:26 NLT, John 14:15-28, John 16:13-15 NLT



Paul explains: I wrote regarding everything that Jesus began to do and what He taught to His apostles, the ones He had chosen through Holy Spirit, until the day He said good-bye to them, and was taken up to heaven.

After His death, He presented Himself alive to them in many different settings over a period of forty days. In face-to-face meetings, He talked to them about things concerning the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:1-3 Message).

Jesus appeared to me last, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw Him, though I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I’m not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God’s Church ((vs. 8-9 NLT).

But whatever I am now it is all because God poured out such kindness and grace upon me – and not without results, for I have worked hard. Yet actually, I wasn't doing it, but God working in me, to bless me (1 Cor. 15:10 TLB).

Peter was heard to say: We are witnesses of everything Jesus did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed Him by hanging Him on a tree, but God raised Him from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen.

He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen – by us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the One Whom God appointed as Judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name (Acts 10:39-43).



Yes, God calls us out of the darkness of deception and confusion and regret into His wonderful Light (1 Peter 2:9b). He has given us time

and opportunity that we might receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Him and in His Word (Acts 26:18b).

The Lamb of God at the center of the throne will be your Shepherd; He will lead you to springs of living water (Rev. 7:17a), when the voice of Holy Spirit is heard calling: In the desert (desolation, captivity, marooned) prepare the way for the Lord; make straight (earnest, turning, repent) - in the wilderness make a highway for our God.

Every valley (depression, anguish, woe) shall be raised up, every mountain (shame, humiliation, confusion), and hill (unease, disgrace, doubt) made low; the rough (bleak, contentious, distressing) ground shall become level (balanced, peaceful, unshaken); the rugged (hardened, cruel, bitter) places a plain (refined, purified, uncorrupted). The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it (Isa. 40:3-5). Give the Lord access to your inner being!



Satan, the evil one, is a false accuser (John 6:70 AMP), a liar and murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). He is your enemy, your

adversary who like a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8).

He was exiled from heaven – a punishment for sinning, and acting treacherously against God. So too did Adam rebel against the Word of God. Louder than words his actions stated the counsel of the Most High was not esteemed (Ps. 107:11).

Now sin is crouching at our doors, it desires to have us, but we must master it (Gen. 4:7), for misfortune not only seeks the sinner, it pursues them (Prov. 13:21) in this unprincipled world.

It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But God's Word teaches and equips us so we don't live or fight our battle as the world does. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation (control, plotting, scheming).

The tools we receive from God are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the Truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand



for clearing the ground of every obstruction, and building lives of obedience into mature sons of God (2 Cor. 10:3-6 Message).



God is Love. He has shown how much He loved the world by sending His Son that we might have eternal life through Him. This is real love – not that we first loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins (1 John 4:9-10 NLT). Anyone and everyone who confesses Jesus is the Son of God has God living in them, and they live in God (1 John 4:9-10,15 NLT).

Yes, God Himself stepped in to save us through His mighty power and justice (Isa. 59:11-16b TLB). Surely, He will help us live like Jesus in this world (1 John 4:17b NLT).

Evil was not only able to contaminate our world with fear and hatred, violence and death, but penetrate the depths of our soul when the Word of Jehovah was rejected (ignored, abandoned, forsaken).

For words and thoughts that provoke and lead to rebellion (insolence, defiance, willfulness) are as doing (perpetrating, practicing, engaging in) witchcraft; and stubbornness being (self-opinionated, anal-

retentive, narrow-minded) is as bad as worshiping (exalting, valuing, prizing) idols (1 Sam. 15:23 TLB).



On the website Science Direct this article was posted “Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:” Even Science recognizes the fact that change is stressful, even when it is beneficial. Change requires effort and conscious awareness. In preparing to engage someone in the process of change, it is important to understand how they normally interact with their environment.

The responses to stress are numerous and individualized, just as the variable approaches for intervening. Therefore, it is imperative to be prepared with a number of strategies for handling stress. Because cognitions and mental processes have a strong influence, negative or positive, on the physical and emotional reactions to stress, cognitive restructuring is an important intervention.

Five aspects of mental processing that play a role in stress include:

1. Expectations/self-fulfilling prophecy: What a person believes will happen or expects to happen sometimes will influence their

behavior in a manner which increases the likelihood of the feared outcome. Negative expectations increase anxiety and stress.

2. Mental imagery/visual imagery: Coinciding with expectations for a given situation a person will develop an associated mental picture and internal dialogue. This mental imagery increases anxiety and stress reactions.
3. Self-talk: Internal dialogue takes place 24/7. Self-talk is the conversation or messages that a person has with themselves. It is common that a person is not aware of this internal dialogue or the consequences upon anxiety, stress and self-esteem. Self-talk also influences mental imagery. Negative mental images and negative self-talk can result in anxiety and psychosomatic symptoms, whereas positive self-talk encourages self-confidence, effective coping, and a general feeling of well-being.
4. Controlling and perfectionistic behavior: Perfectionism and unrealistic expectations often go hand in hand. Responses of controlling and perfectionistic behaviors are frequently an effort to avoid abuse, conflict, the unknown, or a feeling of being on-edge and inadequacy. Placing unrealistic expectations on others is a form of controlling behavior. Self-management consumes

enough energy without expanding into the realm to control others. Additional consequences to the effort of controlling others are stress, anxiety, frustration and anger.

5. Anger: Anger is a normal, healthy emotion when expressed appropriately. It can be damaging to self and others when expressed inappropriately because of the internal tension, or build-up, that predisposes alienation and explosiveness with others. This behavior results in low self-esteem and poor interpersonal relating. Chronic anger and hostility are related to the development or exacerbation of a number of physical symptoms, illnesses and diseases.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/self-fulfilling-prophecy>



Without godly thinking, which God's Word bestows, would it be possible for us to really know how our lives have been affected by deception and error? I can assure you the answer is a resounding NO!

I share the Word of God with you because Truth, Life and the Way to assurance, peace of mind and contentment are received only through Christ Jesus. When knowledge of God's Word of Life is lacking, what is essential - faith and trust in God - will also be sparse. Fear, like a

deadly virus, has infected our heart, our soul, and will continue to adversely affect our thinking as well as our health and well-being.

When the enemy is mentioned, though our thoughts may turn to Satan, the Lord has warned a person's enemies will be the members of their own household (Matt. 10:36). Sadly, our enemy is the one with whom we are most familiar, ourselves. Isaiah 40 is not the only Scripture that tells us to prepare the way for the Lord, Who fills in every valley and lowers every mountain so the crooked roads will become straight and the rough ways smooth so too does Luke 3:4-6.



We can be so hard and unkind and abusive to ourselves and others. Emotional turmoil causes questioning to arise like what is wrong with us. We look for solutions that like patches on a leaky inner tube will help us to get by. Without insight into the character of God and the details of His Word and our tendencies we will continue to just get by.

When faith and trust is placed in what is seen and experienced the very natural tendency is to lean on our own understanding and the relationships we share with others. Who can tell us differently when

we have learned through experience skills and strategies that have helped us to survive?

However, when we leave our welfare – emotional, mental, physical, intellectual, sexual and spiritual well-being – dependent on such codependent tactics as minimizing, rationalization, denial, avoidance, violence....we will find ourselves continually striving to survive.

Why? Simply stated something we can always depend on occurring – change. Unfortunately for us, circumstances are not the only things subject to change, so too are our thoughts and feelings and beliefs.



Clare shared the following in her article, “Stop Holding Yourself to Impossible Standards:” Have you ever had those days where you feel as if you are just no good, and you may never be? Have you ever planned something, such as a new weight loss regimen, only to find failure two weeks in? Have you ever been found criticizing yourself in the mirror, turning away from yourself because you have little self-esteem, or have you ever developed a sense that you are inferior to someone else?

Of course, a certain level of self-consciousness can be normal. However, might it be time that you stop holding yourself to impossible standards? We all object to ourselves in various ways, but it's when this becomes a repeated, unhappy thought loop and when we start granting ourselves fewer freedoms or letting that negative self-talk take root that we start to encounter real issues. This can be a problem for anyone, regardless of gender, race, sexuality, or age.

Thankfully, you needn't live like this throughout the entirety of your life. However, it requires looking to yourself, figuring out how you got into these rational or irrational habits, and doing your best to subvert (weaken) them.

<https://www.emmysmummy.com/stop-holding-yourself-to-impossible-standards>



An example of an impossible standard might simply be trying to act like someone you're not. This may be a standard you are trying to reach, but not one you can ever fully actualize – simply because it isn't you or how you view the world.

Neil Raman posted the article “10 Things People Who Have High Standards Will Appreciate,” and share: While having high standards is

valuable, it can also have detrimental effects if there isn't a healthy balance between doing what's important and what's not required.

Here are ten things people with high standards will recognize and relate to because these things can be helpful and also a hindrance. Knowing which of these can get you to where you want to be is important for your overall success, well-being and happiness.

1. You compare your progress or success to other people.

Comparing yourself with others can bring up unhealthy emotions such as disappointment, regret, envy, jealousy, frustration or even sadness. While desiring more success can be a positive thing, knowing the reasons for wanting more success is important.

2. You are very disciplined. Those with high standards let nothing get in the way of what they want. They can give themselves a directive then carry out the required action steps to get what they want.

3. You don't like to fail. While everyone has different definitions of failure, the truth is no one likes to miss their objectives. Those with high standards find it hard to accept something hasn't



worked out the way they wanted it to. Sometimes, this causes someone to persevere with something longer than necessary.

4. You tend to be hard on yourself when you make a mistake.

Similar to not wanting to fail, making a mistake can bring up many emotions for people with high standards. They are harder on themselves when they make a mistake than when others do. This can lead to a loss of motivation, which can slow down their progress towards what they want.

5. You downplay your successes. People with high standards struggle receiving complements, therefore, they downplay what they've accomplished. This is because they don't want to come across as a braggart, so they prefer to minimize the things they have achieved.

6. You over-think things a lot. Those with high standards are constantly thinking about what they should do more of.

Whenever they receive feedback, especially if it's negative, they dwell on why they received that feedback, which can again lead to them being hard on themselves.

7. You always want to do better. This is an important benefit because those with high standards never settle for what they've accomplished. They know they can always do better, so they're constantly focused on improving themselves and what they do.
8. You do more for others than for yourself. People with high standards readily help others, sometimes to their detriment, because they don't focus on their self-care. There has to be a balance between how much you do for others and for yourself.
9. You push yourself to work as hard as you can. Constantly working isn't an intelligent long-term strategy, because everyone needs to rest, recover and rejuvenate. Those with high standards often have big goals and put extra pressure on themselves to achieve them in the timeframe they have set. This causes them to work longer hours, which takes a toll on their mental, emotional and physical well-being
10. You always have new things you want to do or create. Having high standards also means having new, creative ideas, which is a good thing. Being focused on completing tasks and projects so you feel you're making progress in life.

High standards are great when used properly, but there are some disadvantages too. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Becoming overly critical of other people's behavior
2. Getting upset easily at minor mistakes others make
3. Feeling frustrated when your efforts aren't appreciated
4. Wanting to give up when faced with challenges
5. Self-confidence may decrease if outcomes aren't reached
6. A loss of interest in activities you enjoy and not allocating time for them
7. Doubting your abilities and talents

Having high standards isn't a bad thing; however, you need to know the effect your actions or behaviors are having on you and others. If you can have a healthy balance between having high standards and being of service to yourself and others, you will create a better quality of life.

<https://neelraman.com/10-things-people-who-have-high-standards-will-appreciate/>



In this world we may find ourselves in need of a better quality of life simply because the mixture of Good and Evil seems so imbalanced. During my BC (before Christ) days I used to equate life to a game of chance with a new hand being dealt each and every day. What I expected from myself was to play fairly and do the right things. Though I tried to prepare myself for the bad that so often came my way, what I didn't take into account was my own evil heart.

There was so much I didn't know. Like this mixture of good and evil that causes so much conflict in the world, is also responsible for causing the internal conflict within our soul. Since I didn't know there is a righteousness that comes from God, I did the natural thing by allowing my heart to determine what is good and just and fair. The problem with this – the heart seeks to please its own desires.

Joanna Davila, PhD. wrote, the dates, and popularity, of the original Emily Dickinson quote and the recent Selena Gomez song title suggest the idea that the heart wants what it wants is timeless and reflects a deep emotional experience that people can relate to.

The heart wants what it wants – the words themselves imply that the heart wants something that isn't good for it, and that the heart will pursue it, relentlessly, consequences be damned.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/skills-healthy-relationships/201602/the-heart-wants-what-it-wants-do-you-have-follow-it>



There are so many reasons why we think the way we do; however, there are also hidden motives of the heart that prevent us from receiving. They also interfere with our ability to be totally honest with God, ourselves and others.

What have we not received? What have we misinterpreted due to our stubbornness, arrogance, pride, fear, standards that are too high, unrealistic expectations...that cause us to appear wise in our own eyes? When everyone is doing as they see fit (Judges 21:25), they fool themselves into thinking they are a good listener when they are anything but, it isn't just the Word they are letting go into one ear and out-the-other instead of acting on what they hear (James 1:22 Message).

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in someone else's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How

can you say to them, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from someone else's eye."

"There was a Pharisee who stood up and prayed about himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' The tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"

"I tell you that tax collector, rather than the Pharisee, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Matt. 7:3-5, Luke 18:11-14



Yes, the voice of John the Baptist was heard calling in the desert, “Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him. Repent (think differently; change your mind, regretting your sins and changing your conduct), for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” Matt. 3:2-3 AMP.

Thinking differently is key. Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer wrote: Someone has said that people live their lives “crucified between two thieves – the regrets of yesterday and the anxieties of tomorrow. Ed Roswell wrote: Do you worry? I mean really worry – to the point of losing sleep or developing an ulcer, a headache or high blood pressure? The word worry comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning “to choke” or “to strangle. That’s an apt description of what worry does to us.

And it not only has physical consequences, it has spiritual ones as well, in the end, worry won’t stretch our savings account or keep cancer or job loss at bay. But it will sour our mood and eventually stifle our relationship with God. Giving up the debilitating influence of worry is one big step toward a life well-lived.

<https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/surrounded-by-worry>



Dr. Lutzer states: The word worry means 'to be torn in two.' And that is exactly what anxiety does – it tears us apart. Our bodies might obediently go in one direction, but our minds are somewhere else. The result is that we live with tension; we cannot sleep and we cannot enjoy the present moment. Worry causes us to work against ourselves and hinders our fellowship with God.

When Adam allowed the appearance of fear to be altered by thoughts plagued with anxiety and worry, the awe and amazement and wonder of God became difficult to remember. Dr. Lutzer asks: Don't you wish that you could worry say, from 8:00 pm to about 8:30 pm, then turn it off and get a good night's rest? But we can't seem to prevent worry from returning to our minds. We have no control – or so we think.

God's Word gives us much to think over. God will make it all plain. Fix this picture in your mind: Jesus, descended from the line of David, was raised from the dead. That's why I set God's Word out – so that everyone that hears God's call will get in on the salvation of Christ in all its glory. This is a sure thing:

If we die with Him, we'll live with Him

If we stick it out with Him, we'll rule with Him



If we turn our backs on Him, He'll never turn His back on us  
If we give up on Him, He does not give up  
There's no way He can be false to Himself

Think about and repeat these basic essentials over and over. Fear and worry, anxiety and complaining chip away at our faith. It wears everyone out. Concentrate on doing your best for God, work you won't be ashamed of, learning and laying out the Truth plain and simple

(2 Tim. 2:7-15 Message).



Dr. Lutzer wrote of three reasons Jesus gave regarding why we should not worry, and then three reasons why we don't have to worry:

1. Jesus said we should not worry because of who we are to God.  
“Look at the birds in the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they,” Matt. 6:26. Don't miss the Lord's point: when we worry we diminish our value.

2. We should not worry because it is useless. “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to His life,” Matt. 6:27. Worry is like putting on the brakes and stepping on the gas simultaneously. It would be worth it if it added to the length of our life, but in fact, it might diminish it instead.
  
3. We should not worry because of our testimony. “For pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them,” Matt. 6:32. When we worry we act as the unbelievers who do not know the Father. Two people get cancer, one is a Christian the other is not. How tragic if the Christian accepts it no better than the pagan!

How do we overcome worry or anxiety? Three words in this narrative will help us.

1. The word Father. We find it more difficult to trust our heavenly Father than our earthly father because our heavenly Father is less predictable. Our earthly father would prevent us from having cancer and accidents if it were within his power to do so. But our heavenly Father does not. Does that mean He loves us less? No! Our heavenly Father loves us with a perfect love. However, He is

willing to allow us to experience loss and pain for a greater, eternal good. Please believe your heavenly Father is trustworthy. He loves you and will do right by you!

I want to take a moment to address what Dr. Lutzer shared. God never intended for us to struggle with fear or worry or sicknesses like cancer. His Word, His guidance, His role as confidante and mentor was ignored and ultimately rejected.

If He could make us understand our own heart is responsible for the advancement of evil in our world, in our homes, in our lives then He wouldn't have to try whatever to help us, His Word would just simply protect us. However, it is up to us to make the necessary adjustments in our opinions, our perspectives, our beliefs, and the only Way to receive what is beneficial now and forever is to appreciate, honor and respect what God's Word says.

2. The second word is faith. O! You of little faith," Jesus said. Our faith must be developed; we must believe that God is not only powerful, but good. Faith is built through an understanding of God's promises.

3. The last word is first. “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well,” Matt. 6:33. Worry reminds us of all those things that we have not yet given to God; or we could say that our worries point to those things that we have placed ahead of God.

By entrusting ourselves to our heavenly Father, we no longer have to be ‘torn in two’ by the events of life. They have been transferred from our hands to His, and with that, we can be content.

<https://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/read/articles/dealing-with-anxiety-why-does-jesus-say-we-shouldnt-worry-16121.html>



There is much to be remembered:

- If a person should wander from the Truth, and someone should bring them back – Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from Death and cover over a multitude of sins

(James 5:19-20)

- Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me. I make

known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please

(Isa. 46:9-10)

- Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, I am bringing My righteousness near, it is not far away; and My salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, My splendor to Israel (Isa. 46:8,13)
- Remember the wonders God has done, His miracles, and the judgments (findings, opinions, determinations) He pronounced. He is the Lord our God; His judgments (decrees, perceptions, assessments) are in all the earth (Ps. 105:5-7)
- Remember to extol His work, which people have praised in song. All mankind has seen it; they gaze on it from afar. How great is God – beyond our understanding. The number of His years is past finding out (Job 36:24-26)
- Remember, throughout the history of the kingdoms on earth, the God of heaven has been building a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will this Kingdom ever fall under the domination

of another. In the end it will crush the other kingdoms and finish them off and come through it all standing strong and eternal.

(Dan. 2:44-45 Message)

- Remember, God has given us free-will so exercise your freedom by serving Him, not by breaking the rules. Treat everyone you meet with respect and dignity (Peter 2:16-17 Message)
- Remember, the whole world is under the control of the evil one, God sent His Son to give us understanding, so that we may know Him Who is True (1 John 5:19-20)
- Remember, the evil one reigns over the world using witchcraft: Manipulation, Domination, Intimidation for rebellion is sin meant to control you, while stubbornness has made you subjects of bondage for idolatry is lethal (1 Sam. 15:23, Heb. 2:15, Ps. 119:118 Message)
- Remember, a house divided against itself will not stand. God will destroy witchcraft. No longer will words that manipulate, dominate and intimidate be cast as spells. God will destroy all the carved images and sacred stones from among the people. No longer will they bow down to worship the work of their own

hands. God will take vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations that have not obeyed the Word of God (Luke 11:17, Mic. 5:12-15)

- Remember, God-denying people are never content with what they have or who they are; their fear and greed and pride drives them relentlessly (Job 20:20 Message).
- So don't meddle where you have no business being, or fantasize about grandiose plans. Keep your feet on the ground, and Holy Spirit will cultivate within you a quiet heart. That you also may discover: Like a baby content in its mother's arms, my soul is a baby content. Therefore, wait for God. Wait with hope. Hope now, hope always (Ps. 131:1-3 Message).



In this article posted by Michael Cain, "A Christian Mind (1): Think Differently," he writes, don't be a donkey. More precisely, don't be like a horse or a mule (which is actually a different species than a donkey). Animal behavior is directed by instinct, whereas human behavior is directed by intelligent choice.

You discriminate based on rational and moral evaluations. God has made you distinct from His animal creation.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding.”

Ps. 32:3-8-8 ESV

God expects your intelligent cooperation with Him. Don't be a mule...or a horse...or a donkey. Think differently. From God's Word, we can learn how to be content whatever the circumstances (Phil. 4:11).

We find this Biblical command to “repent,” to literally *think differently*, reflected everywhere in the Bible. Outlining the benefits of humility, Paul instructs us: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. <https://www.ucg.org/beyond-today/blogs/think-different>



As Cain wrote, your mind should not only be different from an animal's mind, but also from those of unbelievers who have not submitted their minds to God's revelation of Truth.



This was what Paul so often wrote about: You must no longer walk in the futility of your mind. It darkens your understanding, and alienates you from the life of God because of ignorance, which is due to the hardness of a heart....

But that is not the way you learned Christ – assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind,” Eph. 4:17-18,20-23 ESV).

All of mankind, saved and lost, suffers from a corrupted mind as a result of inherent sin. The Christian’s advantage is not a higher IQ; our advantage is a renewed mind, able to think with God’s perspective and know God’s wisdom. As for lost mankind, they have chosen not to honor God as God. This has led them to become “futile in their thinking.” “Claiming to be wise, they became fools,” Rom. 1:21-23 ESV. As for you, think differently.

~

Thinking differently begins with...thinking! God has given you a mind to use for His glory. Don't underestimate the importance of your mind. What you believe, and learn, and know and think is vital. What does the Lord Jesus say will allow you to experience true freedom as one of His disciples? Is it feeling the love? Is it smelling the incense? Is it doing whatever you want? No! Our Lord said:

“Ye shall know the Truth, a  
And the Truth shall make you free!”

John 8:32

Many students close their minds when they close their school textbooks, satisfied that intellect should play little, if any part, in the Christian life...I am not pleading for a dry, humorless, academic Christianity, but for warm devotions set on fire by Truth.

The Lord Jesus said the greatest commandment:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all  
your  
soul and with all your mind and with all your strength!”

Mark 12:30 ESV

While you should give attention to your studies, and you are responsible to use your mind for your employer, God has the preeminent claim upon your mind.

This is not just about developing a Bible IQ either. The point is, your thoughts shape your actions. The Lord taught the act of murder stems from hatred in the mind, and the act of adultery stems from lustful thinking (Matt. 5:21-22,28).



Likewise, the activity of serving others is a result of a Christ-like mind (Phil. 2). To love God, and to “consider others as more important than ourselves” (Phil. 2:3, HCSB) is obviously not natural to man. It requires you to think differently, to think in a new way, which is only possible through your cooperation with the powerful work of Holy Spirit within you.

You have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him, Who created you (Col 3:10). Be renewed in the spirit of your mind (Eph. 4:23)!

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



Cain continues: There are two dominant thought patterns, and you will definitely migrate toward one or the other. The two thought patterns can be summarized under these two titles: this present age and the will of God. Galatians 1:4 calls this present age “evil,” and says the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for us to deliver us from it. In contrast, the text above says the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect. To adopt the thinking of God requires you to think differently from this age – you need to think in a new way.

You won't be renewed in your mind without the Scriptures. Do you recall our quotation from John 8 above? There was actually more to it. The Lord said:

“If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free!”

John 8:31-32 ESV



An awareness of the value of your mind to God is bound to affect what you allow to come into your mind. This impacts, in turn, what you watch, what you read, what you listen to and what you allow yourself to daydream about. But the mind doesn't become pure merely by trying to keep bad influences out.

One of the sovereign remedies against sin is to spend much time, thoughtful time, meditative time, in the Scriptures, for it is impossible to get rid of the trash in our minds without replacing it with an entirely different way of thinking.

Putting it bluntly: If you think holy thoughts, you will be holy! If you think garbage, you will feel like garbage. Give your mind to the Scriptures. Take an evening to relax with a good Christian book. Take time to quiet your mind before the Lord, and submit your will to His in prayer. If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that

are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above (Col 3:1-2, *ESV*).

<https://truthandtidings.com/2016/07/a-christian-mind-1-thinking-differently/>



The Apostle Paul wrote: God's firm foundation is as firm as ever, these sentences engraved on stones: God knows who belongs to Him: Spurn Evil, All You Who Name God as God. In a well-furnished kitchen there are not only crystal goblets and silver platters, but waste cans and compost buckets – some containers are used to serve the meals, others to take out the garbage. Become the kind of container God can use to present any and every kind of gift to His guests for their blessing (2 Tim. 2:19-21 Message).

When I began searching God's Word, I started in the New Testament because I wanted to learn as much as I could about Jesus. Though I had received knowledge from others, what they knew and their relationship with the Lord was unable to overcome the error in my thinking. I certainly gained a good amount of head knowledge, but heart knowledge was in short supply.

Why? When forgiveness and redemption and peace with God is heard, we are enticed by how this would benefit us. We are all aware of the fact that every good relationship requires both give and take. As a majority of our relationships reveal, we are much more proficient at taking care of me, myself and I.



In Luke 6:38 we discover Jesus, God's Word of Truth, commands us:

“Give! Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you!”

Many people are very obvious in their self-centered attentiveness, but others like myself, have learned more covert ways of being selfish. Pleasing others is a means of taking what is needed for self. I never thought of myself as being selfish or self-centered, but that is what our learned behavior accomplishes because thought is given to what works best for self.



When we become frustrated enough or as the case was for me desperate enough, a new approach may be sought. Approach is defined in the Webster-Merriam Dictionary is as follows:

- 1a. to draw closer to: NEAR approach a destination
- b. to come very near to: to be almost the same as
  
- 2a. to make advances especially in order to create a desired result
- b. to take preliminary steps toward accomplishment or full knowledge or experience of – to approach the subject with an open mind

We have each learned, by the best ways and means available to us, to survive in this fallen world. Unfortunately, we are enabling evil to not just have the run of our lives, but in many cases to stampede unbridled throughout the land. And sadly many, including ourselves, are being trampled.



Bad outcomes are so very rampant in our nations because hearts and souls have been filled with hate and anger, greed and malice and



lust...We, make it possible for evil to control our thoughts, our choices, our behaviors. The internal struggles we have with doubt, mistrust, shame, guilt, arrogance, self-confidence...when left unresolved are absolutely working against us.

We not only contribute to the negativity that attacks our thinking, we are allowing our thought life to cast us into the swells of turbulent emotions. It won't take very long before we realize just how inadequately skilled we are in managing the unwelcome or maybe the welcomed onslaught of desire.



So many times we find ourselves loaded down with the additional weight of shame and guilt and vengeance when we've allowed ourselves to be controlled by the dictates of our emotions.

When we stand before God, there will be no one else to blame for the negativity we ourselves have empowered and unleashed. You know what's interesting, since childhood we have behaved in a know-it-all fashion that causes us to resent and resist authority.

We have that drive to do things the way we see fit; however, many times we have placed ourselves and sadly others in the way of harm

causing much undo (demoralizing, unbalancing, disheartening) experiences. So much pain and heartache and trauma is and has been brought about by the promptings of our own thinking, addictions, compulsions, impulsiveness, obsessions, depravities...

We are responsible for breathing life into the dark and negative (adversarial, unsympathetic, cancerous, hostile) forces that desire to kill, steal and deceive each one of us. Why? In the image of God has God made man (Gen. 9:6), but in the image of evil did "self-dependence" make us.

Yes, on the sixth day God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and gave to them dominion over every living thing that moves on the earth. God saw everything He had made, and indeed it was very good (Gen. 1:27-28,31 NKJV).



How much time went by before the events in Genesis Chapter 3 occurred? One day we will know; however, we are well aware of the outcome. Death! Not just of our bodies, but of hopes and dreams,

relationships and the future purpose and potential of so many terminated lives.

Lucifer allowed pride to place him in an irreconcilable position with God; we don't have to suffer the same fate. Maybe you've heard the saying "Misery loves company." Hopefully, this explanation Jesus gave about the parable of the weeds in the field will reveal how pride can place others in that same irreconcilable position with God:

"The One Who sowed the good seed, the Word of Truth and Life and the Way to peace and reconciliation with God, is the Son of Man. The good seed that sprouted from the field of the world stands for the sons of the Kingdom of God. The weeds the enemy sowed among the wheat are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil."

"The owner of the field allows both the wheat and the weeds to grow together until the harvest so the wheat will not be uprooted. At the time of the harvest, first the weeds will be collected and tied into bundles to be burned; then the wheat will be gathered and brought into God's barn."

“The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Those who have ears let them hear!”

Matthew 13:29-43



When we come into agreement with negativity we are placing ourselves in a position of harmony in opinion and action and character with wickedness, which gives evil dominion, authority and power, to not only influence, but to also adversely affect those images we see in a mirror's reflection.

Satan's glory, the only joy he will ever again experience, is to cause our pride-filled tendencies, attitudes, opinions...to defile God's holy name "I AM."

The first person God identified Himself to was Moses when He said:

“I AM WHO I AM.

This is what you are to say:

“I AM has sent me to you!”

Ex. 3:14



How many times have we heard someone profess “I am who I am?” No, we are the person who either indulges a heart that is in agreement with evil, or trains and disciplines a heart to be in a covenant relationship with God. Matthew documented these words of Jesus:

“There is only One Who is good. If you want to enter Life, obey the commandments!”

Matt. 19:17

We each are in a battle for the welfare of our soul, a spiritual battle. Unfortunately, far too many are in agreement with negativity; seemingly unconcerned. For how could anyone claim to be unaware of

the fact that negativity produces a defect – a defeat evidenced (proved, substantiated, manifested) by the loss of morals that sustain Life and Truth and Compassion.

A person who trusts in human philosophies, and relies on the strength of human ability and will-power are unable to see the forest for the trees. Why? They are unsure of or completely unconcerned with their standing with Christ.

Instead, engaging in warfare that is meant to inflict as much devastation and destruction and death not only in the lives of others but in regard to or no regard for the life God has and one day will bequeath.



The world is unprincipled. The day star, once the carrier of light, now casts shifting shadows of darkness – deception, injustice, unfairness and unrighteousness - in as many ways and means as there are people willing to carry out the intentions of evil.

Yes, wickedness brings down suffering upon mankind, and then reviles (condemns, criticizes, convicts) each and every one of us for our own complicity.

We are caught in our pride by the sins of our mouth and the words of our lips (Ps. 59:12). Yes, our offenses are many in God's sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning our backs on our God, uttering lies our heart has conceived; all of this must be acknowledged (Isa. 59:12-13).

How overwhelmed and depressed and grieved we become as our wrongdoings pile up, our sins stand up and accuse us. Our wrongdoings stare us down; we know in detail what we've done (Isa. 59:12-13 Message).

But God, He invites us to partake of the fruit of His Spirit so our fears can be overcome by His love; our sorrows conquered by His joy; our anguish subdued by His peace; our willfulness mastered by His patience; our callousness upended by His kindness; our depravity unseated by His goodness; our disloyalty surmounted by His faithfulness; our cruelty and abusive ways bested by His gentleness;

our self-indulgence stopped by the fruit His Spirit of Truth produces: Self-control and self-discipline.



Sadly, in this world we have experienced our heart being filled with anguish, while the terrors of death seek to assail us. We have known the distress of fear and trembling, while horror that overwhelms awaits an encounter. Times we've found ourselves wishing we had the wings of a dove, and could fly away and be at rest.

We have endured the insults of an enemy; though a foe, whose anger is raised against us could be hidden from, but when it is a companion, a close friend with whom sweet fellowship was once enjoyed, how devastating to discover evil lodging within them (Ps. 55:4-7,12-14 TLB).

What is most beneficial, when it's recognized and acknowledged: Evil is in each and every human heart. For such a long time I allowed myself to be duped by wishful thinking. I viewed myself as a good person while - ignoring, minimizing, excusing, justifying... - all of which ensured I remained in denial. This sounds so hypocritical, I was able to not just think but believe "I'm a good person," yet my behavior was clearly testifying against me.





I was driven by fear and self-interest; as a result, I knew nothing about how we are affected by the human condition. I understood nothing about the far-reaching effect that each and every one of the life events we experience can have on us.

Being guided by my own moral compass, totally focused on what seemed normal – managing and maintaining a desired lifestyle - my eyes were plastered over so I could not see how self-destructive my coping skills and learned behaviors and character deficits really were.

As social creatures, we set a goal to be weaned from dependency to become an independent, self-adjusting adult. Unfortunately, our minds are closed to Truth, when we are codependent on one another instead of choosing to be God-dependent. We will always be striving for what cannot be purchased - acceptance, validation, approval, justification and Love. We are always doing something to gain recognition for our efforts, our work, our accomplishments...

No one stops to think how we have crafted ourselves, our talents, our finances and other people into idols. No one has the knowledge or

understanding to say there are things we think that have been fueled by deception. A deluded heart misleads so many to believe what they do will save them, but they cannot save themselves (Isa. 44:18-21 TLB).



Yes, we are social creatures. Friends come and friends go (Message); there are “friends” who pretend to be friends (TLB); some may even ruin us (NCV Prov.18:24a). There is One Who called His betrayer friend:

“Judas, do what you came to do.”

Matt. 26:50

On the night when the Lord Jesus was treacherously delivered up and while His betrayal was in progress He took bread, and gave thanks.

He broke the bread and said:

“Take, eat. This is My body, which is broken for you. Do this to call Me affectionately to remembrance.

When their supper was ended, He took the cup and said:

“This cup is the new covenant ratified and established in My blood. As often as you drink it, do so in remembrance of Me.”

1 Cor. 11:23-25 AMP



Jesus 100% Man had the very nature as God 100% - of love, of kindness and mercy and forgiveness. He was able to look past the betrayal of Judas to call him friend, but didn't hesitate identifying the hypocrisy of his behavior:

“Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Luke 22:48

Only God knows why money was so important to Judas that he was unable to receive interest in God's Word of Truth. He was unable to remember the Word of Life because he was an indentured servant bound to death by his fleshly desires.

Judas relished his own thoughts and opinions and beliefs, and by doing so he was prevented from partaking (knowing, tasting, receiving) this Man, Christ Jesus, and truly believe the Truth and the

Life and the Way, Who teaches us to behave as a faithful servant freed by faith to rest in God's eternal, everlasting and unconditional love.



Judas didn't understand God's Word has a face – Christ Jesus. Judas may have known the words of Ps. 118:19-21, but he wasn't able to look past his own understanding so the Light of the World could shine in him. It is Jesus Who opens the gates of righteousness for us.

Judas didn't understand a vital choice must be made do we enter and give thanks to the Lord, or continue doing whatever pleases self? Judas didn't know Christ's identity was the Gate Who gives the righteous entrance to our heavenly Father.

Judas didn't know he traveled with the Giver of Life for His eyes were focused on what he coveted. So many are blinded by the shining glitz and glitter of what the world promises to be a glamorous life! I pray more people would come to know Who helps us to build a truly glorious life.

BUILD MY LIFE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z32HiCoFzlU>

... Worthy of every song we could ever sing  
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for You, oh, we live for You

... Jesus, the Name above every other name  
Jesus, the only One Who could ever save

... Holy, there is no one like You  
There is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder  
And show me who You are  
And fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love to those around me

... Jesus, the Name above every other name  
Jesus, the only One Who could ever save

Lead me in Your love to those around me  
... And I will build my life upon Your love  
It is a firm foundation

And I will put my trust in You alone  
And I will not be shaken  
And I will build my life upon Your love  
It is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in You alone  
And I will not be shaken

... Holy, there is no one like You  
There is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder  
And show me who You are  
And fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love to those around me  
... I will build my life upon You  
... Lead me in Your love

Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for You, oh, we live for You

Song by Pat Barret ft. Chris Tomlin



The most important decision a person will ever make is to give thanks to the Lord, for He is waiting for us to emerge from the darkness of denial, deception, doubt and disbelief as Understanding dawns.

For Jesus is a Friend Who sticks closer than a brother (Prov. 13:24). Greater love has no one than this – that they lay down their life for their friends (John 15:13). You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God, He demonstrates His own love for us in this – while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6-8).

Jesus said:

“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”

John 10:11

Jesus is waiting to answer with Truth and Knowledge and Insight about God, Who is Spirit (John 4:24), and Who sent the Lord to be our salvation (Ps. 118:21).



Judas heard Jesus speak about a lot of things that seemingly went in one ear and out the other. The Word of God was unable to move this soul from self-serving behavior to glorifying God.

There are Scriptures like Ps. 5:5, the arrogant cannot stand in God's presence; He hates all who do wrong. Ps. 11:5, the Lord examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence His soul hates. Also there's Mal. 1:2-3 when God said:

“Esau have I hated, Jacob have I loved.”



God has revealed His strong sentiment regarding those who have chosen to behave as an enemy to Him. James 4:4 says, you adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

We each have lived according to our own system of beliefs. Ps. 82:6-7 NKJV tells us God said:



“You are gods, but you shall die like men!”

God has given us intellect, emotions and free-will to be as a god. He calls us to be free, but not to use our freedom to indulge the sinful nature (Gal. 5:13). If the choice is made to use our freedom as an excuse to do evil (1 Peter 2:16 NLT), we make ourselves an enemy of all that is good!



Everything we have here on earth was given to us by God. How vast His love for us, for by His grace God gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, that our heart might be encouraged and strengthened in every good deed and word (2 Thess. 2:16-17).

In this world trouble is guaranteed to occur. How natural it is for us to speak and think and dwell on all the negativity it produces. If we would speak and think and dwell on what is good – God and His Word – our heart would most definitely be encouraged and strengthened by every good deed and word written by those who were filled with Holy Spirit.

For then we could think about and profess what God's Word says about us:

- We are created in God's image
- God breathed life into us
- We are His sons and daughters
- We are the light of the world
- We are fearfully and wonderfully made
- We are ambassadors for Christ
- We were bought at a price, we are not our own
- God gave His only Son for us
- By grace we are saved
- God has redeemed us
- God has justified us
- We are free from condemnation
- We are forgiven of all our sins
- We are reconciled to God
- We are a new creation
- God's grace is lavished upon us
- God has put a new heart and a new spirit in us
- God called us out of darkness into His wonderful Light
- We are children of Light

- We are blessed by God
- We are citizens of Heaven
- We are loved by God
- We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation
- We are crowned with glory and honor
- We are holy and blameless in God's sight
- We are God's own possessions
- We are God's workmanship, created through Christ Jesus, for good works
- We are children of God
- We have been given the Spirit of Truth
- We are the temple of God and His Spirit lives in us
- We are friends of Jesus
- We can rest in Jesus
- We are part of the body of Christ
- We have every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus
- We are complete in Jesus
- Nothing can separate us from the love of God
- God's love has been poured out into our heart
- Jesus is preparing a place for us with Him
- We are seated with Christ in Heavenly realms

- We have been raised with Christ
- Our lives are now hidden with Christ
- We are appointed a witness and servant of Jesus
- We are chosen and appointed to bear fruit
- We are established, anointed and sealed by God
- One day He will wipe every tear from our eyes



Paul wrote a major portion of the New Testament. One day when he was filled with Holy Spirit he looked a sorcerer in the eye and said: You son of the devil, full of every sort of deceit and fraud, an enemy of all that is good! Will you never stop perverting the true ways of the Lord?

Watch now, for the Lord has laid His hand of punishment upon you, and you will be struck blind. You will not see the sunlight for some time. Instantly mist and darkness came over the man's eyes, and he began groping around begging for someone to take his hand and lead him (Acts 13:9-11 NLT).

Unfortunately for all mankind, we have spent time struck by spiritual blindness unable to see the dazzling glorious light of the Son. We

grope in the darkness that fills this world trying to find our way and protect ourselves. But how can we protect ourselves from the unpredictable that so regularly occurs? How can we protect ourselves from our own abusiveness when we belittle and condemn ourselves for being human? If you are walking in darkness without a ray of light, trust in the Lord (Isa. 50:10a).



I like to encourage when someone is upset over a misjudgment – our mistakes are meant to point out our need for a Savior. Understand what God hates – hypocritical behavior – when good is gladly accepted, but the Source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17) is not. The Word of God says:

“They rebel against Me. The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner’s manger, but people do not understand. Sinful nations, people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the Lord and spurned the Holy One of Israel, turning their back on Him.”

“Their tongue is like a bow ready to shoot lies. It is not by Truth that they triumph in the land. They live in their own light and warm themselves by their own fires not relying on God. They go from one sin to another they do not know their Creator.”

“Why should they be beaten anymore physically, emotionally, mentally? Why do they persist in rebellion? Their whole head is injured, their whole heart afflicted. From the sole of their foot to the top of their head there is no soundness – only wounds and welts and open sores not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil.”

“Everyone suffers persecution. Those who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, and those who go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived for the enemy is always looking for someone to devour.”

“Don’t be misled – you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature; but those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.”

Isa. 1:2-6, Jer. 9:3-4, Gal. 6:7-9 NLT, Isa. 50:10-11. 2 Tim. 3:12-13, 1 Peter 5:8



To harvest is to gather, to remove or extract something, to accumulate a store of, to win by achievements. Only God can bring to mind why and how and what we have harvested/stored up for the welfare of our eternal lives.

Our behaviors reflect the choices and decisions that will grant or deny entrance into God's kingdom. As the Lord said:

“By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned. What profit is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet be eternally lost or destroyed?”

Matt. 12:37, Luke 25 NKJV

If achievements are won but not by Truth the greatest triumph will be lost: To stand in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming (1 Thess. 2:19 AMP). God blesses His people to do great things and to surely triumph (1 Sam. 26:25). When faith is placed in flesh, in finances, intelligence or personal achievement the trust and hope and

confidence it produces surely will suffer the same consequence of time as does our aging bodies.

Through knowledge of God and His Word we receive eternal strength in the Lord and in His mighty power (Eph. 6:10). Yes, the Lord gives strength to the weary, and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and the young adults stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint (Isa. 40:29-31).



We are told to keep our lives free from the love of money (Heb. 13:5 a) for those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction, for the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs (1 Tim. 6:9-10).

Paul spoke of God's economy - faith - for it is a shield He places around every person who trusts the Lord is their strength (Ps. 28:7).



Paul instructs us to take up the shield of faith, with which we can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one (Eph. 6:16).

Flaming arrows that ignite the ruminations of self and circumstance to incite destructive behaviors, they can be extinguished when our faith is in the One Who helps us. Who bestows glory on us and lifts up our head (Ps. 3:3) so we can see the Lord is our God, and He has made His light shine upon us (Ps. 118:27).

Not everybody is ready to see and hear and act with faith in Jesus. Isaiah asked, "Does anyone care, God? Is anyone listening and believing a word of it? The point is: Before you trust, you have to listen. However, unless God's Word is heard, there's nothing to listen to (Rom. 10:16-17 Message). Faith comes from hearing the message of Christ, and the message is heard through the Word, Christ Jesus (Rom. 10:17 NIV).



Yes, faith increases when we hear about Jesus, for the Word of God, is living and active (Heb. 4:12). He answers from His holy hill when we cry aloud to Him (Ps. 3:4):

“Bless the God and Father of sympathy and mercy, the Source of every comfort, consolation and encouragement. Through His Word, which works in you, God consoles and encourages as you patiently endure the same evils, misfortunes, troubles, calamities and afflictions that everyone suffers and undergoes.”

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all mankind. It teaches you to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while waiting for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of your great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for you, to redeem you from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good.”

2 Cor. 1:3&6 AMP, Titus 2:11-15

Jesus did not speak His own words. Rather, the Father living in Him was doing His work. Believe Him when He said:

“I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; or at least believe on the evidence of miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing;

they will do even greater things because I have gone to the Father.”

If you love the Lord, you will obey what He commands. You may ask for anything in His name, and He will do it so the Son may bring glory to the Father (John 14:10-16).



So I encourage you to continue stepping out in faith as you climb into new realms of renewal and recovery for there are many discoveries to be made:

- As we take these steps, we will begin relating to people as equals and with compassion and understanding for them and for ourselves
  - We will learn to express anger constructively, set boundaries, say no, and walk away from abuse and from that which is not good for us
  - Our tolerance for being victimized will decrease
  - We will develop an accurate sense of our responsibilities and other people’s responsibilities
  - The desire to take care of others will be replaced by a desire to allow each person to be responsible for themselves

- We will learn to embrace our issues, and allow others to have theirs
- We will learn to nurture ourselves and others without caretaking
- We will begin addressing and feeling our emotions, taking responsibility for them ourselves
- We will learn how to stop letting our feelings catapult us into controlling gestures that damage our relationships with others
- We will learn how to deal directly and honestly with people, without manipulation and hidden agendas
- We will learn how to no longer think or behave as victims
- We will accept our powerlessness, find God, become empowered and learn to share this knowledge by participating in relationships as equals
- Our lives will begin to make sense and have value and meaning – our needs will begin to be met – laughter and fun will become part of our lives
- We will learn how to lighten up and become fully alive
- Bitterness and remorse will be replaced by Gratitude

- We acknowledge we are not doing all this ourselves – we’re stepping out in faith on this path of Ask and Seek and Discovery, taking part in a spiritual journey
- We acknowledge God’s ministry of Reconciliation and Renewal and Recovery is a daily journey, an investment of time to enjoy His Light, which opens eyes and hands and hearts with faith and hope and confidence to receive all He wants to give us
- We discover God and ourselves
- We realize our Renewal and Recovery has never really been about the other person – it is about us – we are learning lessons we need to master in this life
- We realize we are ready to let go of shame and low self-worth – we stop using fear and shame to control ourselves and others – we stop allowing others to control us with fear and shame and guilt
- Those who step out in faith with God’s Word, and allow Holy Spirit to work in their lives find the most freedom from their old behaviors

I pray all may be well with you, and that you live long and well on earth. I pray you are not irritated or provoked to anger; instead, with Holy Spirit’s guidance you remain in

the training and discipline and the counsel and admonition of God's Word, Christ Jesus.

I pray the honor and respect and love the Lord so richly deserves deepens, and as a servant you are obedient and eager to please with singleness of motive and with all your heart, as service to the Lord. Not in the way of eye-service as though people were watching you and your desire is to please them, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God heartily and with your whole soul; rendering service readily with goodwill, as to the Lord and not to receive the praises of people.

I pray that whatever good you do, you receive your reward from the Lord. That you are strengthened by your faith in Jesus, and empowered through your union with Him! I pray you seek and draw strength from the Lord, that strength which His boundless might provides (Eph. 6:3-10 AMP)